



Northern Rockies Coordinating Group

Federal, State, and Local Government Agencies Working Together in Emergency Response Management

Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, September 20, 2022

PARTICIPANTS:

Board Members: Darron Williams, Bryce Rogers, Aaron Thompson, Dennis Strange, Tate Fischer, Josh Harvey – Chair, Jake Ganieany, Matt Hall, Rich Cowger – Vice Chair, Ryan Melin, Paul Cerda,

Deputies and Others: Chad Pickering, Pam Jolly, Corey Buhl, Ryan Patrick, Kathy Pipkin, Aitor Bidaburu, Jordan McKnight, Anthony Krause, Dave Williams

Purpose: Welcome and a reminder that this is a public meeting for the purpose of conducting government business.

NWCG/NMAC Update: (Aitor Bidaburu)

- NMAC – activity has slowed down significantly; meeting twice a week now. Trending towards releasing some aircraft.
- NWCG – same emphasis areas as reported last month; will be meeting tomorrow.

Northern Rockies GACC and Operational Updates:

NRCG Operations (Corey Buhl)

- Several IHCs are winding down and will be done soon.; will have several still available for a few weeks.
- No Critical needs in the GACC.
- Several IMTs closing out and smokejumpers are back on shoulder season.
- Some IA still occurring.

NRCC Update (Kathy Pipkin)

- Activity slowing.
- Moved to PL2 in the Northern Rockies.
- Will be establishing if there is any Northern Rockies IMT availability.
- Logistics Coordinator position is being advertised. BLM meteorologist is on board. FWS meteorologist recommended selection has gone forward for approval.
- Looking at returning to five-day coverage on October 9th.

Old Business

NRCG Committee Liaison – Data Gathering Discussion and Request – Informational Topic – Aaron Thompson

- *(Continued from August 16, 2022 Meeting)*
 - Action Item – The two remaining committee report outs (Incident Commander and Training Committees) will be provided during the next meeting. Review and validation of committee representation will occur afterwards.
- Ask from the June 21st meeting was for each liaison and NRCG member to go back and complete the questions.
- Goal is to engage in a more robust report out on the questions and moving forward.
- [NRCG Boad Liaisons to Committees and Zones](#) can be found on the [NRCG website](#).
- Paul Cerda – Incident Commanders Committee



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- Charter needs review and updating.
- Navigating the transition to new liaison has proved challenging; however, will be implementing better communication strategies.
- NMAC tasking to IC/AC group - Joe Sampson will be representing the Northern Rockies regarding CIM transition.
- Josh Harvey – Training Committee
 - Did not contact the Training Committee yet.
- Review and validation of committee representation.
 - Intent of this exercise is to improve both communications and engagement.

IMT3 Process Tasking – Decisional Topic – Aaron Thompson

- *(See draft in pre-reading materials.)*
- Intent is to recognize an established process for T3 IMTs.
- Josh Harvey – Wildland Fire Agency Administrators expressed interest.
- Kathy Pipkin – Suggestion to go ahead and do the outreach for the ICs, in an effort to keep all IC recruitment together on the same timeframe.
- Ryan Melin – State Forester supports this effort.
- Paul Cerda – Question if October 1st timeframe is realistic?
- Action Item – Kathy Pipkin will obtain T3 SOP documents from the Great Basin and will provide to Pam Jolly to share with the full BOD.
- Corey Buhl – Agree with recruiting the ICs; can get this item on the IC Committee fall meeting.
- Tate Fischer – FWS supports this endeavor also.
- Aaron Thompson – Suggestion for Corey Buhl to take the lead on this and forgo a formal vote.
- Action Item - Will task to Corey Buhl and Kathy Pipkin. Josh Harvey will compile a formalize tasking.
- Action Item – Discussion around IMT support, including the T3 IMTs, will be put on October agenda. Kathy Pipkin will provide an update on current support provided.

New Business

NRCG CGAC Representation Proposal – Decisional Topic – Aaron Thompson

- Background:
 - National Multi Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) uses the Coordinating Group Advisory Council (CGAC) and the Incident Workforce Development Group (IWDG) as two primary subgroups to help inform national policy and direction. Currently the Northern Rockies Coordinating Group (NRCG) representative to CGAC is the chair of NRCG which rotates every two years. The participation on CGAC from NRCG has waned over the years depending on the Agency's value of CGAC. The Northern Rockies Operations Officer and Coordination Center Manager have filled in as representatives as necessary to cover those meetings. Some GA's use the same methodology as the NRCG for participation and others have appointed a permanent position based on workload and need.
- Proposal:
 - In an effort to have consistent representation on CGAC, the proposal is to appoint an agency



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from the NRCG Board who has a stakeholder interest to a two-year term limit. After the term is completed, the BOD will solicit for another Agency or re-appoint the current agency to another two-year term. This will help reduce the workload on the NRCG Chair as well as provide CGAC with a consistent name to coordinate with.

- Josh Harvey – Support this proposal.
- Dennis Strange – Support as well.
- Ryan Melin – Support and would suggest a year rotation, with an option to extend.
- Aaron Thompson – Spoke with Craig Glazier and he volunteered to take the first rotation.
- Chad Pickering – Support a one-year rotation, with an option to extend.
- Aaron Thompson – Suggestion to formalize at November meeting.
- Action Item - Aaron Thompson will compile a draft rotation for BOD review. Craig Glazier will attend the November CGAC meeting. Kathy Pipkin and Corey Buhl will ensure that Craig Glazier receives an invite.
- Josh Harvey – Formal vote not required.

WFAA Tasking – List of needed Key and Critical Support Positions for Incident Management Teams (IMTs) – Informational – Josh Harvey

- From the joint WFAA/NRCG BOD meeting:
 - WFAA's are requesting this list be derived from roster supported data.
 - Tasking for Kathy Pipkin and Corey Buhl.
 - Intent is to identify the need in order to move forward with increasing the number of Northern Rockies (NR) Incident Management Teams (IMTs) in future years.
- Kathy Pipkin and Corey Buhl will be tasked with this item; however, need exists for a formal tasking outlining clear intent.
- Action Item - Josh Harvey will issue a formal tasking.

Joint WFAA/NRCG BOD Direction Memo – IMTs for FY23 – Informational Topic – Josh Harvey

- Originated during WFAA IMT briefing that occurred on September 06, 2022.
- Joint memo will be signed and distributed soon.

CIM Memo Clarification – Informational – Josh Harvey

- Melissa Wegner brought to Craig Glazier's attention that the NRCG CIM memo is not in alignment with the NWCG CIM memo.
- Discrepancy revolves around the field evaluator language. NRCG memo is more restrictive.
- Action Item – NRCG memo will be edited and re-issued to bring into national alignment.

NRCG Pre-Use Inspection Process – Informational Topic – Ryan Patrick

- (See pre-reading materials.)
- Update on previous tasking.
- Provided briefing paper to the board earlier this spring that provided three alternatives to current process.
- Will need follow up with clear direction regarding intent with pre-use inspection.
- Currently responsibility is with dispatch centers to coordinate this process.



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Board of Directors Conference Call Agenda

Tuesday, September 20, 2022

- Pre-award inspection has since been eliminated from historical process.
- Recommendation to have dispatch centers continue the coordination of pre-use inspections.
 - Acknowledged this is unpopular with dispatch centers; however, all alternatives have capacity issues.
- Kathy Pipkin – centers do not have inspectors.
- Corey Buhl – centers don't have the personnel or capacity for this workload either.
- Jordan McKnight – recommendation protects both the contractors and the agency administrators to some degree. Acknowledged that there is not a surplus of individuals to accomplish this work. Determining the route will help prioritize the workload. Desired end state would be a memo from the Board outlining expectations and process.
- Kathy Pipkin – this is not a dispatch issue; is a shortage issue. Inspectors are an ordered resource, just like any other resource. Agency issue to get individuals trained. Dispatch does not have this capacity. Historically have better success filling inspector positions on incidents.
- Corey Buhl – other GACCs do not always accomplish pre-use inspection and when that occurs, it is listed in documentation.
- Chad Pickering – for the greater Missoula area, have built an inspection site at the AFD. Does come down to who operates. Do need that capacity. Will be a nice site, if can staff.
- Aaron Thompson – would like more information regarding what other GACCs are doing and clarification on the minimum that must be done.
- Ryan Patrick – Changes occurred to the process when IBPAs when to a national level. Important to note associated Lessons Learned that noted a better inspection process was needed. Need exists to do more than the minimum acceptance. Recommendation to have dispatch centers coordinate and work together as a group to build capacity. Desire is for direction from the board as to where the GACC wants to be moving forward.
- Jordan McKnight – if BOD would like to see any follow up, or changes, or more information added to the briefing papers, that would help to fine tune those documents. Ryan Patrick has accepted a new position and his current position will be vacant.
- **Action Item - Re-distribute briefing papers for BOD review and place on the October agenda for more focused discussion.**

Review of Action Items: (Josh Harvey)

- Differed in the interest of time.

The next scheduled NRCG Monthly Conference Call is October 18, 2022 at 10:00 Hours Mountain Time