

NRCG Business Committee 2019 Spring Meeting

4/2-4/3/2019

Missoula, MT

In attendance: Amanda Boatright, Wanemah Hulett, Tracey Nimlos, Sarah Lee, Bidy Simet, Maebeth Seidlitz, Diane Cartney (via telephone), Heather Good, Becky Shepard, Katie Svoboda, Mike Lucas, Ann Vogt, Kelly McKee, Debby Wesselius, Jeff Gardner, Joanne Marceau, Denise Middlesworth, Fauzia Massey, Randy Linthicum, Erin Lally

Current Action Item Review

- **FireNet Accounts and Team Drive Folder**
 - o Sarah sponsor for non-federal employees.
 - o Send Sarah your FireNet email address so she can add you to team drive.
- **Determine if other agencies can use IPAC for tribal LUA bills**
 - o No definitive answer yet.
 - o New Deputy Regional Director for Trust Services is supportive of moving forward getting guidance. Creating a new task group to address. May have something in place in the next year or two.
 - o In the short term if you need assistance or have questions Amanda can connect you with people that can provide guidance. Currently many moving pieces in regard to tribal land ownership.
- **Send NRCG LUA SOPs out for comments and editing**
 - o Out for legal review with Office of the General Counsel (OGC).
 - o Jeff is the new lead for this item – not certain what OGC's feedback will be.
 - o The biggest change in this SOP is direction Contracting Officers to enter agreements to access land to get water- not purchase water by volume. Jeff has that portion written up just needs to put into guide.
 - o Agreements for Idaho State Trust/Endowment land? Should work with their state office, same approach in Montana.
 - o Add NRCG Business Committee as source of SOPs and language directing questions to assigned IBA or agency Incident Business Lead.
 - o Forest Service Contracting is reorganizing under USDA. It is possible that we might have to reevaluate some strategies after they look at current processes.
- **Donation Guide**
 - o Montana Department of Emergency Services has identified organizations to receive donations from public. Potentially overkill if we did the same thing for each of our zones.
 - o List from DES covers us for MT - if they don't have an organization setup in a specific area or for a specific type of donation they will do the legwork for us.
 - o Idaho - does not have a DES. Amanda will contact Amber to research if similar mechanism in place.
 - o MT DES doc would be a good thing to take to the Western States as a model of what could be useful/helpful in each state
 - o Donation contact info from MT DES would be a good IBOG addition for MT agencies.
 - o Have not addressed outgoing donations. Guidelines would vary by each agencies own policy.
 - o For group - ID, ND, SD, and Fed agency leads provide guidance on their own agencies policy re: outgoing donations to task group.
- **Draft SOPs for NERV Program**
 - o Notes from March 6th committee conference call handed out, draft ready for review
 - o Holly and Nemah will serve as co-chairs in Deanna's absence.
 - o Expectation is for each GACC to have SOPs in place.

- **Add Tribal Specifics to Chapter 50 Supplement**
 - o Not done more than likely will not be done for this year.
- **Cost Share Template Update**
 - o Agenda Item.
- **Verify e-Resources Links**
 - o Done and ready to post online.
- **Breakdown Calculation General Messages for Equipment, including HETFs**
 - o Done - 4 sample general messages handed out.
 - o Would still like to get comment from a contracting officer before posting on the business committee website.
 - o Power point Bidy created on the team drive will be part of the webinar.
 - o These were used in the Northwest on FS fires last summer - got positive feedback from ASC. References to clauses and documentation of how calculations done is helpful additional backup documentation.
 - o For non-HETF specific calculations, makes it very straightforward to single operator, breakdown, etc.
 - o Don't want button to be too easy on the other hand, will encounter dynamic situations that need individual attention. Still want time keepers to reference actual agreement and be able to build that knowledge.
 - o ASC seems to prefer deductions from daily rates and backup documentation for those rather than changing the daily rates. Lots of room for error with several daily rates built in the database.
- **COMP Transports**
 - o Decision tree distributed for group discussion later.

Committee Reports

- **Operations**
 - o Met in mid-March in Helena, Rapid Extraction Module Support (REMS) guidance/whitepaper came out shortly after.
 - o Exploring standardizing fire suppression modules across the Northern Rockies, looking to follow BLM model. Every GACC has a configuration, but BLM is the only agency in NR that currently utilizes. Ordered as overhead.
 - o Surge Task Force – Organized group of resources controlled by MAC group to provide critical resources for specific tactical operations, used commonly in other GACCs. Put together a small committee to explore option, accessing info from other geographical and functional areas. Idea is to have more solidified and standardized for NR.
- **Incident Commanders**
 - o Last met in October - Discussions on REMS and over-the-counter medications. (specifically decision from FS that medical units cannot dispense OTC medication)
 - o Discussion on a standardized pre-order.
 - o Tracey brought this topic to ICs and would like to extend to the FSCs - she and Debby went to NY and worked with FDNY. They have a relatively large people who hold NWCG finance qualifications and are very interested in working with NR teams.
 - o Somewhat limited due to their union agreement- OT cap, cannot extend past 14 days. FDNY has coop agreement with R9, so good to go in the federal system.
 - o Can be name-requested if not on a roster, including COMPs and PROCs.
 - o Have two fully qualified type 2 teams - only one can be gone from the city at a time. Have developed depth at every position.
- **Training**
 - o No update. Proposed possibility of new training committee representative. Committee approved.

- **Dispatch**
 - o Nothing to report, preparing for dispatch workshop.
- **Logistics/Equipment**
 - o Incident Contract Project Inspector (ICPI), S262 in Missoula next week.
- **Buying Team**
 - o Good number of applicants this year. Really good interagency response for national NR BUYT.
 - o Getting first roster ready now. Also working on short team potential for local Forest Service use only.
 - o Many outside the NR have expressed interest in joining or training with NR buying teams. Tracey says OK, if frequent to NR. Other GACCs might start to see this as problematic.
 - o Already have a long list of trainees in the Northern Rockies, so would potentially only need qualified BUYMs from out of GACC.
- **NRCG Board of Directors**
 - o Last conference call was brief.
 - o Discussed Remote Situation Unit Support and GIS capabilities- will not automatically be part of cost share if they are only supporting 1 or 2 fires.
 - o Several plans have rolled over, very few changes
 - o There will likely not be an Agency Administrator (AA) workshop this year for the Forest Service, but potential for a lot of training opportunities for influx of new district rangers. BLM is planning one and BIA is waiting to get approval for AA refreshers that include input from all functional areas. IDL is doing something similar as well.
 - o A roadshow AA presentation would be a good idea, flexible on schedule and audience.
 - o Have offered AA refresher during the webinar week in the past, was not well attended.
 - o If an AA workshop is a good idea would need to inquire on need for one to the board now for implementation next year

Zone Reports

- **Northern Idaho**
 - o Not much to report, did not get a detailer in behind Heather while she was on her detail. Conducting MAC exercise at beginning of June
- **Southwest**
 - o Deanna is on a detail to WO, Tracey representing for both Central Zone and SW.
 - o Had planned on a joint S261 with Central Zone, was cancelled
 - o Matt Hall detailing in behind Bruce Suenram for the DNRC
- **Central**
 - o Potentially getting detailer behind Lily, no word on when position will be filled permanently.
- **South Central**
 - o REMS topic came up with Gallatin County. Have capability but can't go out of area or intentionally travel to support fire. Personnel don't have wildland specific qualifications.
- **Eastern**
 - o Rob Miramontez, Eastern Montana Chair on detail to North Carolina, but still functioning as Eastern Area Chair.
 - o S260/S261 will be hosted week May 20th, location TBA
- **Northwest**
 - o Type 3 workshop end of April. Plains Dispatch is being consolidated- DNRC Plains Unit will now be dispatched out of Kalispell. The Lolo NF portion that Plains dispatched will be now dispatched out of Missoula.
 - o Glacier FMO retired, might be a while to get filled permanently

- **North Dakota**
 - o No update from ND State.
 - o The Dakota Prairie Grasslands do not have an FMO. ND working on interagency training and preparedness. S260/S261 or abbreviated version is planned.
- **Fire Wardens**
 - o Nothing to report from meeting, conference last weekend of April.
- **Fire Chiefs, NW BIA, GP BIA, NWCG IBC**
 - o No report

Agency Reports

- **BIA**
 - o Solicitor came to their national meeting, potentially posing more questions than answers.
 - o This season will be business as usual, but changes may be forthcoming for tribal resources responding outside their home unit.
 - o Working within confines of two conflicting authorities re: sovereignty.
 - o Do tribes now need to get their own liability insurance? In general they already carry, but what that exactly covers is unclear and will be tribe-specific.
 - o Another meeting next week, hopefully with solicitor. Solicitor did know if fire was even a contractable program under the Indian Self-Determination Act (Public Law 93-638). If this is the case the BIA might have to reassume every contracted program, equipment, property.
 - o Possible but would require a mandate at the national level, tribal employees would have to become bureau employees and qualify. Even though supposed to meet same as bureau standards cannot enforce due to conflicting authorities.
 - o Potential that prior to fire season may see some policy on qualifications of tribal resources be non-transferrable – intention to have BIA sign red card and then not be able transfer qualifications to contractor.
 - o Solicitor also has issue with tribes having access to IQCS, which is a federal system, which essentially means the BIA “owns” their qualifications and contractors cannot certify based on BIA-issued qualifications
 - o Where does this put crews, national shortage issue, contracting be the workaround?
 - o Updated NAC Plan forthcoming.
- **IDL**
 - o Update from Amber via email – IDL no longer allowing commissary on the incidents
 - o 2018 auditing/reconciling Fire Department agreements. Paid 5.7 million to their local government cooperators.
- **MT DNRC**
 - o Western States Business Managers Meeting was held the end of January. Working on developing state-to-state agreements to bill back and forth between 19 western states. WA & UT unable to participate. Intention is to have ready for this year.
 - o Portable toilets and hand wash stations solicitation closed yesterday. Process electronic only this year, no hard copy submissions were accepted. May impact number of vendors.
 - o Last year for rental car agreements.
 - o Will have 3 Type 2 crew agreements this year.
- **USFS**
 - o National Forest Service Incident Business meeting this month. Entire first day focus is coop agreements, billing, cost shares and recovery. National task group formed to address billing issues and timelines.

- Pushing for national standard for billing documentation. MT in strictest FEMA region in country, requiring 100% documentation, creating a tremendous workload. Other FEMA regions accept agency transaction registers.
- Also working for standardization across the states for third party billing/litigation
- Talking about standard rates/methodology on how rates are calculated. Exploring possibility of using e-ISuite to settle cost share agreements/bills. At least as a tool to get to a certain point and speed up process. Also add threshold for standard rates of items (re: smaller incidents where e-ISuite is not utilized)
- FS HR is backed up. No timeline for many open positions, change from eRecruit to USA staffing seems to have created bottleneck.

- NPS

- Glacier Deputy Superintendent vacant in addition to FMO. No report from Yellowstone. Still haven't filled behind Georgia McAdam.

- BLM

- New MT State FMO- Aaron Thompson from WY BLM. State and Deputy Director positions vacant
- Experiencing issues with new unintegrated credit cards.
- Finalizing orange book.
- Getting ready for pre-season meeting, MT under National preparedness review.
- Agency suffered a good size budget hit this year, effects have trickled down to hiring
- New Loss of Human Life handbook came out to replace Line of Duty Death guide
- Providing documentation for multiple fires, including an international criminal case and multiple FMAGs for MT and SD. Had the help of two career seasonals who worked all winter, still not finished.
- Helping eastern states counterpart with their 32 individual Operating Plans.

Committee Business

- Fire Contracting Update

- Post-furlough National direction came out and then was revised for 2019 solicitations. See latest letter [here](#)
- Opted to solicit in spring. Closes May 8, inspections due May 13th.
- Solicitations the same and inspections have been open since September 18. Will have awards, normally done by June 1, new deadline July 1.
- Contingency plan - 2016 awards have still been extended, just in case 2019 awards can't be completed. There will be no break in coverage, but cannot have 2016 and 2019 awards in ROSS simultaneously, will make decision in June on what will happen. This pertains to water-handling equipment only.
- Rollover agreements - contractors given option to change dispatch/update rates, then good to go.
- BLM- awards are good, pulled back from office trailer solicitation - did not get response from potential vendors. Office trailers once again will be EERA/Commercial
- Tent solicitation also pulled back, due to furlough. Will also be EERA/Commercial item for this year.
- DNRC – portable toilets and handwashes closed Monday. 1 more year on rental cars. Everything on 3 year agreements.
- Medical - Will not resolicit. Time required to vet licensing would not be feasible with backed up water handling schedule. Current agreement extended 1 year, no changes.
- ITEAMS- lots of interest and depth. Link? On NRCC page however only accessible by AQM.
- Not available for Ops to go in and look to see if what they need is actually in there. Logging and equipment that is utilized is in there, with lots of miscellaneous items as well. A read-only access option would be ideal, but not a priority to create.
- Not a mandatory source. Just a list given to the BUYT to see if what they need is there

- Alternatives? In the NW they use google form for interested parties that populates a spreadsheet to give to BUYTs that is helpful.
- Changes forthcoming potentially.
- Jeff and Debby will have new supervisors by fall with AQM reorganization. No transfer of station or physical movement, but everyone will have a new supervisor.
- BLM Contracting- had dedicated fire contracting staff, their current open fire CO position will be flown as a grants and agreements position due to changes within the DOI. Velvett will still be a fire CO but with additional non-fire responsibilities.

Copy Trailer Discussion

- FS is reorganizing the IT department, Patrick and Tara both now work for the Chief Information Office. No changes until the end of FY 19, what their positions look like beyond then is uncertain.
- Copy trailers are an option that should be considered more moving forward.
- With the exception of renting GIS laptops, we own most of our IT equipment used on fires in the Northern Rockies. Most other geographical areas don't. This includes plotters, which are challenging to maintain and are sensitive to dust, heat, cold, etc.
- Had good inventory received on excess from FS units, but parts, drivers, etc. became issues. Down to 1 plotter per team that are relatively new, but still high maintenance and expensive to repair/maintain.
- Rental copiers we get tend to be a mixed bag
- High demand for 11x17 map products- the printers that would make that feasible are expensive and not very portable.
- Copy trailers take a lot off burden off the ITSS'. Parts, support, labor all included in the contract.
- Labor included in the contract is a good selling point to help our IMTs with work/rest requirements.
- Will continue to send out plotters, but in the future it might not make sense to replace.
- NR is last GACC for not utilizing. Large incidents with thousands of resources and/or remote camps, a copy trailer could handle that volume of maps, IAPs, scanning and emailing for payment packages.
- Cost containment? Reasonably priced when look at the bigger picture of parts and labor that go into renting copiers and providing all the labor ourselves.
- These are up for solicitation next year, Jeff is seeing uptick in interest from vendors and there are a few in Iteams.
- Group in agreement. NRCG Board has also heard proposal.
- Considering stressing the work/rest advantage of copy trailers in your IBOGs

NERV Update

- Moving forward on national expansion. Still working on how DOI will fund or add a payment mechanism.
- Discussion about a NERV "center", which might be physical or virtual, to filter out DOI incident rentals.
- DOI still figuring out on their end how to route the invoices to pay and how claims will be handled. Will be split by bureau.
- Juanita is coming to both Logs/Finance Breakout and the Dispatch Workshop, but not at the general session.
- Holly and Nemah co-chairs of NERV group. Meeting again April 8. Will have draft together in advance of team meetings.
- Why only one company? Enterprise was the company that got the ball rolling starting a conversation in developing a national agreement, at the time SW and NW had exclusive Enterprise contracts.
- NR SOPs will need to clarify when to use DNRC agreement, which still has one year overlap. Might be a nice dovetail or potentially see advantages of having both options.
- Amanda – Rocky Mountain IBC discussed issues getting trucks specifically with NERV agreement- these kinds of lessons will factor in decision to maintain DNRC agreements.

- A national contract is going to be to our advantage when we are really busy and we have lots of expanded dispatchers from other areas, one system will clean up some of the issues seen in the past.
- On the other hand, since contract is national, worry that requests could be prioritized nationally and NR might have trouble getting vehicles. Having local vendors on the DNRC contract still might buy more options when things are very busy nationally.
- Current SOPs for other GACCs really task the driver with tracking their own vehicle. Helps to hold the resource accountable.
- NR SOPs should give address pool vehicles vs. single resource and set guidelines for when to order off which contract
- Will shift burden from IMTs to track and pay
- How will rentals be paid for state fires? FS will pay and states will be billed.
- Task group will have a conference call next week with intention of getting a draft out by team meetings

- **REMS**

- NRCG Memo distributed and discussed
- Memo references REMS language in NR SIIBM supplements, REMS have not been part of this years' revision for either chapter so far.
- Will develop standard statement for Chapters 20 and 50, potential to link to exhibit that could remain "under construction" until more details emerge.
- Focus on specifications more than rates for now, Jeff and Tim would like to have a few more months to work out the details.

- **Decision Tree Document**

- Review and discussion of Decision Tree
- Will separate into a briefing paper that states current patterns and concerns and a suggested decision tree
- Could also emphasize how critical Hospital Liaisons are for local units to provide - extended support/attention for the patient. R1 FS is working on this- intent to have one whenever incident personnel have to receive medical care.
- Topic is slated for an hour during Finance Breakout at IMT Meeting

- **Incident Business Management Webinars**

- Working on agenda - firming up what will be offered.
- Inserting NERV information presentation for those who did not attend team meetings, see if Juanita would be available to help with that
- IBA section- might be recruiting for additional presenters. Suggestion to add section addressing roles re: day job vs. incident assignment.
- Sarah provided detailed outline from Amy and David who will be conducting session for dispatch for incident business - initial size up, ROSS-Irwin interface, when to order expanded, business rules for dispatch and how those are changing in the future, etc.
- Equipment section will be broken into beginner, intermediate and advanced sections over 2 ½ hours.
- Webinar will be done via GoToMeeting, recorded and posted on website
- Will still be 4 days, after adding micro purchasing, NERV and dispatch.

- **IMT Workshop**

- Draft agenda presented/discussed, finalized assignments and timeline
- Added an FSC to the COMP Transport discussion leaders.
- For future IMT meetings – would it be worthwhile to divide among the committee to attend other breakout sessions and have a separate conference call after to report back?

- **NRCG Out-of-GACC IMT Welcome Packet**

- Handout from Tracey with language from previous document

- Suggestions - Remove off-road vehicles, insert direction to reference LUA Guide, leave reference to payment matrix and where NR competed agreements can be found and clarify that not all NR agreements competed via VIPR, that agencies share this workload
- Add reference to current supplements after reference to tools on website.
- Tracey will update and circulate with changes.
- **Cost Share/Decision Document Template Update**
 - Small diverse group. Including BLM FMO, state AA,
 - No changes to decision document, but did make changes to agreement template. Took a few things from decision document back into agreement so agreement could serve as a standalone for simpler cost share incidents. Specifically - protecting agencies strategy and methodology.
 - Keep decision document
 - BLM uses when deciding even when a cost share won't be implemented, to document the whys/why nots. Might help you realize that you don't actually need a cost share agreement, mark triggers for agreement to be necessary or serves as a why agreement was NOT entered into.
 - Better to have a decision document in place and not need.
 - Decision document valuable on incidents that involve agencies that employ different methodologies and approaches to sharing costs.
 - Fire net might be a really good place to put decision documents.
 - Those in group who use these regularly please look over and give Tracey recommendations.
- **Delegation of Authority - Cost Portion Template**
 - Language came from outdated IC summary, needs rewording. Group discussion, will be updated.
- **Discussion re: How Dispatchers' Overtime is Charged**
 - Topic specifically targeting primary dispatchers, not expanded dispatchers or those on assignment.
 - No standardization across NR dispatch centers
 - Outside of normal fire season, if incident is isolated, base time and overtime would go specifically to one specific fire.
 - 2018 FS began funding all base time to PR, so would just be overtime only charged. "B" code for FS base time - diverts back to home unit PR funding of base, but tracks by incident for litigation.
 - 6 party agreement gives specifics on when a resource order is required. Even extended attack fires might not be ordered through ROSS for duration of incident.
 - Specific circumstance for requiring a resource order? Qualification maintenance is one. Doesn't mean all time has to be charged to that incident though
 - BLM direction is to charge to a specific fire unless time absolutely CANNOT be broken out. They do not have the same flexibility as other agencies do to charge to support codes, so overtime will be broken out by fire. Appropriate expense and part of the overall fire cost.
 - BIA – only time their dispatchers would have resource order if taking assignment outside of dispatch center.
 - You can charge to a fire without a resource order. 2017 AOP clarifies. Applies to everyone, dispatch, cache workers.
 - CDK and BFK, GBK all charge OT to specific fires due to BLM requirements.
 - WildCad log is an acceptable form of documentation
- **Update the Incident Business Mini Guide for ICS Supervisors**
 - Based on feedback from the field Tracey updated 4/10/19

Review Supplement Chapters

- **All Chapters**
 - Update from name of book throughout, including headers, update DNRC fire program info throughout.

- For future remember to please track changes.
- **Chapter 10**
 - Hazard pay for DNRC employees working within Operational Unit 3 (OU3) area
 - Cleaning up language re: casuals paying for incident rentals, now that NERV will be available.
 - R&R section moved, so all rental car language kept together.
 - General updating for NERV. Which removes language re: personal credit cards vs gov credit cards and off-road vehicle rental info.
 - Redundancies eliminated in state injury information
- **Chapter 20**
 - Update clauses to reference 2018 EERA general clauses and reference to latest wage determination.
 - AIS foot valve language added for each piece of water handling equipment.
 - Discussion of were REMS falls in chapter, addition of reference to online document- specifications and guidance, not agreement
- **Chapter 30**
 - Removed typing of incidents in regard to incident replacement
- **Chapter 40**
 - Will reference new buying team guide.
 - Update email addresses to firenet.gov, not gmail.
 - Discussion re: naming conventions for buying teams and expanded dispatches – names that are too specific vs. names that are not specific enough. Anticipate this topic for future conversation.
- **CHAPTER 50**
 - DNRC - Rates went up, Hazard pay for OU3 response, removed double shifted rate, will pay severity at 100% now, added rates for chippers and boats with suppression capabilities
 - DNRC - Chief certification Form will cover non-red carded local government responders for 5 specific positions. Further qualifications will require a red card for those resources.
 - ND - updated some of their rates, added rate for additional personnel.
 - ID - some misc. language changes, pretty minor.
- **Next Call - 6/4 at 1400**
- **Fall Meeting - 11/6-11/7 in Billings.**