

**NRCG Operations Committee Fall Meeting**  
October 16-17, 2002  
NRTC Missoula

Attendees:

Mike Plattes	FS Technical Specialist – Meeting Director	mplattes@fs.fed.us
Bill Swope	IC - W. Montana Type 2 IMT	bswope@fs.fed.us
Tom Clifford	DPIC – Swope’s Type 2 IMT	tclifford@fs.fed.us
Dale Glenmore	BIA Representative	mail364989@pop.net
Paul Chamberlin	NR Safety	pchamberlin@fs.fed.us
Mark Romey	NW Montana Zone Rep	mromey@fs.fed.us
Steve Frye	IC - NR Type 1 IMT	steve_frye@nps.gov
Phil Perkins	S. Central Montana Zone Rep	phil_perkins@nps.gov
Allen Chrisman	IC - N. Idaho Type 2 IMT	abchrisman@fs.fed.us
Jim Gray	IC - E. Montana Type 2 IMT	Jim_Gray@fs.fed.us
Paul Linse	Aviation Advisor	plinse@fs.fed.us
Wally Bennett	IC - NR Type 1 IMT	wbennett@state.mt.us
Kathy Elzig	NR FUMT Coordinator	kelzig@fs.fed.us
Bob Sandman	IC - W. Montana Type 2 IMT	bsandman@state.mt.us
Ray Nelson	MT DNRC Representative	rnelson@fs.fed.us
Sandy Evenson	W. Montana Zone Team Coordinator	sevenson@fs.fed.us
Pat Nooney	NR Cache Manager	pnooney@fs.fed.us
Steve Harbert	N Idaho Zone Rep (Stand in)	sharbert@fs.fed.us
Jack Kirkendall	SW Montana Zone Rep – Ops Chairman	jkirkendall@fs.fed.us
Dennis Milburn	IC – NR FUMT	dmilburn@fs.fed.us
Greg Greenhoe	Deputy Director FA&A	ggreenhow@fs.fed.us
Dick Rath	IC – NR FUMT	drath@fs.fed.us
John Specht	NR Operations Specialist	jspecht@fs.fed.us
Julie Polutnik	Notes	

***Type 1 and 2 IMT Business and Reports***

NRCG Vacancy Announcement for Team Members (Handout).

- IC/Team Selection Meeting will be held **January 22-23, 2003** in Missoula.
- EAC will be guaranteed 16 team positions for the 2003 season.

NR IMT Meeting Schedule

- **March 18-20, 2003** in Kalispell.
- Items to be thinking about for the meeting: (Please reply to Plattes with ideas)
  - Group leader from each NRCG Committee (Operations, Business, Prevention, Fire Use, Training, Aviation) to present respective topics/issues.
  - Theme for meeting.
  - NRCG BOD representative to present NRCG issues.
  - Speaker to address “Thirtymile Abatement Plan” effect on Teams.
  - Additional speakers/topics

- Agenda Items
  - “Leadership”
  - WUI
  - Local Gov’t relations
  - Accountability Team report/results
  - NARTC Lessons Learned (Paula)
  - National Contracts – current & future (Forbes)
  - Changing roles/ expectations of IMTs (Mann)
  - What makes a good IMT? Poor IMT? (Mann)

## **Team report on ’02 activities/lessons learned...**

### Thirtymile Abatement Plan

- IC’s reported that “Thirtymile Abatement Plan” information sharing was excellent among the teams. IC’s asked if information received at higher levels met the reporting needs. Additionally, IC’s would like to see an “Outcome” briefing or results of findings to close-out the Thirtymile Plan.
  - What does the Plan want to accomplish?
  - How do we measure success?
  - Are the agencies getting to info they need from IMTs to judge whether they are meeting abatement goals? (Yes, teams did meet goals, but the local levels didn’t seem to address the goals as needed.)
- Frye, Swope, Sandman and Chrisman will get together this fall to address the Thirtymile goals/procedures.
- Specht will produce an “NR Area Briefing Packet” for NR resources assigned to NR incidents, out-of-area resources coming to NR incidents as well as NR resources going to incidents out-of-area. The following items will be included in the packet:
  - Staging IMT’s
  - Crew Conduct
  - 14 day Policy/Work Rest Guidelines
  - Driving Policy
  - Standby Policy

### Staging issues

- IC’s asked about guidelines in regards to Staging IMTs (number of days, etc.). Plattes said this would be addressed at the National Lessons Learned Meeting in Boise next month.
  - IC’s suggested 3-day max in staging with clause to negotiate an extension.

### Crew conduct

- IC’s discussed the need for establishing consistent procedures among NR IMTs concerning crew conduct among all of the crews (regardless of agency or crew type). The policy will take into consideration facts and circumstances. Each conduct issue will be looked at on a case by case basis but there is a need for

consistency among the IMTs. Additionally, once ground rules have been established, then it is the responsibility of ICs and DPICs to follow-up on incidents. The crew conduct policy will be included in the "NR Area Briefing Packet".

#### Team staffing

- There is concern of consistent availability of team members and lack of alternates in some team zones. Line Officer support for IMT recruitment and availability an issue as well.
  - Sandman and Bennett have worked up an interagency pilot project proposal that has been submitted to NRCG to address these problems.
  - A proposal was made to have trainees sign a commitment to be available for x number of years upon taking certain 400 and 500 level courses.
  - Other options to be looked at include, job sharing and flexibility to take team members for fewer days as availability allows and considering cost effectiveness. (The idea here is that a member may not be available for a full 14-day assignment, but can go 7 or 8 days instead. 7 or 8 days is better than not filling the order at all.)
  - In addition to trainee positions, look at adding developmental positions to teams. (This idea would need to be brought to NRCG for approval).

#### Team size

- IC's looking at how many "O" numbers they can have to fill their team orders, as each team is different and don't necessarily match the mohe guide. At this time the amount of numbers will stay the same. Each team will identify their individual team make up to include support positions then provide this information to NRCC and the respective zone team coordinators/dispatch offices. Upon notification of a team order, the IC will talk with the agency administrator of the host unit to find out situation then determine amount of "O" numbers needed to meet the assignment objective. This allows the IMTs flexibility to staff up or down for each assignment. This process may result in more Supervisors/Line Officers to support their personnel staffing teams knowing that their people may not be committed to every assignment. It also frees up qualified team members to fill open orders on other teams or opportunity to freelance.

#### ***Fire Ground Safety Report*** (Chamberlain)

- Paul handed out findings from in/out of Area FAST assignments.
- IC's asked to see briefings from FAST visits to their incidents.
- Something to be looked at – Are we very conscious that Type 2 IMTs are managing incidents that were not so long ago Type 1 incidents?
- Driving issues – several fatalities this year. National emphasis in 2003 should be "Driving issues".

#### ***Selection/designation of 2003 Operations Committee Chairperson***

- 2003 Chairperson - NW Montana (Mary Romey)
- Vice chairperson – E Montana (Vacant)

### **NRCC Engine Rotation** (Plattes)

- Proposal to Ops Committee to have 2 separate Out-of-Area engine rotation lists, 1 for wildland engines and 1 for structural engines. Currently, only have 1 list for both types of resource. Committee unanimously voted “Yes”, to have 2 lists.

### **MIF Committee** (Glenmore)

- An organizational meeting has been planned for October 29 in Billings to propose a MIF Committee to become part of NRCG. The MIF Steering Committee will go away if the NRCG MIF Committee gets the go ahead.
- Plattes expressed concerns with the current MIF Plan – Currently, the MIF Plan only includes Montana Indian fire fighters but doesn’t include Indian fire fighters from Idaho or North Dakota tribes as well as Montana Indian fire fighters signed up with the Forest Service. Need to look at a plan that treats all of the Indian fire fighters within the Area the same.

### **OLD OPs Committee Business**

**Status of Updated Drawdown Plan?** No update.

**Status of Updated Complexity Rating System?** No update. However, Specht noted that the Rating System was tabled last Spring as to see what would come out from NRCG about the Thirtymile Plan.

### **ENGB deployment with agency and contract engines.**

- NRCG decision last fall was to have fully qualified ENGB’s on all engines by June of 2004 but letter sent out didn’t clarify Out-of-Area assignments vs In-Area assignments.
- From dispatch perspective – there was a big problem with this issue this year. Plattes asked for recommendation from Ops committee to resolve some of these issues.
- **Decisions agreed by committee that need to be clarified/amended by NRCG in way of a letter to include:**
  - All Out-of-Area engine assignments will meet ENGB qualifications.
  - Restate the June 2004 sign off date to have fully qualified ENGBs staffing engines assigned In-Area.
  - Require agencies and local government resources to meet the same standards by June 2004.
  - Wording in mobe guide will state “All Out-of-Area engine dispatches must have qualified ENGBs”.

### **Clarification on the 14-day Policy**

Still broad interpretation among Geographic Areas, agencies, units, etc. as to the 14-day Policy. The OPs committee proposed that a standardized policy be established and clarified to include NR resources adhere to the policy during in and out-of-Area assignments and resources coming in to NR will follow the policy as well.

- Specht will take this issue to the NRCG BOD meeting.
- **OPs Committee asking for NRCG's position on this issue and clarification in writing.** Clarification should include all national resources (Hotshot crews, smokejumpers, etc.) within the Area, as they all have different interpretations.

### **Aviation Issues** (Linse)

#### Aircraft Rescue & Fire Fighting (ARFF) engines

- Recommendation to develop minimum contract specifications for ARFF engines.
- Recommendation to establish standards and rates for this specialized equipment. **Issue needs to go to Business Committee to be brought to NRCG BOD.**

#### NR Aviation Training and Qualifications Program

- Making progress targeting individuals for aviation team positions and training assignments.
- Recommendation to develop a part-time position to manage and update team aviation availability lists to get individuals priority assignments. (Plattes committed the Aircraft Coordinator position to fill this request as it may be the best place to manage the Program.)

#### Resolve the OPs Committee Incident Aviation Advisor position

- Continual need for an Incident Aviation Advisor with extensive incident expertise on the OPs Committee.
- Recommendation is to have a liaison from the OPs and Aviation Committees to bring forth issues to the respective committee meetings. (Perkins noted that he may sit on the Aviation Committee as the NPS rep. So he may be the logical OPs liaison.)

#### Inequity of AD pay rates for aviation positions from GA to GA

- Differences in rates is becoming a struggling effect to get aviation resources. **Business Committee issue.**
- Plattes stated that this issue doesn't only concern aviation positions and will be brought to the NRCG BOD.

#### **"Ready Reserve" Concept Clarification** (Plattes)

Concept of "Ready Reserve" – On a daily basis at PL5 (sometimes PL4 depending on level of resource commitment) NMAC will identify a group of ready mobile resources that can respond to national priorities. Idea behind this is to not tie up national resources to existing large incidents for multiple tours and allows ability/flexibility to react to emerging incidents. The resources can still be used within the respective geographic area. NMAC won't keep these identified resources in this role for more than 72 hours in a row. If identified crews are required to work overtime or be available on scheduled days off their funding for that period will be charged to the national Pcode.

The NMAC letter can be found at the following link:

<http://www.nifc.gov/news/nmac/correspond/05-NMAC Ready Mobile Reserve June20.pdf>

***NR Cache Management Plan – Draft*** (Nooney)

- Nooney handed out copies of the draft plan. OPs committee needs to disseminate and review the Draft plan with respective zone agencies.
- Nooney wants comments back by January 3, 2003 in order to have the plan finalized and ready for approval by the January 22<sup>nd</sup> IMT selection meeting.

In addition to link on the NRCC web page, the Draft NR Cache Management Plan can be found at the following link:[http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrk/nr\\_cache\\_mgmt\\_plan\\_2002.pdf](http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrk/nr_cache_mgmt_plan_2002.pdf)