

SOUTHWEST COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE CHARTER

Background: This subcommittee was originally created as a task force under the authority of the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG) in October of 2008 and was called the "Southwest Area Communications Task force." It was reestablished in 2011 as a subcommittee under the Southwest Operations Group and is now called the Southwest Communications Committee.

I. Authority

This group is chartered by the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG), and will be a subcommittee under the Southwest Area Operations Group. This charter sets forth guidelines and procedures by which the Southwest Communications Group, hereafter referred to as the "Commo Group".

II. Mission Statement

"Working together to enhance quality communications for interagency wildland fire and aviation operations, to enable safer, more efficient wildland fire management in the Southwest Geographic Area".

III. Objectives

- Consistently promoting a safe and reliable radio communications environment for firefighter and public safety.
- Obtain and revise frequencies that are to be posted in the various aviation manuals and mobilization guides.
- Manage technical assistance as needed for studies, projects and reviews.
- Maintain frequency agreements within the Southwest Geographic Area.
- Offer and coordinate many of the technical issues regarding radios, repeaters and such that are interagency in nature.

IV. Membership

Membership of the Group shall consist of:

- A. Communication representative(s) from the following agencies within the Southwest Geographic Area with interest, expertise or experience in Wildland Fire Communications:

- Arizona State Forestry Division
- Bureau of Land Management-New Mexico
- Bureau of Land Management-Arizona
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- National Park Service
- New Mexico State Forestry Division
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Forest Service

B. Southwest Area Coordinating Group (SWCG) liaison

C. Southwest Coordination Center (SWCC) Representative (advisor and non- voting)

D. Southwest Aviation liaison

E. Other representative member agencies of the SWCG may involve a representative if able (advisor and non-voting).

F. Other ad hoc members or consultants should be consulted as needed during the team's evaluation. These could include individuals with expertise in Dispatch Operations, Procurement, Facilities Engineering, Health and Safety, and GSA.

Agencies are to notify the Subcommittee Chairperson by January 1st of each year with the name of their representatives to the Committee.

V. Officers

The Group shall have the following officers:

- A. Chair
- B. Vice Chair (vice chair will take over role if chair is vacant)
- C. Secretary (secretary will be appointed by Chair)

The Officers shall serve a term of two years and the positions will rotate among the agencies. The rotation order may be changed by Group vote if necessary. The rotation is currently in the order of Group representatives, per IV, A, above. The Chair has responsibility for maintaining the Commo Group web page on the SWCG website, for facilitating meetings and business of the group. The Vice Chair will act as the Chair when the Chair is unavailable.

VI. Key Responsibilities and Duties

The Group may receive action items or tasks from two sources; the SWCG, self-generated by members of the Group, or issues from the Southwest Area Operations Group. Primary responsibilities of the Commo Group are as follows:

- A. Advise the SWCG on area-specific interagency actions concerning communications equipment and application.
- B. Advise the SWCG on ways to replace interagency equipment on a piecemeal basis.
- C. Establish, implement and assure standards for communications.
- D. Interface with NWCG Communication, Education, and Prevention Committee (CEPC) as necessary.
- E. Coordinate and promote research and development related to better interagency communication.
- F. Provide advocacy of new techniques, practices, and procedures which facilitate more effective and safe interagency communication in the Southwest.
- G. Overall coordination and tasking provided by the Southwest Area Operations Group.
- H. Nomination, selection, and coordination of the Commo Group Members with the Southwest Operations Committee.
- I. Identify Aging infrastructure and frequent equipment failures.
- J. Provide technical assistance for radio equipment functional issues bandwidth issues (narrowband/wideband), and mitigate for frequency congestion within the Southwest Geographic Area.
- M. Identify and resolve any communications issues and concerns that are identified.
- N. Will be an interagency working group to address specific radio communication issues in this Southwest Geographic Area.
- O. Will evaluate current communications equipment and processes and develop both short and long term recommendations to ensure employee health and safety and effectiveness for all resource operations.
- P. The subcommittee may set-up task groups or request specialists to assist on specific assignments. Task groups and their memberships will require prior approval of SWCG.

VII. Meetings

The Group shall meet at least twice a year at a site to be selected at the previous meeting. These meetings shall be in spring and fall. Meetings are open to interested parties within the wildland fire management community. Additional conference calls will be arranged as needed. Four Group members shall constitute a voting quorum. Voting by correspondence is permissible if topics are referred to the members by the Chair. A Group member can request additional meetings or teleconferences if the need should arise. Selection of next administration will be done at the last fall meeting on the 2nd year of the prior administration.

VIII. Special Circumstances

This Charter and the standing Commo Group shall remain in effect until amended by the Group or by the SWCG. Additional operational procedures shall be promulgated by the Commo Group as needed.

Recommended By:

Approved By:

X Chris Romo

Chris Romo, Interim Chair
Southwest Area Communications Group

X



Leon W. Ben, Jr., Chair
Southwest Area Coordinating Group

X Gary Kemp

Gary Kemp, Chair
Southwest Area Operations Group
