

Southwest Operations Committee Meeting

Conference Call 5/2/08

CHARTERS

The IHC Charter is awaiting Darin F.'s signature. Then it should be passed to Jay for posting on the website. The Charter for the T2 Crew Committee from Jason Greenlee is almost ready to be taken forward to the SWCG.

ENGINE COMMITTEE

The last Engine Committee meeting did not have very good participation. Apparently a lot of FS people got caught up in Fire Refreshers and hiring complications, as well as fires. The interagency aspect is harder to pull off due to an email gap which makes communications a little more difficult. Given the onset of fire season it may not be possible to accomplish a genuine inter-agency charter with the current timeline so it may have to be delayed. The feedback from the field has indicated that there is interest in participation from the DOI side and that it is worth pursuing post-monsoon. All are instructed to send the contact information (name, phone number, agency, email address) for their representative to Guy again, his email: gswilson@fs.fed.us.

Permian Basin was visited by USFS personnel in order to consider it as a venue for the Engine Academy. The Engine Academy group is still trying to work out the cost and budget for the 2009 Academy. The current cost projections are still too high to be feasible for agency partners. Upfront cost could be difficult but cost by cost contributions might be more implemental. The BLM is interested in having a presence in the classroom to address policy differences.

IMT's

Nomination forms need to be scrutinized better for legibility and details before they get forwarded to SWCC this year. The nomination process is getting bumped back. The IC's would like to see more signature blocks on the nomination forms and the Ops. Committee will oversee these changes. The timeline can be found in Appendix D of the SWCG IMT Guidelines. IMT selections are to occur Jan. 15th.

A recent visit to the Trigo Fire resulted in good reviews of the operations side, however there may be issues which arise over the course of the season that will need to be addressed. To this end there will be a conference call at 1000 NM time on August 15th. Bridge and passcode should remain the same.

NIMO team selection has started and a number of Section Chiefs have accepted offers. The IC has not been announced yet at this time.

VanBruggen's team will put together the SW IMT meeting for 2009. Ops Committee will look into allowing a Wildland Firefighter Silent Auction at the meeting.

GENERAL UPDATES

Mark recently went on a field exercise with the Flagstaff Hotshots. His impression was that it would be a good exercise for all the IHC crews to engage in with the Ops Committee and has asked the Superintendent to write up something on it which could be shared with other crews in the region.

BLM AZ is looking at early-upping their helicopter. They are also make plans on propositioning resources and are moving up their preparedness reviews. They will also be bringing down an Air Attack.

The Engine Operators class that was offered at Permian Basin went well. The off-road course was very challenging and while the facility was smaller than the one previously used in Arizona it met the need for class.

BLM NM has also taken steps to prepositions resources. An ASM module has been brought into the state. They are placing Engines in Las Cruces and Socorro and are looking at bringing Ruby Mount IHC down in May.

Closeout notes from the Alamo/Beehive were presented. Critical skill shortages still seem to be a problem. There was also some concern on the physical conditioning of some of the T2 crews. Craig Cowie gave a briefing on the Trigo T2. The sense is that there were not enough IHC's available due to availability start dates. To meet some of the needs some IHC's were brought on two weeks earlier than originally planned. Aviation tactics are facing challenges this year with high winds.

The NPS inquired into the possibility of assembling T3 teams in the SW. NIMO has suggested that they might be able to bring in people to help with building up T3 programs. Some units have stronger T3 programs than others. It is suggested to start a T3 Subcommittee to provide guidance, training, and incur support from the agencies. It is recommended that for now it should be a Task Force that can eventually become a subcommittee. October the 14th with be the target date for ICT3 TF with Andy.

A number of prescribed fires have been called off due to lack of resources available. The BLM is bringing in out of region resources to support their burn operations.