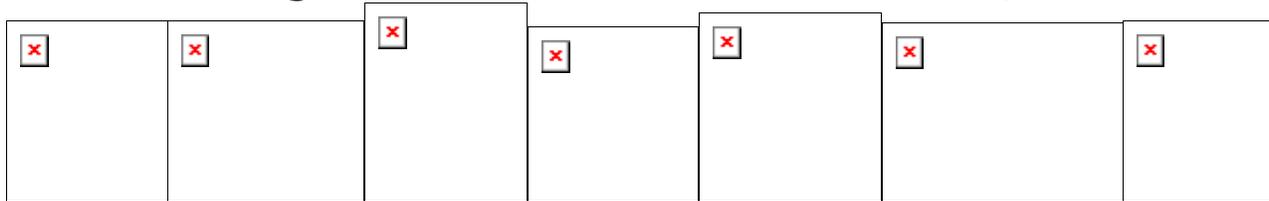


Southwest Fire Management Board

June 28, 2002

**2002 wildland fire season****Directed to:** All Federal and State Fire Management Units in the Southwest Area**From:** Chair, Southwest Fire Management Board**Topic/Issue:** Notes of June 27 Board Meeting, Winslow, Arizona**DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT**

Attendance: Bill Waterbury, Vern Ely, Bob Lee, Pam McAlpin, Jeff Whitney, John Philbin, Frank Smith, John McGee, Willie Begay, Bob Lineback, Brian Swift.

Meeting was opened at 1000 AM by vice-chair Bill Waterbury

Agenda: SWFMB Interaction
 Team management policy
 Discussion of Sandman letter
 GA MAC Operations Guide
 Area IMT policy for inter-GACC dispatches
 National MAC relationship
 1700 GA MAC conference call

SWFMB Interaction

Much of this discussion centered on relationships between board members and actions to take to strengthen interaction in a world of conference calls versus face-to-face meetings during a tough fire season.

Key points:

Rumour control by members is critical; don't be upset by external influences, follow-up on sources, work on facts and clear issues.

Here working on issues for the Agencies represented in southwest fire management board to come to understanding and when possible resolution.

Too focused upon trying to solve too many problems, need to focus on critical few issues that affect strategy first, deal with issues within our control. Need to look ahead to future problems and issues, 1 week, 1 month, 6 months, etc.

Seemed to all that with the Rodeo Incident the SWFMB has moved more to crisis mode, almost like we had not had a fire season until Arizona was seriously affected.

Thirtymile has had an effect upon thought and practices of SWFMB and Southwest IMT's.

Agreed that it seems that we have allowed GA MAC business crossover into Board business which has confused many participants, agreed that we need an "executive discussion period" option available for confidential SWFMB discussions.

Action Taken:

Set-up a separate conference call line for SWFMB issues and confidential discussions

Agreed to clearly separate Agency, SWFMB, and GA MAC business on conference calls so will become "MAC Business, Board Business, and Agency Business"

Emphasis at start of conference calls the issue with cell phones, use mute buttons, side conversations and discussions lead by SWFMB members for GA MAC decisions

Team management policy

General discussion centred around SWFMB historically has followed the SWFMB charter and Operations guide to manage the National IMTs. In many cases specific guidelines are lacking for SWFMB and IMTs. Methodology needs to be in place to react to Agency or National MAC policy changes to give guidance to our IMTs. The SWFMB is a staff function, and prepares guidance for the IMTs. May need delegation from the SWFMB to the ICs. The IC's and their IMTs are responsible to the SWFMB for their performance and conduct. On the Incident Delegations then are given for authority to act on LO/AA behalf but not all responsibility. LO/AA expects them to come prepared to contain an incident safely. SWFMB has the responsibility to ensure that these IMTs are trained and equipped to take the assignment. The SWFMB is dedicated to their well-being, safety, and improving working conditions. Concept that we supply the "tools" to perform.

Middle of the fire season is not when to change policy and guidance on an incident. LO/AA concerned that these issues may adversely affect the performance of team by reducing focus on mission, i.e. a major distraction.

SWFMB -adaptive behaviour- Board takes issues and making them work for the IMTs and firefighters in the southwest, needs to address issues quickly, and then get feedback from customers, finalize quickly. Need to look at how to implement in the field with guidance as to how to measure success, may be sideboards. SWFMB needs then to monitor and adjust as needed. The Board needs to see when policy or direction is not working in practice in the field then make corrections and report back solutions to agencies or NMAC. SWFMB needs to report back to NMAC on concerns for support of IMTs and problems to implement Thirtymile direction.

Length of Assignment

SWFMB is committed to following and implementing NMAC direction, various handbooks, and agency directions. We offer the following clarification for all resources in the SW GACC, excluding severity resources and BAER:

14/2/14 Days (Holding in place)

Because of our concern for cumulative fatigue in our 2002 season, we will allow this action at National PL 5 within SW GACC only if there are no rested resources available to replace, and there is a documented need for this because of life threat or serious safety risk. We would encourage the use of the national 14/21 policies instead. Again, this would apply to all SW resources.

14/21 Days

- a. 14 days, exclusive of travel, then home
- b. 14 days or more, not to exceed 21 days
 - Home unit concurrence by employee, documentation via fax for IC records
 - Less than 21 days then one day off within meeting IBMHB 12.7-3, quality of R&R
 - More than 21 days then two days off within meeting IBMHB 12.7-3 quality of R&R
 - Travel is inclusive
- c. Regular IMTs members do not need to obtain home unit permission due to the contract with their agency agreeing to their participation on the IMT yearly.

Rotation System of IMTs within GACC

In the 2002 Season as part of our SW Strategy, we brought in out of GACC IMTs to be staged when within GACC IMTs were committed or unavailable at PL 4. SWFMB has followed same policy on assignment of staged teams within the GACC as S MAC and PSW MAC. This system has caused some disagreement from within and outside the GACC as to fairness of the system to staged teams being not favoured over local resources for assignment.

SW GACC National IMTs

- PL 1-3 Follow the SW Area MOB guide rotation system.
- PL4/5 Consider staging behind IMTs when committed when in very high or extreme fire danger i.e. ERCs are above 90th percentile.
When SW IMTs become available Staged Teams will be:

1. Sent home or
2. The SW MAC will consider either placing them next in rotation or
3. The SW MAC will consider assigning geographic areas of responsibility for assignment.

This will be communicated to all IMTs when an IMT is staged.

SWCC will report to SWFMB/SW MAC all IMT call outs, whether they resulted in assignments or not.

SWFMB will consider projects to be undertaken by staged teams.

SW GACC Area IMTs

PL 1-4/5 SW Area Mob guide closest forces concept
 Consider Staged IMTs at Zones in PL 4/5

Suggest that Zones use same concepts as above for National IMTs for staged Area, or IMT brought in to area.

Need to consider adding stand down concept to Planning Levels considerations for Zones.

SWFBM agrees that the present Complexity Analysis seems to favour the need for National IMT's and in the present no risk option for LO/AA's they are following the analysis exactly as direction rather than guidance. We will review and recommend to NMAC/Agency/NWCG ISO Working Team revisions based upon practical field experience in SW 2002 season.

Transition of IMTs within GACC

Bill Waterbury was assigned to develop a process, protocol, or checklist for the orderly release and transition of IMTs with in the GACC for the Boards consideration.

Discussion of Sandman letter

The SWFMB received a letter from IC Bob Sandman with suggestions and concerns over the management of staged outside GACC IMTs by the SWFMB and Zone Boards. The board carefully reviewed the letter and the Board elsewhere in these notes reflects some points taken in actions.

Bob Lee is preparing a draft response to Bob Sandman for the SWFMB's consideration.

GA MAC Operations Guide

The Board agreed to accept as a working document but with the right for review and change as needed during this season. Final review and acceptance will be at the end of this season.

Area IMT policy for inter-GACC dispatches of Area IMTs

Bill Waterbury was assigned to draft a letter for the Boards consideration on the composition of Area Teams assigned within the GACC. There is a discrepancy between the National Mob guide and the SW Area Mob guide.

National MAC relationship

Two issues for discussion:

- SWFMB wants time to react and comment on issues prior to signature
- Expectations of SWFMB of Representative and Agency Representative

Consensus that NMAC needs to be responsive to the needs of the field by being proactive rather than reactive. Decisions need to be out in February for the Southern, Southwestern, Pacific Southwest, and Alaska so Areas can react. Need to recognize when we are in fire season.

Prior review and concurrence would help settle many problems. A simple model is the opportunity to review by the GA MACs and those affected, and then allow time to implement. It was felt NMAC is imposing policy down to IC's to where judgement in the field is being taken away, i.e. someone a thousand miles away telling person on scene how to tactically operate.

The Board agreed to work with Sue on process that provides her with the information to present our concerns or position on an issue. Issues need to be presented in a formal white paper format with our desired outcome in a

professional manner. Board agreed that we need to involve Sue in our Executive Board Conference Calls as needed.

Question arose on distribution of NMAC notes and official correspondence from them, will follow up with Sue on the issue.

/s/ Kirk Rowdabaugh, 2002-2003 Chair, Southwest Fire Management Board

Cc.