



SOUTHWEST COORDINATING GROUP (SWCG)

April 28, 2005 Teleconference Meeting Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Pam McAlpin (BLM-AZ) (Chair), Bob Lee (BLM-NM), Nancy Neskaukas (NMS), Ken Castro (NPS), Mark Kaib (FWS), Bill Waterbury (USFS for Tom Beddow), Dave Behrens (AZS, for Kirk Rowdabaugh), Dugger Hughes (SWCC), John Waconda (BIA-Southwest, for Cal Pino), Leon Ben, Jr (BIA-Western), Jay Ellington (SWCC, Ex. Sec.)

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Mark Hammond (BIA-Navajo)

GUESTS (at various times): Cathie Zettler (NAZ's), Ron Melcher (AZS), Chris English (BIA-Ft. Apache), Curtis Heaton (FWS, Buenos Aires), Chris Wilcox (FWS, Buenos Aires)

The teleconference began at 0830, April 28, 2005.

TOPIC: Three-Tier Dispatch

SPEAKER: Ron Melcher / Pam McAlpin

DISCUSSION: Recent meeting held in Albuquerque. Nothing new to report at this time.

DECISION/ACTION: Ron Melcher and Pam to meet, discuss direction and issues, and set up date for next meeting in late July – early August.

TOPIC: Dispatch Issues in Southwest Arizona

SPEAKER: Mark Kaib

ISSUE: Recent fires in southern Arizona and along the Colorado River have resulted in some dispatch concerns between the state dispatch, AIFC, Yuma, and other zones. The pending unusual fire season in this desert country is already testing the functionality of the current dispatch process. Resources being sent from several dispatch offices. In acknowledgement of these past and current dispatch concerns, it is crucial that the (Three-Tier Dispatch) steering committee make some suggestions, so the coordinating group can take action to remedy the situation as soon as possible..

DISCUSSION: Lots of work over the past few days between the involved parties... early season an indication of a possible bigger problem... paper written by Curtis Heaton and e-mails from Dugger... transfer YUD under AIFC... AIFC crowded facility... expanded dispatch/BLM Training Center... IA is more the issue, not expanded component... need long-term solution

DECISION/ACTION: Each party will emphasize working together better and increasing communications.

TOPIC: Smoke Management Reporting

SPEAKER: Nancy Neskaukas

ISSUE: Even though SWCG produced the Smoke Mgmt Reporting directions on the ICS-209, we learned NM Env. Dept. is requesting a final form to units to be completed upon completion of a large fire. This is something we thought the ICS-209 would accomplish.

DISCUSSION: NM Env. Dept. wants a final report within 6-weeks of declaring a fire out.

DECISION/ACTION: Nancy to get with Jay to insert additional info in mob guide and ICS-209 Supplement.

TOPIC: Incident / IT Issues

SPEAKER: Chris English

ISSUE/DISCUSSION: Members of Incident Management and Burned Area Emergency Response teams, plus support staff (IR, WX, FBAN etc.) do much work on laptops they bring to an assignment. With computer security tightening, people bring computers with 'User' access. Printers cannot be added, the computers cannot be networked, cleaned up or defragged. Interagency software cannot be loaded. At the least, people on IMTs should have a user added to the systems they bring and use that has Administrative user rights. I expect this issue to be taken to the CIO's of the USDA and USDI, because this is where this computer user rights security issue be brought to light and a decision made. Incident staff members work in dynamic, adaptive environments. It seems that IT Managers don't grasp the Incident situation. Discussion revolved around (1) partitioning hard drive, where one partition is established for agency programs and has no admin rights and one partition for incident use that has admin rights, (2) procuring computers during the incident,

(3) different users from different agencies, and (4) lock down computers brought by USFS personnel. Bill Waterbury stated a number of FS folks have recently been given admin rights. The problem is the FS has to make this request to IT. He is currently working on a template that can be provided to the IT folks stating the need and requirements for incident use for FS folks.

DECISION/ACTION: Chris will work with Bill in providing additional justification, information, and language that will be sent to the IT folks. Bill will send letter around to SWCG for review prior to submitting to FS IT folks.

TOPIC: BIA Designations

SPEAKER: John Waconda

ISSUE/DISCUSSION: The BIA is changing its representation on the SWCG. Letters are being forwarded by BIA-Southwest Regional Office, Western Regional Office, and Navajo Office to the SWCG discussing the reasoning and purpose for the change on the SWCG. Primary reason for this change is to place folks on the SWCG who have actual budget authority. The letters will indicate that Cal Pino will be the SW Region representative, Leon Ben, Jr. for the Western Region, and Mark Hammond for the Navajo.

DECISION/ACTION: None

TOPIC: SEAT Operations Plan

SPEAKER: Ken Castro

ISSUE/DISCUSSION: Ken submitted the draft Aviation Committee's SEAT Operation Plan for review and approval. Plan deals with working together and is not under specific agency control. A discussion was held on embedded IOFR's with SEAT operations, but it was decided this should be handled on a case-by-case basis.

DECISION/ACTION: Most of the SWCG members have reviewed and approve the Plan.

TOPIC: Team Support

SPEAKER: Mark Kaib

ISSUE/DISCUSSION: Follow-up discussion from previous meetings.

DECISION/ACTION: Type 1 Teams need to submit an Annual Procurement Plan by January/February meeting of the SWCG. Mark to inform the IC's of the SWA Type 1 teams.

TOPIC: SWCC Predictive Services Storage Shed

SPEAKER: Dugger Hughes

ISSUE/DISCUSSION: SWCC Predictive Services staff is acquiring more-and-more portable weather equipment, but is running out of storage space. A shed was purchased last year and placed out at the SW Training Center. However, it is full and more storage space is needed. About \$2-3K is needed.

DECISION/ACTION: BLM-AZ may be able to provide funding, but needs to review their budget. Pam will inform Dugger once she knows BLM-AZ's status.

TOPIC: SWCG Vice-Chair Position

SPEAKER: Pam McAlpin

ISSUE/DISCUSSION: Willie Begay is the current vice-chair, but will be stepping down as the BIA changes its membership on the SWCG. BIA decided Leon Ben, Jr. would step into the role, but Pam received a nomination that stated Mark Hammond would be the replacement. Pam pointed out that those who have been on the SWCG for less than at least one year should not be placed in the role of Chair or Vice-Chair, much like what happened when Tom Beddow replaced Bill Waterbury on the SWCG, when Bill was the Chair at the time.

DECISION/ACTION: After a short discussion it was decided that BIA would pass on the Vice-Chair position for this term, but be in position to follow-up on the next go-around. Also, a decision was made that each of the three offices of BIA would be recognized as separate entities on the SWCG. As a result of BIA passing on the position, when you look back on the non-formalized rotation for the SWCG over the past 10-15 years, the NPS is the closest to being up next. Therefore, Ken Castro, who has been on the SWCG for at least one year, will be the Vice-Chair for the SWCG through October 2006.

TOPIC: SWA Dispatch Steering Committee Charter

SPEAKER: Dugger Hughes

ISSUE/DISCUSSION: Committee charter is completed and is ready for signature.

DECISION/ACTION: Dugger will check with Pam to acquire signature and provide signed copy to Jay for record keeping.

TOPIC: Arizona Interagency Coordinating Group Charter

SPEAKER: Pam McAlpin

ISSUE/DISCUSSION: Committee charter is completed and is ready for signature.

DECISION/ACTION: Pam will sign and provide copy to Jay for record keeping.

TOPIC: SWCG Handbook

SPEAKER: Pam McAlpin

ISSUE/DISCUSSION: Review of Handbook.

DECISION/ACTION: Place on agenda for next meeting.

TOPIC: National Interagency Prescribed Fire Implementation Guide

SPEAKER: Pam McAlpin

ISSUE/DISCUSSION: Recently learned this guide was being drafted. Should there be a SW Task Group to work on this... one of three volumes (1) Red Book for suppression, (2) WFU Guide, and (3) Rx Guide.... Question as to why there should be a SWA Task Group...

DECISION/ACTION: Place on agenda for next meeting.

The next meeting of the Southwest Coordinating Group is scheduled for May 19, 2005 in Albuquerque, starting at 1000.

The teleconference was adjourned at 1030, April 28, 2005.

/s/ Pam McAlpin

Chair

Southwest Coordinating Group

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