

Southwest Coordinating Group Meeting January 24-25th, 2007

0900 Jan. 24, 2007 – Phoenix, AZ

In Attendance:

SWCG Members – Leon Ben, Helen Graham, Roy Hall, Donald Griego, Kenan Jaycox, Glenn Joki, Dave Lentz, Bob Lineback, Hector Madrid

Recording- Bianca Juganaru

Guests – Kelly Castillo, John Philbin, Tom Mellin

DISCUSSION ON PREVIOUS MEETING NOTES

Discussion of the previous (November) meeting's notes and the Action Items were sorted to determine which were completed and which are ongoing projects.

Next meeting will be Feb. 13-14th in conjunction with the Type 1 Team Meeting in Chandler, AZ. Meetings after that are scheduled for April (dates undetermined at this time) and May 23-24th in Albuquerque, NM. Meeting after that will be subject to MAC group/seasonal considerations but if held will be July 25-26 in ABQ, then a tentative date of October 10-11th for the first fall meeting.

The Central West and Northern AZ team are having a combined team meeting in Laughlin on Feb. 7th and would like a representative from SWCG to be present. *H.Graham* will be going.

SW MOB GUIDE CHANGES REVIEW

K. Jaycox presented on SW Mob Guide update process. Next year the plan is to present the Mob Guide for changes at a fall Dispatch Center Manager Meeting, and get the whole process going earlier.

Significant SW Mob Guide Changes:

- Examination of Map. Yuma Dispatch is coming off the map due to a Feb. 1st deadline for technological absorption into AIDC. Other lines modified a bit.
- Update of Dispatch Center terminology
- Addition of 12.4.1 on the SWCC Website which was adjusted and moved from previous position in 25.7.1.
- 22.1b – Mobilization to follow D.O.T. Driving Standards listed in the Red Book, and this will be spelled out. Emphasis in work/rest is that it is a supervisory responsibility to manage fatigue.
- IMT information is to be consolidated all in one place, Chapter 68.
- Changes on section 22.9.5 on Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD).
- 23.4.2 – 4390 ordering and clarification.

- New AFF language to match the National Mob Guide.
- New Flight Strip Form (24.17.3)
- Rewrites in the Predictive Services Section 25 by Chuck Maxwell and Jay Ellington.
- Preparedness Level rewrites.
- Chapter 40 significantly updated.
- Rewrite on Communications Advanced Teams (CAT).
- Ch 68 – IMT re-write.

Discussion covered concerns over flight following and the issue AFF.
 IMT membership examined as part of chapter 68 rewrite.

SUMMARY OF NMAC/GMAC MEETING

P. McAlpin, B. Lineback, and K. Jaycox attended the NMAC/GMAC meeting. It was a well attended meeting. Bob presented the SWCG concerns from our November meeting and they were well discussed. He sent the notes from that meeting around previously.

NMAC has stated the dialogue regarding Type 2 IMT and FUMT utilization nationally will be more thorough in the future. Better communications requested.

Karyn Wood, USFS, is the representative to SW MAC from NMAC, and is now included on the SWCG mailing list.

Deployment of Type 2 Teams out of GA and their meeting of mob guide configuration standards was discussed and a number of action items were generated from it. SWCG voiced a preference for new policy to not be implemented in the midst of the Southwest fire season. Significant policy changes could be in the works regarding cost and fuller utilization of all the Appropriate Management Response tools.

Discussion of Military use on fires was discussed but no resolution was reached.

NMAC has expressed a sense that they would like to increase connection to the GMAC's and have created a new mailing list to coordinate with GAC chairs. NMAC is pursuing clarification from the agency heads on their authority to move, allocate, and reallocate national resources.

NIMO rotation is to be separate from Type 1 Team Rotation.

This last season, four or five GACC's put a freeze on out of region orders at the same time. This was a problematic situation and prevented 70% of the nations resources being reassigned for a few days in PL-5. The recommendation is that if a freeze is implemented by a GACC, it be a very short time, temporary situation in order to allow the GACC's to catch up with their order load.

The GA chairs held a meeting of the GACC chair group the next day, confirmed a revised charter, went over some old business, and Pam will retain the chair til her term expires next fall. Notes also were sent around on that meeting.

THREE TIER DISPATCH

Plans from all Southwest units were due on Jan. 5. A few have not been received yet. Kelly Castillo and the 3 Tier Work Group has been asked to review all plans, make recommendations, and present to the April SWCG meeting.

K. Castillo presented on progress being made. It is noted that there needs to be a check for any lingering NPS unit dispatches that have not sent in a proposal. Third Tier has not been organized correctly if there are two third tiers geographically dispatching for the same geography, so a the situation with AZ State and the zone proposals need more examination.

Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch (formerly Lincoln Zone Dispatch) will incorporate Pecos Valley Dispatch pending technological implementation of radio capabilities for which there is a deadline of May 2008.

Safford Dispatch is to be incorporated into Tucson Interagency Dispatch (formerly Southeast Zone Dispatch). One of the BLM positions at Safford will be converted into an Assistant Center Manager Position at Tucson. The intention is for this to be accomplished within a year. Safford will relinquish their aviation dispatch responsibilities to Tucson as the first step of the transition. Tucson Dispatch will need a new facility of some kind.

Yuma Dispatch is to go to Arizona Interagency Dispatch Center. Communications work on Telegraph Peak needs to be accomplished. A standard policy for administrative dispatch for Yuma BLM is being established. An investigation on frequency use indicates that there should not be a problem with accommodating dispatch needs. The transition could be accomplished by April.

With the current plans Prescott Interagency does not have any partners at this time although they are open to possibilities.

Tonto NF, Pima, and San Carlos have all been incorporated into Phoenix Interagency Dispatch Center for the 2007 season. Pima and San Carlos are opening dispatch positions to be flown for that office. A new facility is being arranged and for the time being there is a modular facility at Williams Gateway that is to be utilized. There are repeater sites that are being assessed to provide communication links.

Springerville Interagency Dispatch's plan (formerly White Mountain Zone Dispatch) has been delayed and is anticipated to be submitted at the end of January. Tentatively it looks as though it will be moving to Show Low and will incorporate Ft. Apache.

Funding for a radio backbone to facilitate communication with Ft. Apache could present some challenges.

A study group is looking at seven options for dealing with the fourth tier BLM dispatch facility at Farmington, NM. This is supposed to be talked about by the Zone board at their upcoming meeting.

Decision as to how the Navajo Nation will be involved in dispatch consolidation remains to be seen. Economic factors have been an issue.

As far as Dispatch Centers being incorporated into other GACC's (as was the case with Arizona Strip BLM and Color Country Dispatch in Utah) the general thought is that the SWCG wants to do what makes the most sense for facilitating dispatch response.

COMMITTEE ISSUES AND CHARTER UPDATES

All SWCG members with committee links need to check to see if their charters are up to date on the website, and insure that the appropriate chairs and SWCG liaisons are listed. If their website is not up to date, contact *Jay Ellington* to make changes.

Some committees meet or have conference calls based on work-load. Updating and reestablishing some of the committee contacts may be necessary; SWCG liaisons should help their committees stay current and functional.

The Operations Group has not been that active. Other committees (Aviation, Engines, etc.) could be under Ops, but they are active and have current charters. There has been some difficulty obtaining stable membership in the Operations Group. The question arises as to how these operations groups should be related and organized; no decision made. Perhaps some of the committees should outline annual, recurring duties to insure they stay active.

All current committee's charters should be examined for relevance as a standing committee and recommendations made for the next SWCG meeting, with an eye to having Committee Chairs at the April or future SWCG meetings.

There is a proposal for a work group to be put together of four or five people with an IHC background to develop standards for new crews coming on board. Fourteen re/certification elements would be examined for application amongst the Southwest IHC's. Dave Lentz will talk to Mark Kaib about forming this group as a sub-group under the purview of the Ops Group.

The liaison to the T2 crew committee reported that there had been discussion on forming ten person crews for Initial Attack within the SWFF program. This issue will be revisited.

The Prevention Committee is going to revise their Charter and insure the work of the group is of a more interagency nature. The Prevention Committee and the Information Committee have different purposes so they cannot combine. There is supposed to be a Prevention Workshop in April to take place in Carlsbad, NM. Looks like *Claudia Standish* will be taking over the Chair position.

EXPANSION OF IR COVERAGE ON INCIDENTS

Tom Mellin, the Remote Sensing Unit leader and the IR Coordinator for the SW, presents. There are not enough Interpreters for every incident when we get busy, but there may be other means of obtaining IR coverage.

2006 was the first year that all the Infrared Imagery was taken with a digital system. This means that the interpreter had no hard copy and this created a shift in the necessary skill set to computer oriented, so a number of previously qualified interpreters were no longer able to fill the position. Also, there are not as many trainees as the course has not been put on in recent years and there is a lack of training opportunities. At this time there are only six IRIN's in the southwest who are capable of working with the Phoenix Digital Imagery. GIS skills are going to be a requirement in the future for IRIN's. There were over 1800 requests for IR flights in 2006 and 32% of those requests were UTF'd. Few, if any, of those UTF's were due to a lack of an interpreter. Most were due to aircraft breakdowns and unavailability. There was some scrambling to obtain interpreters and long distance utilization of remote interpreters to cover the flight data.

Multiple interpreters can be located in a geographic location to fly multiple fires. This is called a Pod and a benefit is that it allows for easy inclusion of trainees. Remote interpretation is the other solution. NIFC is providing a FTP site for the use of IRIN's to assist in executing remote interpretation. The con of these solutions is a difficulty in providing communication between the IRIN and the Situation Unit Leader on incidents. There were occasions when it would take several days to get in contact. The best case scenario continues to be an IRIN per fire; however this is not always a possibility.

Availability of IR aircraft has been a difficulty. Usually in the Southwest, due to the fire season being typically earlier than other areas, the IR aircraft is available and staged in the southwest.

Ideally, IRIN trainees will have GIS skills and other fire experience. They also need to have a commitment of going to fires as an IRIN. The course is going to be put on again April 16-20th, 2007 in Denver. There are several prospective candidates from the southwest.

The Situation Unit Leaders are going to be furnished with passwords so that they can use the online IR order form. In summary, the IRIN group is well aware of the shortages in staffing and is working to correct that.

SW PL GUIDE REVISION

Review of proposed updates regarding PL levels and they will go into the 2007 SW Mob Guide. Discussion on where to locate sections on IMT member freelancing and what language on Ready Reserve to include.

At the NMAC meeting it was discussed how the traditional means of staging resources as Ready Reserve did not work this last season. Certain GACC's were holding onto resources when they were desperately needed for emerging fires. National Ready Reserve is now meant to be executed by identifying certain resources per GACC as Ready Reserve, and while on Ready Reserve those resources can be committed to anything (Initial Attack, Staging, Fire, etc.), but they are to be released for reassignment to the emerging situation upon notice. The suggestion is to adopt a similar stance for the SW, and we have been doing that to a certain extent.

There was also a suggestion for some kind of generic language to hold resources before release at certain Planning Levels for a pre-determined period of time, so that there is a larger pool available for reassignment. It was decided not to include this in the PL guide; it can and has been implemented as needed in the SW. It was noted that it is better to release a resource from a fire and stage them where they can get better quality rest for the next assignment, rather than holding them at fire camp.

AVIATION UPDATE

Helen Graham delegated these issues to *Darren Mathis* who is working with *Dave Underwood* of the Aviation Committee. *Kenan Jaycox* will be involved in the discussion as SWCC has a major role in aviation tracking issues.

BIA and NPS are going to be hiring positions which will be additional members of the Aviation Committee.

SW ENGINE ACADEMY

The SW Engine Academy is being advertised as an Interagency Training opportunity on the Southwest Website, but last year non-FS candidates were rejected due to the funding being exclusively USFS. *H. Graham* created an agreement offering to fund some of the academy. It is proposed that some kind of agreement be created to make this genuinely Interagency, especially since there is a need for this training for BLM candidates. If this is not possible then the Academy needs to be advertised as USFS only.

At this time the USFS has a need to address personnel skill sets in the field so the USFS needs to limit the SW Engine Academy to USFS.. Apologies have been issued regarding the advertising of the Academy on the SW Webpage, an Interagency venue. It will not be advertised as such in the future until such a time as it can be made an Interagency Academy. However, it is recommended that more discussion occur between USFS and BLM to move toward an amiable agreement. Changes are coming in 2008 that may facilitate these changes and Roy Hall will have further discussions with the USFS principals on this issue. This may enable them to develop so that DOI will be able to contribute instructors and coaches to the cadre.

PRIORITIZATION OF 2008 520/620 CANDIDATES

Candidates' names and nominations discussed and prioritized.

OTHER

Letter from *Dave Beherens* regarding the Arizona State Type 2 Short Team was discussed.

K. Jaycox brings up the issue of within Zone ordering directly between dispatch centers (neighborhood policy) beyond IA. Other GACC's have some neighborhood policies between units at lower PL's. Such a policy could present certain problems as conflicts come up for resources. The SWCG is in favor of implementing neighborhood policy and have the Zone Boards involved in sorting out disputes.

K. Jaycox presented the proposal of a Mega-expanded for the Central West Zone to serve as an Expanded for the three dispatch centers in the area (Phoenix, AIDC, and Prescott.) Logistically it might be easier to execute than separate expandeds. This may be the way to best address the shortage of Support Dispatchers. It decided to pursue the issue and move forward with the experiment.

0800 Jan. 25, 2007

In Attendance:

SWCG Members – Leon Ben, Helen Graham, Roy Hall, Donald Griego, Kenan Jaycox, Glenn Joki, Dave Lentz, Bob Lineback, Hector Madrid

Recording- Bianca Juganaru

Guests – Pruett Small

ISSUES FROM TYPE 1 SELECTION MEETING AND UPDATE

D. Lentz attended the Type 1 IMT roster nomination meeting. Geographic Area employees were selected prior to out of GACC and fifty-six positions were nominated for each team. It was brought up by the teams that BLM NM does not have strong participation on the Type 1 teams, although they are participating on Type 2 teams. FDNY nominees are being put into unit leader and trainee positions.

Additional info gleaned from the teams: The T1 teams believe that Agency Administrators are not as knowledgeable in fire as they once were. There is a feeling that the Fire Management for Agency Administrator classes have some practical knowledge gaps when it comes to preparing the Agency Administrators. Questions arose on “acting” administrators being qualified to deal with fire season activities. IMT’s are requesting budgets to fund team stuff such as computers.

IMT’s are wondering about AZ State agreements and MOU’s regarding an email that came out in 2007 from *K. Rowdabaugh* stating that the State of Arizona will conduct its own detection, suppression, and dispatching. This may create a difficulty when creating response plans when a patch of State land is in the midst of a Federal fire, and dealing with cost share on multi-jurisdictional fires. No one at this meeting had a copy of the message and so it was tabled until a future meeting when Kirk is in attendance.

Aviation Positions on teams continue to be difficult to fill. There has been some sharing of Aviation Positions with Type 2 Teams; this is no longer aligned with the SW policy of one person/one team. Needs to be halted to prevent conflicts. There also seems to be a shortage of FBAN’s, Procurement Unit Leaders, etc.

FEEDBACK FROM SOUTHWEST AFTER ACTION REVIEW

D. Griego, H. Madrid, and K. Jaycox attended the meeting. (Notes have been circulated).

Some of the issues: There were a few times when there were not enough open lines for IC’s for the MAC conference calls this last season. *K. Jaycox* has been looking into that issue and has found out that if we want more than 35 lines then there will need to be a whole new system put in and the cost to put in a new system is extremely high. The decision was made to monitor who is on the call and we may have to cut back to insure the IC’s have a line.

SW IC’s would like the SWCG to have next year’s SW AAR sooner after fire season. Fall 2007.

K. Jaycox emailed the SW IC’s on the “Freelance Policy” update as they requested.

There were some difficulties in opening Expanded on the Navajo Nation this last summer. That was only the second time a Type 1 Team had been deployed up there, so the BIA is looking to bring this up at their meeting and help their people to be more prepared. This is an issue for all units that seldom see large fires.

Bob has created an email list for the SW IC's and for the T2 Team Board chairs and vice chairs, so that info can be passed along more consistently. The SWCG Handbook is being revised and will have the team management stuff consolidated into a team management appendix. Dave Lentz and Leon Ben will be working on this. Staging of out of region IMT's was discussed. They would like Cache Loss Reports and Bob will send it out to them. These reports can be problematic when it comes to tracking item use on incidents when the fire name changes, a complex is formed, or there are multiple teams involved.

The SWCG is looking at how to manage the "last season" FUMT, (takes a national rotation slot on Aug. 1). While Northern Arizona Zone is not interested in managing this team, *Joe Reinarz* is still interested in being IC. SWCG made it clear that they would manage this team as it would be national and not zone in nature. Joe has solicited interest from the appropriate Type 2 Team members that would make up a FUMT. If this is to be viable this year, the date of transition from being Type 2 to FUMT must be set and a commitment made. Any conversations regarding National late season need for Type 2 vs. FUMT will be between SWCG/MAC and National MAC. SWCG approves of the idea of the Reinharz FUMT. Next step will be to have Joe OK it with the Northern Arizona Team Board. If they are OK with releasing their T2 team to go in this direction, then Joe will then submit a proposed roster to SWCG. SWCG may need to help if there are any holes in the roster. Bob will contact Joe and get this proposal in motion. *Lawrence Garcia(NMIMT)* is also a FUM1 and a regional FUMT could be formed if he also wants to go in that direction late in the season.

SWCG MOU UPDATE

The SWCG MOU expires March of 2008. All members of SWCG are to read through it and submit written comments at the April meeting to *H. Madrid*.

SWCC FBAN

Over the past few years SWCC has been detailing in FBAN's during fire season. The necessity of this was discussed because the Weather section generally overlaps heavily with the FBAN's duties. Could the Meteorologists in Predictive Services produce these products? The thought is that we need to continue to have a FBAN do these services. Since FBAN's are difficult to obtain they have to be scheduled in advance. The SWCC FBAN could also be loaned out to teams deployed in the field who do not initially have an FBAN.

There is a Predictive Services survey that *C. Maxwell* has been sending out over the last two years so that the field can provide feedback on the service provided. This may need wider dissemination.

SWCG HANDBOOK

Proposed revisions discussed and changes made. Members to read one more time and approve at Feb meeting if no further changes.

SELECTION OF WFU TEAM

R. Hall presents list of nominees for FUMT. There are trainees for all the positions except for the position of FSC2 and they are on the look out for that. Discussion covers various trainees and their qualifications with an eye to the future. NMAC has now agreed to allow for team recruitment from out of GACC. Proposed 2007 FUMT Roster approved.

SELECTION OF TYPE 1 TEAMS

P. Small presents the Whitney Type 1 Team proposed roster. There is some planning toward the future. Several ex Hotshot superintendents are making the move up into team level, which is encouraging for seeing field turn-over into leadership. This may be reflecting the influx of new IHC Superintendents in the SW Area. Team members are to be on one team only. Oltrogge's Team roster also discussed. There are two team members who require clarification and *P. Small* will pursue those issues. Whitney's Team roster had a few team members who are on more than one team, and quite a few AD's. Apart from those issues regarding further discussion, the rosters were approved. Each team consists of 27 core, 17 negotiated with the ordering unit, 6 trainees, and six S-520 mentorees (56 total). Bob will send a copy of the new consolidated SW Mob Guide section on teams to the IC's to make it easier to follow SW policy.

Action Items - SWCG Meeting – January 24-25, 2007

Next Meeting: February 13-14, 2007, San Marcos, Chandler, AZ

Ongoing Issues

Topic	Action needed	Responsibility	Date
Fuel Loading and 2007 fire season risk	Fuel loading is an ongoing discussion and the Predictive Services group will continue pre-season risk analysis	Kenan Jaycox	Spring 07
SWCC Briefing Packet for Out of Region Teams	Packet needs to be updated with SW updates, hazards and BLM information. Kenan assembles.	Hector M. Helen G. Kenan J. Bob L.	March 07
Three Tier Dispatch	Unsubmitted plans need to be sent in. Committee will present recommendations at the April SWCG meeting.	All and Kelly Castillo	April 07
T1 Crew Location Analysis	Task Ops Committee to study/assess optimal crew locations	Dave Lentz	November 07
Three Tier Dispatch	Work on NFAEB letter dealing with interagency IT issues, per Lincoln Zone discussion	Helen G. and Kirk R.	March 07
SW MOU	Review and comment on old MOU	All SWCG Members	April 07
MAC Group Calls	SWCG will review/revise the MAC handbook and review the Conference Call format as part of that process	All	Feb 13, 07
<i>New Items:</i>			
Granite Mountain IHC	SWCG needs copies of Granite Mountain certification process letter.	Dave L & Pam M.	Feb. 07
CWZ/NAZ Type 2 Team Meeting	SWCG will have a representative at the meeting in Laughlin, TX Feb. 7 th , 2007	Helen G.	Feb. 07
JPA	Helen to contact Susan MacDonald or Ginger Brudevold-Black at Region regarding JPA.	Helen G.	Spring 07
Mob Guide Changes	Highlight changes in Mob Guide regarding FAMWeb and 209's in an email to IMT's. Ken will include it in presentation as well.	Bob L.	Spring 07

Charters	All committee liasons need to check to see if their charters are up to date as far as the appropriate chairs and liaisons being listed. If their website is not up to date, contact Jay Ellington to make changes.	All SWCG Members	Feb 07
SWCG Handbook	Review and comment on any changes to the Handbook made at Jan. meeting due by Feb. meeting.	All SWCG Members	Feb. 07
IHC Certification and Standards	Ask Mark to bridge his IHC certification group proposal with the IHC Committee (Robert Auza) and solicit participation from them.	Dave L.	Spring 07
IR Flights	Build IR flight online requests process into SWC presentation for the IMT's.	Ken J.	Spring 07
SW Engine Academy	Discuss more with Mike Baca regarding H. Graham's offer to form an Interagency Agreement for future SW Engine Academies in the hopes of enabling all Agencies to assist and participate.	Roy H.	Spring 07
T2 team rosters	Contact Larry Raley and Butch Wilson regarding IMT membership duplication.	Bob L.	Feb. 07
Late Season Fire Use Team	Discuss SWCG recommendations with Joe Reinharz to pass to NAZ board	Bob L	Feb 07