

Southwest Coordinating Group Meeting May 13-14, 2008, Albuquerque

Approved by SWCG 6/25/08

UPCOMING SWCG DATES:

June 25-26, 2008	Albuquerque, NM USFS RO
July	via MAC schedule if needed
Sept. 30?	2009 IC Selection Mtg.
Oct 14, 15, 16	IC AAR and Springerville mtg.
Nov. 12, 13?	ABQ?

May 13, 2008

Attendance: *SWCG Members* – Loren DeRosear, Jason Greenlee, Donald Griego, Kenan Jaycox, Marcia Kearney, Bob Lineback, Hector Madrid, Cal Pino, (Leon Ben, Jr. in PM)

Guest- Bill VanBruggen, Dugger Hughes, Jeff Whitney, Kelly Castillo (via phone)

Recording- Bianca Juganaru

PREVIOUS MEETING NOTES AND ACTION ITEM REVIEW

March 26 meeting notes reviewed and approved. Action Items reviewed, updated and ongoing carried over at the end of these notes.

IMT CLOSEOUTS

Much discussion on issues related to the Solano Fire. Some were contradicting and conflicting, with different members having different interpretations of the situation. Suggestion to order a FAST team to get some outside perspective and recommend some solutions. Decision deferred until Leon arrived in the afternoon.

IMT evaluations/incidents were reviewed for 08 fires that have occurred. There are continued problems with enough qualified aviation personnel on teams. Pooling resources could be considered for 09 but brings other issues. There have been problems with attempting to contain costs that have hindered ground firefighter's progress.

The plans to place an ESDS with IMT's at camp have not worked out as there are not enough of them to go around. The SW will put t/g on a ROSS course for IMT Ordering Managers and Supply Unit Leaders so that they can deal with those issues.

There was concern raised over an incident related to the physical condition of FF's on T2 Crews. It was determined that this concern would have to be passed on to the Crew Boss' so they can help regulate the issue.

DRAFT T3 ORGANIZATION NMAC REPLY

Bob sent reply to NMAC, and SW is weak on formal T3 orgs. Discussed responses: AZ State - 2 T3 if short team not out, Flagstaff hopes to put together 1 soon, Phoenix – 1, Santa Fe and Taos might put 1 t/g. A number of dispatch centers have responded by stating that they can and do put together T3 organizations on the fly have had a fair amount of success with doing so, as long as the T2 and T1 teams

are not out. It is generally believed that pre-identified T3 organizations run more smoothly. The Ops Committee will look into this issue with the goal of enhancing our regional T3 organizations.

SW WEATHER TRENDS AND FUELS CONDITIONS

Chuck Maxwell gave the 2008 Predicative Services outlook. 6 weeks of almost windiest weather on record. Expect high ERC's mid-June to mid-July. However, May moisture will prolong green-up in some areas.

T1 IC SESSION

Jeff Whitney has been selected as IC of the Phoenix NIMO team. The group confirmed that Deputy IC Dugger Hughes take over for the rest of the 2008 season to finish out Jeff's last year tenure. This team IC is one of several SW IC's that will be advertised in the late summer. Dugger will be welcome to apply. The NIMO selection has created other vacancies on the IMTs as well; the IC's are already working to fill these vacancies. It is also brought up that there is a need for individuals with T2 quals who can be utilized as branch directors.

There was discussion on the fires that the T1 IMTs have responded to this year. VanBruggen's gave positive feedback on the BIA sending a new AA to shadow the process on the South Tularosa Fire. NOAA has issued a flash flood warning for the area of the Trigo and the Whitney/Hughes T1 IMT is attempting to work with NM State so as to prepare for that.

Progress is being made on setting up the 2009 all SW IMT meeting. It will likely be in Albuquerque. A rough meeting outline is being developed to include breakout sessions and an optional Fireline Refresher.

SWCC UPDATES

The dispatch committee is contemplating making the dispatchers workshop a week early (Jan. 23) and annually at NAFRI. The ThinClient proposal is being examined further for SWCC application as well as for Expanded Dispatch and IMT's. This may be more cost effective than current methods. Potentially systems could be kept by the cache system for use by IMTs for incidents. Ideally a few SW teams will be exposed to it in the 2008 season.

Kenan proposed outlining the GACC neighbor procedures (for mobilizing closest resources across GACC boundaries in boundary areas) in the 2009 mob guide, rather than continually signing these agreements with the neighbor GACC's every year. Bob has changed some to make them 5 year agreements, and the neighbor GACC's agreed. SWCG agreed that this would be advantageous and tasked Kenan with achieving it if possible.

There were confusion issues in Texas regarding Air tankers. FEMA wanted tankers permanently assigned to them and demanded specific placements. Alamogordo is a preferred base because of technical factors related to the runways and it is a turn-key operation available year round. Roswell is a turn key operation upon activation and staffing, with very long runways, but aviation fuel is sometimes an issue for non-P3 aircraft. A conference call between SW and Southern Area/Texas managed to work out the kinks for now. There continues to be concern about overlapping 2nd Tier dispatching in West Texas and NMAC or others may need to help resolve someday.

AVIATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

The committee will be meeting on May 20th. They are almost done revising the SEAT Operating Plan for 2008 for the SW. They are also working on a pilot briefing packet, but they have been trouble coming up with a template that everyone is happy with.

OMB QUESTIONS OF SW PL LEVELS AND IMT USE

OMB sent an inquiry as to why the PL level in the SW was different from the Southern area and also as to why the SW had 2 T1 IMTs out. One of the T1 IMTs was on a BIA fire and SW had met the standards for PL determination as laid out in the SW Mob Guide.

IMT FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The group discussed the requests that Hector had received from the IMT's and decided who would fund what. Hector will get back with the IC's involved.

INTERAGENCY GUIDANCE FOR AD's

Some other GACCs have guidelines setup for hiring and use of ADs and perhaps the SW should do the same. There may have been some misuse of a finance codes in relation to bringing in ADs. SWCG tasked the Incident Business Committee with creating guidelines.

NORTHERN ROCKIES STRUCTURE PROTECTION GUIDELINES

SWCG took a look at the NR Structure Protection Guidelines that are being developed. NPS has some parks which are mandated to provide structure protection within their area and this is achieved by having qualified structure protection firefighters, not by having wildland firefighters provide such services. The BIA has cross-training programs in some areas and a number of tribes have their own departments. According to the Redbook wildland firefighting, education, and fuels reduction are expected in WUI, but that structure fire suppression is to be left in the hands of local FDs. SWCG decided to wait and see what NR/GB do and also there is some new National guidance being developed.

SWCG HANDBOOK

Some additional changes were made to the SWCG Handbook.

CONFERENCE CALL WITH CHAIR OF THIRD TIER TASK GROUP

Discussed draft memo to SWCG with Kelly Castillo. The updates were reviewed and SWCG asked Kelly to include the fourth tier exemptions since this memo is meant to be an all round summary. Continued monitoring of the implementation and the follow up will be passed to the Dispatch Committee, and the task group will be dissolved, although Kelly will be available to the Dispatch Committee. Any other suggestions for Kelly are due in writing next week; then he will finalize the memo and the task group will dissolve. But the 3rd tier transition work will continue.

Kelly also agreed with the groups request for a FAST team to investigate issues related to the Solano dispatch jurisdiction issues. AZ BLM will support any actions taken to promote safety or efficiency.

May 14, 2008

Attendance: *SWCG Members* –Leon Ben, Jason Greenlee, Donald Griego, Kenan Jaycox, Loren DeRosear, Marcia Kearney, Bob Lineback, Cal Pino

Guest- Glen Joki (via phone), Dave Behrens(via phone), Ron Melcher (via phone), Dave Cummings

Recording- Bianca Juganaru

SOLANO REVIEW TEAM UPDATE

NICC does not have teams available; we must locate the specific individuals. Several names have been identified; members will contact at break. Team should consist of about 4/5 team members; contain dispatch, IMT, BIA, and state expertise. SWCG felt strongly that an objective group from outside the GACC needs to examine the issues involved.

OPS GROUP UPDATE

The IHC subcommittee is coming along well and coordination will continue through Mark Kaib.

The Engine subcommittee is struggling a bit, due to difficulties with communication and scheduling meetings. The Ops Committee informed the Engine subcommittee that if they cannot come together and become effective as a committee, then the committee may be dissolved. There are still issues related to the engine academy related to location and future interagency funding. The BLM had an employee who came over from the USFS; at the time he was already enrolled in the Engine Academy; once he became an employee of the BLM he was told there was no longer any room for him.

Nominations for the 2009 IMTs are going to be submitted to the appropriate agency Ops Group members, (rather than the SWCG representative). IC nominations will still come to SWCG. Core Ops Committee members will sit in with the IC AAR in the autumn.

AGENCY ROUND ROBIN

The various agencies present gave updates on fire occurrence/behavior thus far in 2008.

The upcoming Pelona Prescribed Fire will be the largest in BLM history if it occurs. The BLM engine regeneration technology on the new engines has been going fairly well.

BIA SW ran into some difficulties with making one of their helicopters operational. They have received some requests for severity. There have been some staff vacancy difficulties and budget constraints are an issue.

Fish and Wildlife in southern AZ have faced difficulties with increased UDA activity. They have plans to bring in additional resources and hope to have an opportunity to bring fire back into ecosystems that need it. They have had no problems with the International engine regeneration.

Western Region BIA is evaluating gel for aviation applications. They are a number of fire vacancies. A USFS detailer has been brought in as an FMO to assist. There is concern that actions to cap severity request may negatively affect Initial Attack success. GSA wants to standardize DOI vehicle fleets across the board, which could have interesting implications.

BIA Navajo has been running record ERCs over the last several weeks. They have been utilizing their Hotshot crew to deal with the starts of concern. They have been attempting to find ways to staff so that they can deal with fire conditions. The fuels CE may be eliminated in Arizona and this could affect FMPs.

The USFS was facing litigation on 4 fire management plans, so withdrew approval per further considerations. There have been some national level efforts to allow multiple objectives on fires, in order to allow for a mixture of Fire Use and suppression, depending on circumstances. The Gila is being considered as a test area, given their success with Wildland Fire Use and AMR. There are a number of vacancies in the R3 Regional Office. Financial constraints are on the forefront of USFS activities.

NM State has seen high fire activity this spring with over 200,000 acres burned so far. They have developed an agreement that enables them to order and pay for SEATs more efficiently. The USFS has suggested some amendments to the recently signed NM JPA. They have some severity resources assigned. The issue on Trigo with one of their inmate crews has been resolved, and the crew was used successfully a few days ago.

NPS has severity in the Guadalupe Mtns. An improperly filled severity order cost the NPS some money when he had to be sent home.

SW MAC EXERCISE AND HANDBOOK UPDATE

The MAC exercise was successfully conducted and suggestions to improve the MAC Handbook were made.

GATR & TRAINING COMMITTEE UPDATE

Acting GATR, Duane Tewa attended. Duane attended the National GATR meeting. Discussion at that meeting included the realignment of NWCG. The SW Training Committee is working on finishing their updated charter. They are also working on analyzing Zone training needs and they have a conference call scheduled for May 22nd. The new 310-1 book may be out soon. SWCG discussion covered IMT shortage positions. An attempt will be made to schedule an interagency "death in the line of duty" class next winter.

NEW INTERAGENCY FIRE POLICY PROTOTYPE AREAS

New national fire policy is to be implemented in 2009, but there will be a few "prototype" areas this year where the new policy would be implemented in order to determine issues before widespread interagency adoption in 2009. National leaders trying to determine how this will all work. In the SW, the NPS has proposed the Grand Canyon as a "prototype" unit. USFS is probably going to use the Gila and considering the Kaibab. The Kaibab would be good, since it could work in conjunction with the Grand Canyon so that boundary issues would not be a hindrance. May not be firm guidance until June.

WFDSS decision prototype areas are being considered, (might be the same), but the program is under development and unsure where it will be this summer. Some WFDSS tools are up and available for all to use now, but the entire decision package is still under development. Supposed to be mandated next year.

OTHER COMMITTEE UPDATES

The AICG is revising their charter. They wanted to meet with CWZ to discuss fuels collaboration and smoke management, but there was a conflict with the smoke management meeting. They hope to bridge this gap and also plan to utilize GIS to map NFORS projects to increase collaboration.

NMICG had requested a 2009 Fuels Treatment list segmented by dispatch area. The goal is to keep up zone and smoke management coordination. A few agencies have not gotten those figures in yet, but it is close to completion.

The Predictive Services Committee will stay in existence and has plans to bring representation from the different dispatch centers to reactivate fuels monitoring.

The Mob Center Task Force had a checklist of items to achieve for the reopening of the Albuquerque Mob Center. The contractor who was originally going to be used to fix these issues never called back and that will have to be revisited. The facilities contracting officer is investigating items on their end and thus far SWCC has had success in hosting crews at a local level in some places.

FUTA STEERING COMMITTEE UPDATE, STATE REPS

Lisa Bye presented on the FUTA Steering Committee. FUTA changed from two regular sessions to a regular session and an advanced academy session in the spring. Travis is conducting follow-up to determine success on home unit projects related to the advanced academy. Dick Bahr from the National Fuels Group gave recommendations and presented on plans being developed to create career path for fuels specialists. FUTA's future role may be more classroom/theory related. The Nat Fuels Group wants FUTA to continue as is for a year until the national workforce training analysis is complete. That study will determine the future strategic direction of national and regional training centers. The 2008 funding came up a bit short and Dick Bahr was going to approach the National Fuels Group for the remaining funding. The 2009 budget is supposed to be the same and should be showing up under NAFRI's budget. The lease for the Columbia Building will be coming up for renewal soon and that is being taken into consideration. There is a push to bring fuels and fire training and the interagency aspect all together in a more holistic approach in developing personnel. There is a conference call scheduled for tomorrow and the next chair will be the USFS rep who will take over in the fall of 08.

OTHER

The USFS is doing a prototype session on June 18-19th as ICs and AAs to go through sand table exercises together. The Santa Fe NF will be hosting this exercise.

SWCG Action Items - *Ongoing followed by new ones*

Topic	Action needed	Responsibility	Date
SWCG Committee Charters, Members, and Chairs	SWCG committee liaisons need to check SWCC website to see if their charters, chair names, essential documents, and member lists are up to date. If not, contact Jay Ellington.	All SWCG Members	Ongoing

IMT Recruitment to wider audience	GATR/Trng Committee to utilize SWCG memo with SW 2009 training advertisements. Revise, update if needed for 2009. Get into training packets for fall/winter fire classes.	Duane Tewa, Glenda Womack	September 2008
IMT SW GIS CD's	Update SW out of GACC IMT briefing packets for 2008 season. Place 2 copies in Phoenix. Get copies of the CD's to each SW IMT (8).	Jaycox	May 20
SWCG MOU	Collect missing BIA-Navajo signature; post.	Jason Greenlee	June 2008
Operations Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich N. to send draft Ops charter to Bob L. • Other Ops subcommittee charter revisions in progress, (to Rich, then Bob). • Pass the Charter for IHC committee on for approval. • Consider invite of SW zone reps to IMT member selection meeting? • Bob sign T2 Crew Subcommittee charter and pass to Jay. • Ops Group to look at ways to make T3 Orgs more available in SW • Work with Training Committee to develop accelerated training for IMT shortage positions • 09 SW IMT Meeting: make decision on location, general budget, and begin planning. Present as needed to SWCG. • Oct. IC AAR: Send notice out to ICs and Ops Group 	<p>Nieto</p> <p>various sub-committee liaisons</p> <p>Kaib, Nieto</p> <p>Madrid, Griego</p> <p>Lineback</p> <p>Madrid, Griego</p> <p>Madrid, Griego</p> <p>Madrid, Griego</p> <p>Madrid, Griego, Jaycox</p>	<p>June 2008</p> <p>June 2008</p> <p>June 2008</p> <p>Dec. 2008</p> <p>Fall 2008</p> <p>Fall 2008</p> <p>June 2008</p> <p>Sept. 2008</p>
FUTA Steering Committee	Lisa write a proposal to combine FUTA Steering Committee with PFTC. Look for National Level involvement/support.	Kathy Lister, Lisa Bye, and steering committee	Autumn 2008
Agency Admin. Awards	Process 2008 awards.	Kearney	June 2008
SWCG Reps to survey Agency Administrators	Discuss coordinating regional and executive leadership with the IMT meetings and encourage interagency discussions.	All	June 2008
Support Cache T3 Kit	Ken to give information on NWCG memo to Cache Managers and Dispatch Centers.	Jaycox	June, 2008

Zone Boards Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find; get the Zone Board Charters posted to the SW website. Leon develop draft talking points for SWCG members to follow when meeting with the Zone Boards. Annually, each SWCG rep should attend at least one Zone Mtg. so all are covered. León/CWZ, Bob/Santa Fe, Jason/NAZ, Hector/Taos, Pam/Tucson, others to be listed. 	Jaycox Ben Jr. to Lineback all	June 2008 June 2008 Ongoing
Team Related Recognition	Develop recognition categories for next years IMT meeting?	Marsha, Pam	June, 2008
ROSS Self Status Memo	Kenan to draft clarification and update memo requiring zones to implement self-status for SWCG Chair to send out.	Jaycox to Lineback	June 2008
	<u><i>New Action Items</i></u>		
Agenda Items for Next SWCG Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Fuels Committee Power Point Bea Day to present on the Engine Academy alternatives IMT Recognition awards AICG to present Draft AMR talking points IMT Meeting 09 Planning Solano Review Recommendations Field S-420 class update Aviation Committee Update Ops Group Update 	Leon Ben Jr. Bea Day/McAlpin Pam/Marsha Leon Ben Jr. Madrid, Griego all Glenda Womack Kearney/Dave U. Rich Nieto	
IMT Closeout Self Improvement	Amend the IMT questionnaire according to SWCG's guidance.	Lineback	June 2008
Incident Critical Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Message to IC's about identifying early critical issues negatively affecting the incident, (example: water cents issue). Discuss these issues at June meeting. 	Lineback	June 2008
Aviation Committee	Share highlights of the SEAT plan changes with SWCG.	Kearney	June 2008
IMT Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hector will coordinate 08 support of requesting IMT's. Remaining funds to go to support of costs for '09 IMT meeting. 	Madrid	June 2008
SW AD Guidelines	Task the Incident Business Committee with creating draft SW interagency AD Guidelines, based on the Eastern area guidance	Behrens	June 2008

Update of SWCG Handbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update main handbook again and get it posted to the web and inform SWCG members. Incorporate changes from MAC exercise and post on website. Include decision to record philosophy on utilizing the matrix as a decision tool, but not an absolute, rigid model. 	Lineback	June 2008
Three Tier Memo summarizing status to SWCG	Third Tier Task Group will incorporate 5/21 comments into the memo and send final to Bob to pass to SWCG and Dispatch Committee for monitoring.	Castillo, Lineback	June 2008
Significant Fire Information	The NM Governor wants information on significant fires (high visibility, structures threatened, high values at risk) regardless of jurisdiction. Pass information on such events to NM State FMO.	All, Griego	Ongoing
EDSD shortages	SWCC to organize and put t/g a ROSS course focusing on IMT Supply Unit Leaders and Ordering Managers	Jaycox	Winter 08-09
2009 Mob Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop protocols for dispatching neighbor resources across GACC boundaries in boundary areas. Review NIMO infill guidelines before adding them to the SW Mob Guide in 2009. 	Jaycox	Jan 09
Training Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Ops Group to develop accelerated training for IMT shortage positions Finish Charter update Local Fire Mgmt Leadership: Coordinate '09 training dates in interagency SW announcement. Include Fire and Ecosystem Management course. Get GATR Charter posted to the Training Committee website. 	McAlpin, Womack, Tewa	June 08