



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

c/o U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Interagency Fire Center

3833

South Development Avenue

Boise, Idaho 83705

Memorandum

November 26, 1999

To: NWCG Members, Working Team Chairs

From: Executive Secretary

Subject: 76th Meeting Minutes

Attached are the corrected and modified minutes from our October 1999 meeting.
Please contact me if you have any questions.

Attachments:

Meeting Minutes

NWCG Membership List

IBPWT Membership List

WFEWT Membership List

FWWT Draft Issue Paper and Draft NFDRS Weather Station Standards

NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP 76th MEETING MINUTES October 1999

The 76th meeting of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group was held in Quincy, Massachusetts, October 20-21, 1999.

Members attending: Don Artley, Chair, Montana Division of Forestry
Roger Erb, Vice Chair, Fish and Wildlife Service
Rick Gale, National Park Service

Ed Shepard, Bureau of Land Management
Harry Croft, Forest Service
Dave Cleaves, Forest Service Research
Steve Haglund, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Jim Hull, NASF, Texas Forest Service
Don Montanic, Intertribal Timber Council
Steve Hill, U. S. Fire Administration (USFA)
Jim Stumpf, Executive Secretary

Associate Member: Jim Smalley, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

Guests attending: October 20, 1999

Barry Mathias, IRM Program Manager
Will Brimberry, IQCS Project Manager
Jim Stires, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bill Leenhouts, Fire Use Working Team

October 21, 1999

Barry Mathias, IRM Program Manager
Jim Stires, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bill Leenhouts, Fire Use Working Team
Neal Hitchcock, ROSS Project
John Skeels, IRM Working Team
Maureen Brooks, Wildland Fire Education Working Team
Wildland Fire Education Working Team
Bob Leaverton, IOSWT
Incident Operations Standards Working Team

SUBJECT: Approval of 75th meeting minutes.

DISCUSSION: The final 75th meeting minutes were mailed to members after NWCG and Working Team review and acceptance.

MOTION: Accept minutes as corrected and mailed.
SECONDED AND CARRIED.

SUBJECT: NWCG Charter.

DISCUSSION: The amended charter was reviewed and discussed. We should delete references in the draft to Department of Defense because of their lack of follow-up in moving forward in membership. NWCG decided to defer further action and Secretarial approval.

ACTION: Rick Gale will take the document informally to the Department of the Interior, Solicitor's Office, to get an interpretation on the charter and references in the draft.

SUBJECT: Possible duplication in Incident Operations Standards and Fire Use Working Team Charters.

DISCUSSION: There appears to be duplication in standards review and qualifications areas of the charters of these two Working Teams. We need to have one repository for all incident qualifications, including prescribed fire. Some users consider prescribed fire as a management aspect, and that as such it should not be included in the Fire Qualifications System. The current draft 310-1 does meet agency needs for prescribed fire qualifications.

NWCG prefers one set of qualifications for emergency management, as well as prescribed fire. There appears to be a process breakdown between Working Teams in their discussion and coordination of the standards for the *Qualifications and Certification System*.

Working Team charters should reflect cooperation and coordination with other teams to develop one project with cooperative input from all concerned. There may be a need to review all charters to ensure there is an integration of all activities and how they work together in cooperation.

ACTION: Dave Cleaves and Harry Croft will draft a sample charter clause reflecting cooperation and coordination with other teams for inclusion in all WT charters, and review all Working Team charters for redundancies. The charter review will be presented to NWCG at the January 2000 meeting.

SUBJECT: NFPA 921, Fire Investigation Standards and the interim standard adoption.

DISCUSSION: Wildfire Investigation is a new chapter in this NFPA document which is intended to be a guide, not a standard. The legal system has used guides as court documents, so the guide may have some binding influences. Comments that NWCG members would like to make should be addressed to NFPA by March 31, 2000. NWCG and agencies need to track issues that are appropriate on upcoming NFPA standards documents.

NFPA Tentative Interim Amendment (TIA) on potential conflicts of interest statement regarding a body making a certification of the same standard developed. NWCG has written in support of the proposed TIA that would delete language that prohibits a body from certifying its own standards. The NFPA Technical Committee has decided not to recommend an amendment; however, it can be brought up on from the floor at the full meeting of NFPA. NFPA recognizes a problem with this language and encourages concerned parties to pursue this issue through the normal revision cycle for NFPA 1000, which is in the year 2000.

ACTION: Harry Croft agreed to take the lead on pulling information together on the NFPA 921 comments. Draft comments will be discussed at the January 2000 NWCG meeting. In addition, Jim Smalley will keep NWCG up to date on changes to the TIA that may be proposed.

SUBJECT: Approval of Incident Qualification Certification System (IQCS) Project and Charter.

DISCUSSION: The IQCS project study is being developed to pull several qualifications systems that currently exist into one that can be used by all agencies. None of the current systems meet all incident qualification business needs. Approval of the charter will draw all Federal agencies into the IQCS business requirements. The business study portion of the program has been funded.

MOTION: Approve the IQCS Charter to complete the business plan as submitted.
SECONDED AND CARRIED.

SUBJECT: Crew/Personnel Management (14/21 day) length of fire assignments.

DISCUSSION: Ed Shepard led an ad hoc group to review the fire assignment length criteria and potential conflict. There are probably as many opinions out as there are personnel involved with fire. An amendment to the National Mobilization Guide accepting a 14-day assignment, excluding travel, was proposed for the winter 2000 Mobilization Guide revision. Only a small portion of the fires annually exceeds 14 days in length.

MOTION: Accept the draft submitted and modified for the 2000 National Mobilization Guide.

SECONDED AND CARRIED.

SUBJECT: Fire Management for Executives.

DISCUSSION: This is a proposed training curriculum for adoption into the Senior Executive level within wildland Federal agencies. It is suggested that the curriculum be delivered in geographical areas. The training will last for about 8 hours.

ACTION: Rick Gale requested and received assistance from NWCG members to assist, as needed on the cadre.

SUBJECT: IRM Program Management update.

DISCUSSION: One of the IRM positions has been filled; the other two positions are in the classification process to be filled on a Government-wide basis. Hopefully, the positions will all be filled this fiscal year.

SUBJECT: FY 2000 NWCG budget.

DISCUSSION: NWCG reviewed the budget proposals as submitted by WTs. All proposals were accepted as submitted, with the following exceptions: Accept the 20% reduction budget submitted by the IRMWT. Reduced the IBPWT by \$2,000 to reflect a change in travel requested for FEMA. Neither NWCG nor WTs should fund Federal agency participation on the team. Provide a \$3,000 increase to pay for State travel for the Fire Management Contracting Task Group. Reduce the \$50,000 Fire Works Project submitted by the Wildland Fire Education WT. The total budget approved is \$924,400.

MOTION: Accept the FY 2000 budget as amended, pending approval of agency budgets.

SECONDED AND CARRIED.

SUBJECT: Fire Management Contracting Task Group.

DISCUSSION: The Task Group is the result of a decision made at the GACG/NWCG meeting in June 1999. The group will explore the general uses of contract personnel and equipment within all agencies. The Task Group recommends they be an ad hoc group, with a final report with recommendations proposed at the May 2000 NWCG meeting. The Group will sunset itself once the project is complete.

MOTION: Accept the charter and work for the Fire Management Contracting Task Group with a completed product for review in May 2000.

SECONDED AND CARRIED.

SUBJECT: Training of private contractors.

DISCUSSION: The issue was reviewed by the Forest Service legal staff, who determined that it was a conflict of interest for private contractors to attend Federally sponsored training at Federal facilities. Contract personnel can be included in Government training if they are sponsored by a Federal or State agency and they are a member of a local government fire department (paid or volunteer).

ACTION: Don Artley will send a follow-up letter to Indiana closing the information on their request.

SUBJECT: Social science study.

DISCUSSION: A select group of fire managers and social scientists has been assembled to determine what social concepts may be adopted to improve the fire program. We do a good job at having tools for fire behavior but when it comes to personnel, we don't really have a good idea of the needs and desires of our employees. A list of action items for a starting point includes:

- Complete task description for the group's use.
- Establish a steering committee to proceed to see how to get fire management topics into the social science arena.
- Jerry Williams will try to develop a cohesive strategy for fuels management public information.

ACTION: No NWCG action is necessary at this time. We would like to be kept informed of progress on this emerging issue.

SUBJECT: Potential Memorandum of Understanding with the Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC).

DISCUSSION: The Australasian Fire Service has recognized a need for establishing a way to share information between them and the United States. They proposed sending a letter of request for participation at some level.

ACTION: The subject will be tabled until we receive a formal request from the AFAC.

SUBJECT: NWCG structural fire protection.

DISCUSSION: The Northern Rockies Coordinating Group has put together a position paper providing consensus statements and recommended procedures on how structural fires are dealt with in the NRCG wildland interface area.

ACTION: This item was brought forward for information sharing. No other action is necessary.

SUBJECT: Demographics study.

DISCUSSION: The Forest Service and National Park Service have a contract to do this study with the Brookings Institute.

ACTION: The results of the project will talk about attrition and employee ages, and should be available in January 2000. The Forest Service and National Park Service have agreed to share this information.

SUBJECT: Lessons Learned position.

DISCUSSION: The NPS has established a position at the National Advanced Resource Technology Center (NARTC) called the Lessons Learned Program Manager. The position has the responsibility to provide current state-of-the-art information dissemination and assessment of the quality of national training courses at NARTC. Rich Wands, Santa Fe Forest FMO, has been selected for this position. The position is immediately supervised by the NARTC Director.

SUBJECT: Use of Incident Management Teams on FEMA assignments.

DISCUSSION: The Forest Service (ESF#4) was tasked to provide support for a logistics center in South Carolina during Hurricane Floyd. In addition, an Area Command Team was activated to support the IMT. The consensus of NWCG is that use of an IMT was an overkill of personnel and positions. The Forest Service will continue to support FEMA in their request because of obligations in the Federal Response Plan. It is up to Federal agencies to educate FEMA on what will work best in disaster support. The activated team has the responsibility to send team members not needed back to their home base from disaster assignments.

ACTION: An Ad Hoc Work Group is developing the issues and looking at alternatives for use of the IMTs assigned to support FEMA.

SUBJECT: Dates for future NWCG meetings, Working Team presentations.

DISCUSSION: The following meeting dates were agreed on:

77th meeting, January 11-12, 2000 - San Diego

- Safety and Health WT

78th meeting, May 23 (emerging issues), 24-25, 2000 - Boise

- Information Resources Management WT

79th Meeting, October 31 - November 2, 2000 - east (Shenandoah N.P.)

- Fire Equipment WT

ACTION: The NWCG Chair will formally invite the Working Teams listed and explain the desired outcome of their presentations.

SUBJECT: Incident Command System (ICS) 20 years later.

DISCUSSION: A review of the ICS appears to have been done in a rather piecemeal fashion. There probably has never been an overall objective look at the system since it was developed 20 years ago.

After discussion, there was a proposal to develop an ad hoc group to look into an overall review. The group will brainstorm the problem and develop a scope of work as the first step in the proposal.

ACTION: Rick Gale volunteered to take the lead with this ad hoc group.

SUBJECT: NWCG 310-1; what is status, and where are we going?

DISCUSSION: Recommendations and procedures in revising 310-1, *Qualification and Certification Standards*, was presented by the IOSWT. The previous 310-1 was finalized last year and put into the field as a test document. Comments on the document were received by the IOSWT on September 30, 1999. The comments appeared to have more substance than those received during the previous review. All comments have been considered by the IOSWT. The 310-1 qualifications are designed for national mobilization, but some local areas have adopted these standards within their own domain. (National Mobilization refers to mobilization outside the local GACG.) Some comments included:

- May have too much training required - IOSWT reviewed required training vs. on-job-training for participants. They feel they are (60-70%) responsive to the recommended changes in training vs. OJT. There is a slight increase in required training from the 1993 version, but less than considered in the 1999 draft version.
- Currency standards too high - The WT agreed that some of the subordinate positions could maintain currency in a number of different ways, i.e., OSCT1 could maintain currency by filling OSCT2, Branch Director, or OSCT1. These options may help relieve some of the concerns.
- Some perceived there was too much of a block from the Single Resource Boss to Task Force/Strike Team Leader. There may have been a roadblock to Division Supervisor to the TF/STL but the IOSWT has made some modifications in the qualifications, permitting qualification from a number of subordinate channels.

Fire use vs. fire suppression positions was another area of concern. Field input indicated not to combine all the positions, but leave some of them separated for prescribed fire and suppression. The Fire Use and IOS WTs have worked together and are in agreement on the qualifications standards and placement of these standards in

the revision to 310-1.

The IOSWT looked at the following criteria to determine which courses should be required:

- Skills and knowledge were needed to do the job assigned; the only way to obtain technical information with uniformity and consistency was with formal training.
- Safety (of personnel, the public, etc.).
- Training may be developmental and provide the building blocks of key knowledge over time.

Recommendation from IOSWT:

- Incorporate changes recommended by the IOSWT.
- Re-publish the 310-1 draft for final review (November 20, 1999).
- Review by NWCG, IOSWT, TWT, FUWT as a final review. Review copies will be distributed by the IOSWT by December 15, 1999.
- Based on review comments, publish final 310-1 in February 2000.
- NWCG submit with cover letter to field with the final 310-1 supporting the revision.
- Provide coordinated support for the effort.

NWCG thanked the IOSWT for their effort, and agreed to the follow-up action and recommendations to conclude this project.

ACTION: The IOSWT will have a final 310-1 for review by NWCG and agencies in mid-December. We will make final approval of the 310-1 at our January meeting.

SUBJECT: Type II crew standards.

DISCUSSION: The IOSWT is tasked to look at the entire Type II crew issues of safety, management, gear, etc. Different GACGs have different standards for agency crews, EFF crews, etc. Crew typing may be expanded as a portion of the solution. This should not be a national crew study in terms of numbers, but recommendations to have standard crew typing for national mobilization.

ACTION: The IOSWT agreed to do the staff work on this project and report back to NWCG at their spring meeting.

SUBJECT: Review existing Type I and II short and long team standards and configuration.

DISCUSSION: The IOSWT is tasked with this project. There is a perception that there is difficulty in filling teams and this may be, in part, caused by the number of people required on Type I and II IMTs. Type II team standards exist, but appear to be ignored by some GACGs. Management doesn't have the opportunity to order what they want or need for IMT configurations, i.e., some GACGs will only send long teams, regardless of the request. Some teams, when ordered as a short team, will immediately order the rest of the team to fill all positions, needed or not, as a matter of course.

ACTION: The IOSWT agreed to do the staff work on this project and report back to NWCG at their spring meeting.

SUBJECT: Wildland Fire Education Working Team presentation.

DISCUSSION: Maureen Brooks, Chair, and the WFEWT provided an excellent presentation on the background and current/future projects their Team is involved with.

SUBJECT: Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS) update.

DISCUSSION: The ROSS project is continuing to be generally on target for its completion and implementation. The cost of the project, although expensive, is only about 5% of the total suppression budget annually. Once fully implemented, we should be able to save more than the cost through added efficiencies.

76th NWCG MEETING SUMMARY AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

Issue	Action	Responsibility	Accomplishment Date	Status
Working Team charters	1) Develop a sample charter clause reflecting cooperation and coordination with other teams for inclusion in all WT charters. 2) Review all Working Team charters for redundancies.	Dave Cleaves Harry Croft	January 2000	
NFPA 921, Fire Investigation Standards	Pull together draft comments for the standard.	Harry Croft	January 2000	
NFPA Tentative Interim Amendment	Potential conflict of interest statement regarding a body making a certification of the same standard developed. Follow up on balloting of NFPA Committee.	Jim Smalley	June 2000	
Fire Management Contracting Task Group	Explore the general uses of contract personnel and equipment within all agencies.	Ed Shepard	May 2000	
Demographics study	Review the results of this study.	Harry Croft Rick Gale	January 2000	
Incident Command System review	There probably has never been an overall objective look at the system since it was developed 20 years ago. It appears it is time to take an objective look at the entire system.	Rick Gale and Ad Hoc Task Group		
Review revisions in 310-1	Based on IOSWT recommendations and timetable, review the final 310-1 and prepare for discussion at the next meeting.	IOSWT, Draft 310-1 to NWCG Exec. Sec. To NWCG Members and review action.	December 15, 1999 January 2000	

EMERGING ISSUES

NFPA Standards	NFPA is continually developing and modifying standards and their guidelines	Jim Smalley, NFPA, will follow up and try to keep NWCG current.		
Social science studies	Determine what social concepts may be adopted to improve the fire program.	Rick Gale		