

National Wildfire Coordinating Group
92nd Meeting Minutes
January 2005

Action	Decision	Agenda Item
		1. Welcome and introductions
	X	2. Approval of previous meeting minutes
X	X	3. Presentation of final NIMO report
X	X	4. Proposal to develop guidance on alcohol use while on fire assignment
		5. DHS NIMS NIC Briefing
X	X	6. California Wildfire Coordinating Group (CWCG) request for representation on the ROSS CMB
X		7. Briefing on using USDA/FS personnel as NWCG point person to assess need and opportunity for NWCG & OWFC involvement with DHS
X		8. Discussion on how to proceed with involvement in NIMS and the DHS NIMS NIC
	X	9. Status of proposed DOD membership in NWCG
X		10. Review and discussion of the draft updated NWCG MOU
X	X	11. NWCG Budget
	X	12. Adoption of NWCG Medical Unit Operating Standards
X	X	13. Fireline Safety Refresher Training
X	X	14. RAWS and ROMAN issues
X		15. Forbes – Human Resource Specialist (HRSP) coordination program
X	X	16. IMT Mobilization Standards
X		17. Review of follow up action items from previous meetings
X	X	18. Wildland Fire Parallel Training Concept proposal
	X	19. IOSWT Briefing
X	X	20. NWCG glossary approval and proposed super-glossary concept)
	X	21. TWT Briefing
		22. Quadrennial Fire Fuels Review (QFFR) Briefing
X	X	23. Appointment of chair for the Safety and Health Working Team
	X	24. IBPWT Charter Revision
	X	25. Review of AD Pay Plan for 2005
		26. Future meeting schedule
		27. Fire research update
X		28. NASF issue with NWCG publications

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The 92nd meeting of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group was held in Houston, Texas, January 25-26, 2005.

1. Welcome and introductions

Members attending:

- Kirk Rowdabaugh (Chair), NASF, Arizona State Forester
- Alice Forbes (Vice-Chair), U. S. Forest Service
- Allen Deitz (Executive Secretary), NWCG IRM Program Management Office
- Jim Erickson, Intertribal Timber Council
- Mike Long, National Association of State Foresters
- Larry Hamilton, Bureau of Land Management
- Mike Hilbruner, USFS – Fire Systems Research
- Edy Williams-Rhodes, National Park Service
- Phil Street, Fish and Wildlife Service
- Lyle Carlile, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Hugh Wood, U.S. Fire Administration

Guests Attending:

- Barry Mathias, NWCG IRM Program Manager
- Logan Lee, TWT Chair
- Kelly Hawks, BLM
- Bill Hicks, FEWT (GSA)

January 25, 2005

- Tom Harbour, FS
- Gil Jamison, DHS

January 26, 2005

- Don Artley, National Association of State Foresters
- Sue Vap, National Park Service
- Tony McDowell, International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC)
- Tom Kuntz, IAFC Wildland Fire Program
- Bob Leaverton, IOSWT Chair (via teleconference)
- Hallie Locklear, IBPWT Chair (via teleconference)

2. Approval of previous meeting minutes

Decision: 91st meeting minutes approved as distributed.

3. Presentation of final NIMO report (Harbour)

The study report presents a set of nine key recommendations and a recommended organizational option. The report focuses on organizational concepts, but does not fill in the details. If accepted, a more detailed level of work will be needed to fill in these details for implementation.

The study group believes the nine key recommendations, along with the organization option, are the best possible recommendations. The group believes all the recommendations must be addressed – not selectively chosen for implementation.

The study group is seeking NWCG validation of work done; and is requesting needed modifications, if any, be identified. Some of the recommendations are not NWCG actions – NWCG acceptance of the report will send the message to agencies of work needed. The report was presented to the NASF fire committee last week. The committee was not overly enthusiastic, but no one had any better ideas. The states are ready to accept and push it forward.

The Study Group discussed what NWCG would need to take to WFLC. The group feels the concepts need to go to WFLC, more than all the specific recommendations. The group also noted that OMB has expressed some willingness to allow paying for some of the efforts out of suppression monies, rather than all coming from preparedness monies.

NWCG needs to take the concepts/issues to WFLC to inform them of where NWCG is with NIMO and ask for their endorsement. Quite a bit can be decided and implemented within the agencies without relying on WFLC to “do it”.

Decisions:

1. NWCG accepts report as presented
2. NWCG to charter a small group to develop implementation plan for NWCG consideration in time for Fall 2005 NWCG meeting.
3. NWCG liaison to task group: Edy Williams-Rhodes
4. Task Group membership:
 - a. joint chairs from DOI and FS
 - b. Co-chairs will identify other members
 - c. **ACTION:** Alice Forbes (FS) and DOI members will identify co-chairs by February 4.
5. Task Group to work with Liaison to develop charter

Action: Task Group Liaison (Edy Williams-Rhodes) to initiate communication with WFLC to let them know where NWCG is with NIMO. (Probably needs a presentation to WFLC – with/without a letter). Gil Jamison recommends communicating with FEMA, as well.

4. Proposal to develop guidance on alcohol use while on fire assignment

The Forest Service is requesting the NWCG to develop a policy recommendation addressing alcohol use on incidents; the request is for a position of no drinking while on assignment.

Comments: This is reacting to an individual responsibility. Writing policy will be re-writing an already established policy that is not enforced. Writing another policy won't solve the personal responsibility issue.

The IIBM Handbook addresses this under conduct: "...will not drink or use drugs to, from, and while on incident..."

Decision & Action: IBPWT Liaison will task the IBPWT to collect information on each agency policy covering alcohol use while on assignment, clarify where we currently are, and report back to NWCG at the Spring (May) 2005 meeting.

5. DHS NIMS NIC Briefing (Gil Jamison)

Gil Jamison, Director of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) National Incident Management System (NIMS) National Integration Center (NIC), presented an update on current activity at the NIMS NIC.

Presidential directive #5 requires establishment of a national response plan. The National Response Plan (NRP) was recently signed by the DHS Secretary; it is now being tasked to the NIMS NIC for "long term care and feeding" of the plan. The DHS has been independently developing and implementing the NRP and NIMS, but is now bringing both together. As part of the plan, the Secretary of DHS signed the NIMS strategy, March 2004.

Key points of the strategy include:

- State & local governments' implementation deadline for NIMS is 2007;
- Federal agencies NIMS implementation plans were due December 31, 2004 (implementation plans can/should be fed into budget cycle)
- DHS directed to become compliant with NIMS.

Seven core FEMA personnel have been assigned to the NIMS NIC; others are on detail from other agencies (Coast Guard, etc.). The NIMS NIC is suggesting/looking for detailer assignments from fire agencies (non-reimbursable at this time).

Resource typing standards efforts: 120 response resources have been typed (available on Web site at WWW.FEMA.GOV/NIMS). Effort is largely directed at state and local level, now beginning to look at federal resources. The NIMS NIC is looking at the ROSS as a potential holding place for a national resource inventory.

Inventory efforts are underway to identify what standards are available and in place. This inventory will be the base to identifying what standards need to be developed or adopted. The NIC is trying to avoid re-inventing or re-developing standards if they have already been developed.

The NIMS NIC is also looking at data standardization for data exchange among various response resource systems.

Training and exercises: A major initiative is beginning to develop a national standard curriculum for NIMS training. A meeting in Emmetsburg (February 2005 timeframe) is planned to look at existing available training courses and begin looking at equivalency issues.

The NIMS as currently defined is a first cut. An advisory group is being established to further guide development of the NIMS.

Philosophical concerns: The NWCG knows the wildland fire business. Others in the mix don't always know – the NIMS awareness training is aimed at these players. NWCG bears a role as mentor to other groups.

Credentialing is a big part of the NIMS. The fire redcarding model and accomplishments is being looked at.

Another initiative addresses the need for integrated emergency response plans integrating all aspects of emergency operations – This needs participation and ownership at local level from all players – not just emergency planners.

6. California Wildfire Coordinating Group (CWCG) request for representation on the ROSS CMB

The ROSS responded to the CWCG request in a November 13, 2004 letter. The CWCG is now asking for an official NWCG response letter.

The NWCG letter should support the recommendation set forth in the ROSS letter. Should consider adding a “period of XX years” time limit. The need for continued dedicated representation should be re-evaluated by the NWCG at that time limit.

Decision and Action: Refer the issue to the IRMWT for review and recommendation to the NWCG Chair. IRMWT Liaison (Alice Forbes) will take the issue to the IRMWT Chair.

7. Briefing on using USDA/FS personnel as NWCG point person to assess need and opportunity for NWCG & OWFC involvement with DHS

Dale Dague has developed two briefing papers on the issues of the NIMS adoption and the NRP implementation. USDA is looking at locating a USDA person (possibly Greg Power) at the NIMS NIC.

Action: Alice Forbes will email the issue papers to NWCG members.

8. Discussion on how to proceed with involvement in NIMS and the DHS NIMS NIC

Having NWCG involvement and on-going communications with the NIMS NIC is crucial.

Need to clarify the needs and opportunities from the NIC regarding staff at the center and representation on the NIMS Advisory Group.

Suggestion of a permanent policy-level person at the NIMS NIC and a rotating operations-level detailer. Need to establish or identify key contacts within agencies for these persons and other NIC staff.

Action: Hugh Wood will clarify what level of wildland fire participation/representation is wanted by the NIMS NIC and ask for invitations to the February meeting to be extended to all DOI fire agencies (not just DOI) and the NASF.

9. Status of proposed DOD membership in NWCG

There is civilian DOD interest, but no support from the military. NWCG is unlikely to get a positive response from the DOD at this time.

Decision: Table the issue of DOD membership until a later date.

10. Review and discussion of the draft updated NWCG MOU

Grants and agreements (Sherry Garey (BLM) and Cheryl Molis (FS)) have looked at the draft. Currently waiting for legal counsel regarding level of approval needed – information should be available by the Spring (May) 2005 NWCG meeting.

The following edits need to be made:

- Add “and collectively referred to as the Partnering Agencies.”
- Remove the Economy Act reference from the authorities
- #4 must remain
- #5 – reword “DOI & USDA” to “partnering agencies”
- Add a modifications clause (insert as #9) to be legal

Action: Sherry & Cheryl will format into appropriate format by May meeting.

11. NWCG Budget

IOSWT and FWWT have not submitted FY06 budget requests.

The NWCG budget and budget process need strategic direction. Need to look at what NWCG is trying to accomplish and is it realistic with this funding level. What are the priorities? Suggest looking for project and task funding from external sources.

Suggested review points for the budget committee:

- Look at need for funded activities of all the working teams.
- Can any team(s) go unfunded for a year?
- Need to ask each team what the impacts would be if the team was not funded for FY06?
- Need to evaluate travel costs – review for effectiveness.

- How much state travel – how many state travelers – need to be funded by the NWCG budget?
- Need to identify prior-year actual expenditures and compare to budgets – how close.

Decision: FY06 budget committee appointed; members are Alice Forbes, Lyle Carlile, and Sue Vap. The budget target is \$980,000 for FY06.

Action: Budget committee to develop draft budget in preparation for May NWCG meeting. Committee will work through the WT Liaisons for review and feedback.

Action: Alice Forbes to prepare a letter to WT chairs restating the policy that NWCG only sponsors NASF approved east & west representatives to teams. Other state representatives will need to be funded by other funding sources. The letter will also provide suggestions to control travel/meeting costs.

12. Adoption of NWCG Medical Unit Operating Standards

SHWT met with the NASEMSD (National Association of State Emergency Medical Services Directors) and the NASEMSP (National Association of State Emergency Medical Service Providers) and reached agreement for both organizations to adopt a standard protocol for providing medical services on incident using out-of-area EMTs.

The standard has been drafted by the SHWT and their EMSG. The SHWT recommends NWCG approval of the standard.

Concern expressed regarding potential liability if EMT services are provided by an EMT prior to acknowledgment of receipt of the Limited Request for Recognition. The standard specifies up to a 2-day response time – needs to be quicker.

Decision: Standard approved as presented.

13. Fireline Safety Refresher Training

This issue is still hung at dead center. Everyone agrees it is needed, but can't figure out how to do it. A "Band-aid approach" for this year is in place, but no long-term solution has been identified.

The SHWT proposal recommends the NWCG task the TWT with creating a refresher training program and that the TWT adopt the following recommendations from the Refresher training Task Group:

- Continue efforts regarding web based dissemination of information to instructors of annual safety refresher training with initiatives such as WFSTAR.
- Continue with a video training package produced on an annual basis that addresses current issues and updates in wildland fire safety.
- Develop a curriculum of experiential training such as staff rides, sand table exercises, tactical decision games and other simulations for annual refresher training.

TWT estimates the trade off with the current level of resources will equate to three course revisions per year. Contracting would be an option, but the cost is high and funding is not available.

The NAFRI and Lessons Learned Center would be another option, but they don't have the needed resources, either.

The FFAST recommended adding two people to the training development staff to develop and support annual refresher training; but they really don't know what the appropriate strategy really should be. The TWT doesn't feel this is appropriate at this time. BLM support for the courses is currently working, but this should be shared interagency. It was clarified that the intent of current funding was for the A/V unit to contract the video, not divert their resources from other efforts to do the video themselves.

NWCG agrees refresher training is an NWCG responsibility. The issue is a priority issue with other training needs.

The FFAST is recommending the NWCG charter a group to design an organizational strategy for annual refresher training; the also recommend the group consider the recommendations originally developed by the Refresher Training Task Group and endorsed by FFAST.

Decisions and Action:

1. NWCG will charter a group to design an organizational strategy for annual refresher training. The group will consider the recommendations originally developed by the Refresher Training Task Group and endorsed by FFAST.
2. Task group membership will include representation from the IOSWT, TWT, FFAST, LLC, and Director of NAFRI. (2/1/05 note: SHWT Liaison requests SHWT representation on the task group).
3. NWCG should be specific and set sideboards in asking for proposals identifying impacts to programs using current resources. The task group should also address the three bulleted items in the 12/2/04 SHWT letter to NWCG, "Annual Fireline Safety Refresher Training – Rebuilding Through NWCG"
4. Due date: The task group will report by the NWCG Fall (October) 2005 meeting

14. RAWS and ROMAN issues

The Fire Directors (in NMAC) made a commitment to fund ROMAN through the end of FY05.

Decision: The FENWT will be asked to look at ROMAN, RAWS, and all other fuels and weather data programs and systems, and evaluate them for usefulness, effectiveness, redundancy, etc. Report due to NWCG by September 1, 2005. (For further tasking information, refer to the January 12, 2005 NMAC memo to the GACG, "Real-time Observation Monitor and Analysis Network (ROMAN)")

Action: FENWT Liaison (Forbes) to take task to the FENWT.

15. Human Resource Specialist (HRSP) coordination program

NWCG has been requested by the Forest Service to continue support of the HRSP position and provide increased support for the HRSP coordination program. To provide this support, asking agencies to each provide a point of contact (POC) to the national HRSP Program Manager (Jan Everett).

Action: Alice Forbes to send copy of the request for NWCG support of the HRSP coordination program to Allen Deitz for inclusion with minutes.

Action: Alice Forbes to request a list of current HRSP committee members from Jan Everett. The list of members will be reviewed for potential use as the HRSP Coordination Program Steering Committee membership.

16. IMT Mobilization Standards

The NMAC and GMAC made a joint decision at the NMAC-GMAC meeting to stick with the national standard (27 + 6) Incident Management Team (IMT) configuration for national mobilization.

The NWCG chartered the IOSWT (two years ago) to define the makeup of an IMT. The IOSWT looked at a variety of configurations but was unable to come to consensus on a standard configuration.

A letter coming from the SW GACC to the NMAC is asking for a 40-member standard team configuration. A letter from the National IC/AC Group to the NMAC proposes rescinding the current order and proposes the NWCG charter a group to formulate a new recommendation with consensus of various groups. A suggestion has also been made to use 2005 as a benchmark year to evaluate and validate the magnitude of the problem.

The existing standard came from the NWCG, so any evaluation and change to the standard should come from NWCG. Any change needs to be accompanied by a commitment to enforce the standard.

Any change to the NMAC decision to adhere to the standard in the Mob Guide needs to come from the NMAC. The NMAC decision to come with a standard team and staff up after arrival was intended to encourage using local resources. As read by some, the NMAC letter appears to set restrictions tighter and in conflict with the Mob Guide.

Two issues are involved: 1) size of standard configuration; 2) restriction on negotiation with agency administrator prior to team arrival at host unit.

The issues need to be addressed in respect to what the IMT job is, compared to what the public expectations are. "Mission creep" has increased the complexity of the job and the expectations which has led to ever-increasing team sizes.

Decision: Task the IOSWT to put together a group to monitor and assess the effects and impacts of implementing the existing standard over the 2005 season. Group membership should consider participants identified in the IC/AC letter.

Action: IOSWT Liaison to task the IOSWT and request a report to the NWCG at the Fall (October) 2005 meeting.

Decision: The NWCG recommends the NMAC review the letter of December 17, 2004 (“Incident Management Team Size”) to clarify the intent. The NWCG also recommends the NMAC replace the second and third bullet items with verbiage from the Mob Guide.

17. Review of follow up action items from 91st meeting

- Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) contact list feedback is still needed from most agencies. *Still needed.* (Fire Directors)

Action: Allen Deitz to redistribute the CIP Contact List request.

- Rural Fire Report implementation plan – update status to reflect what is complete/what is not. *Still needed.* (Artley)
- Agency Fire Directors to provide Kirk Rowdabaugh with policy statements regarding development of agreements with local FDs. *Still needed.* (Federal Fire Directors)
- Follow up with FUWT for status on FUM1/2. *Still needed.* (Rowdabaugh)

18. Wildland Fire Parallel Training Concept proposal (Tony McDowell, Tom Kuntz, Kelly Hawk)

The Task group findings and recommendation report, “Advancing Wildland Fire Training for Fire Departments”, November 2004, addresses implementation tasks 1(a), 1(b), 1(d) and 1(e) from the Rural Fire Report.

Report conclusion:

- There is a need to create a performance-based, alternate training program that will allow us to operate more safely.
- The alternate training concept will incorporate flexible course delivery methods, timelines, support materials and trainee assignments.
- Instructors will be expected to adjust courses based on students’ existing training and skills.
- This concept will eventually support the development of new Type III IMTs.

Recommended next steps:

- Review and comment by NWCG
- Seek funding mechanisms to implement
- Initiate a pilot program
- Evaluate and change as needed
- Conduct second round of pilot tests in additional areas

DISCUSSION

State-level certification and course validation is a state issue. Each state does it differently; this concept uses the existing process within each state.

The initial goal is to develop local resource competencies; the basic premise is local resources would have same training content/knowledge of the NWCG training. In NIMS, state and local levels will certify. For national mobilization, national standards must be met.

The need for continued/recurring training to maintain certification needs to be tracked. As a firefighter moves through the ranks, how will this be tracked (centrally) for future use? A way for RFDs and VFDs to enter and track data centrally would be great. These are some of the details needing to be developed during implementation planning.

Potential pilots would be states with developed structure programs but without adequate wildland fire programs to give an opportunity for evaluating the effectiveness of the piloted program.

Pilots must test the concepts in areas with less than ideal situations. Not just in areas already and predictably successful.

This attempts to develop a new paradigm counter to the NWCG paradigm. It allows local development of new courses; it lacks NWCG oversight; requires taskbooks only for out-of-area (large fire) dispatch; and instructor qualifications are not standardized. Many details still need to be looked at: how it fit into NIMS; who manages courses after/as developed; etc.

A new paradigm is needed – this is a great start... The NWCG needs to move forward... Solutions are needed today – if the NWCG doesn't identify solutions, solutions may be imposed from outside... NWCG guidelines and agency policies currently accept contractors' responsibility to train their own people. States training their own is similar.

The NWCG needs to look at transition issues such as grandfathering that are in conflict with existing standards. Concerns exist on legal liabilities. The NWCG needs to proceed with complete awareness of where going.

Better control is needed at the Strike Team Leader (and above) level for national mobilization. Also, concerned about a Strike Team Leader locally managing resources from outside.

Decisions & Actions:

- Task the group to proceed with developing a detailed pilot implementation plan
 - The group must work with the TWT and IOSWT (& USFA) as they proceed
- The implementation plan is to address two pilots – one with a state without a developed wildland fire training program; one with a state with a developed NWCG-compliant program (e.g., Florida)
- The group will identify policies changes needed to implement the plan
- The group will report to the NWCG at the Fall (October) 2005 meeting with a detailed implementation plan

Action: Agencies need to review the current [Parallel Training Concept] Task Group membership and adjust as appropriate; information to be sent to Kelly Hawk by February 9, 2005 (two weeks from January 26).

19. IOSWT Briefing (Bob Leaverton, teleconference)

Proposed Policy for Extended Attack and Large Fires

Currently, local resources are used on initial attack. Once a fire goes to extended attack or large fire, local resources are used through a unified agreement or are replaced with resources meeting NWCG standards.

For fire positions, this proposed policy extends the use of local resources to extended attack and large fires at the local unit. This would be a temporary policy (5 year limit) until the equivalency training issue is resolved.

Decision: Remove the 5 year limit from the proposed policy and accept the policy as amended.

310-1 Update

The IOSWT met five times during the past year to work on the update. They will be meeting with the TWT in March for a review. The 310-1 is expected to be out for field review in May or June with a final draft to NWCG at the Fall meeting. The IOSWT is targeting to publish the 310-1 next winter for release prior to the 2006 fire season.

The updated 310-1 will include four categories for positions. The IOSWT has looked at all proposed new positions and have included all leadership courses and refresher training. The updated 310-1 will be more user-friendly for field personnel.

Specialist Positions

The IOSWT is developing (finalizing) a template for position taskbooks (PTB). Other teams must develop their PTBs using this template; the IOSWT then reviews/accepts the PTB. The template is still draft, so is not released for national use. This is moving the IOSWT toward a “review and approve” process from the “do” process.

The workload is high to deal with positions developed and managed by other teams. The workload overload is becoming critical for working teams trying to accomplish all that the NWCG continues to task to the teams.

IC Type 3 team concept

The IOSWT has pushed back on this in the past, but is now looking at the need to address this concept and will begin to do so as time allows.

20. NWCG glossary approval and proposed super-glossary concept (Ralph Alworth)

Glossary of Wildland Fire Terminology

The IOSWT did a 2 ½ year review and update of the glossary. One goal was to make the glossary more timely and more accessible. The glossary will not be printed and distributed through the cache as a paper document; a downloadable and printable document will be posted on the Web. A CD will also be available for those unable to download from the Web.

The glossary will be updated annually and will be posted on the NWCG Web site. The on-going glossary update process will include proposed changes being posted for field review and then incorporated into the glossary on an annual basis.

To facilitate the review and on-going maintenance of the glossary, the glossary entries have been distributed to the NWCG working teams based on their respective areas of expertise. The teams have custodianship over their respective set of entries and are responsible for maintaining the currency and accuracy of the terms and definitions. During the review, the team also looked at various policy documents and directives such as the National Fire Plan to bring the glossary in line with terms used in these documents.

The IOSWT recommends:

- NWCG approval and release of the updated glossary
- NWCG implement a policy for use of the Glossary as the authoritative source for NWCG terms and definitions for use in preparation of all NWCG documents

Decision: Approve the new Glossary; release it with a letter establishing the updated glossary as the authoritative source for NWCG documents and retiring the 1996 version.

Action: Executive Secretary to distribute the letter

Super Glossary concept:

The IOSWT recommends the NWCG establish an all-encompassing glossary to maintain terms from areas outside of the wildland fire suppression and fire use areas. Interagency wildland fire areas such as investigation, predictive services, IRM, and training all have need of standardized, interagency terminology; these should be maintained in an all-encompassing glossary.

Sideboards are needed to maintain the scope of the glossary – keep within the NWCG scope of business.

The IOSWT recommends the NWCG:

- Establish/authorize the super glossary concept
- Appoint the IRM-PMO as the super glossary steward

Decision: Ask for recommendations from the NWCG IRM-PMO (and NWFEASG, if appropriate) regarding the need for such a glossary and how it should be managed.

21. TWT Briefing (Logan Lee)

Tasking Clarification

The NWCG tasked the TWT to be involved in the development of reciprocity and crosswalk of training. The TWT is looking for clarification of the NWCG direction. How limited and with what intent? Is the TWT's interpretation of the tasking (reflected in the TWT letter of December 28, 2004 to the NWCG) correct and valid?

Decision: The NWCG affirmed the TWT interpretation as reflected in their letter of December 28, 2004 is correct.

Working Team Briefing

The TWT believes NWCG training is at a critical point in terms of need for change. The TWT needs to lead or get absorbed (in terms of outside activities such as NIMS, distance learning, all-risk, etc.).

It is unclear if the NIMS is part of the TWT chartered area. No clear working relationship has been established; this has resulted in the perception that we (the NWCG and TWT) "will not play" (i.e., no all-risk).

There is beginning to be a duplication of I-course development addressing all-risk. The Coast Guard, DHS, NWCG, and EPA are all developing and working on 100 and 200 courses. Four different ICS-100 and 200 courses currently are being developed for distance learning. In all these areas the NWCG courses provide a foundation opportunity – the NWCG and TWT must take the initiative to lead, or get run over and isolate ourselves from the rest of the all-risk community.

Approaches for Improved Success:

- Increase NWCG resources
- Prioritize investments
- Increase value to all-risk community

NWCG Resources

NWCG course revision funding for FY2005 has dropped by 25% from 1998 level (2003 funding was at 50% low). The development unit efficiency has increased with cost per course revision steadily dropping; but still losing ground.

The NWCG funding levels have not enabled any distance learning course development. Course materials issued from the Publication Management System and cache has been growing steadily, especially for ICS and S courses.

The desired course revision cycle is a 5-year cycle – currently, training has the resources to reach an 8-year cycle. Projected changes in course volume will soon result in a 10-year cycle. Bottom Line: too much change can occur in an 8-year period; an 8-year change cycle is not satisfactory.

Prioritize Investments

Prioritization of NWCG training courses, based on 310-1: (# of courses supporting)

1. Required courses (31)
2. Operations skills (22)
3. Direct operational support (33)
4. Non-operational KSAs (25)

On a 5-year cycle, current NWCG resource levels can support 50 courses. The above breakdown of priorities can be used to return to 5-year cycle; but that would abandon other desirable courses that don't directly support required and operational skills. Most of the #3 (above) courses are required for NIMS.

Increase Value to All-risk Community

A quick review of the 111 NWCG training courses shows 53 courses apply to all-risk as well as fire, while 58 apply to fire only.

To increase value, the TWT would begin to:

- Repackage courses to apply in all risk environments with minimal investments (modular concepts – all-risk and fire-specific (*risk-specific*))
- Separate processes from environments
- Align better with competency based system
- Get direct all-risk investment in NWCG training program

Possible investment strategies:

1. Incorporate as revisions occur (no investment; long time)
2. Look at priority course in phased process (contract limited courses with variable costs)
3. Comprehensive review (contract - \$500K)

Approach #2 is most likely and reasonable.

Concerns exist that currently available NWCG development resources would all be diverted to the all-risk courses and priority fire-specific courses in need of update would not be updated in the near future. This balance would need to be managed.

The TWT would need to explore partnership potentials. Next steps for the TWT would be to look for all-risk SME participation and begin work on course segregation.

The TWT recommends the NWCG change their direction to the TWT to enable the TWT to address all-risk.

Decisions:

1. As a first step, The TWT should take advantage of opportunities to partner and collaborate on current efforts to develop I-100/200/300.
2. The TWT should take the opportunity at the February DHS NIMS meeting to conceptualize and negotiate partnering.

3. When opportunities arise, the TWT should engage in assessment and collaborative involvement with other course development activity.
4. The TWT can engage non-fire SMEs in course activities for courses applicable to all-risk.

22. Quadrennial Fire Fuels Review (QFFR) Briefing (Rich Wands)

The review is still underway – this briefing is an interim status update only.

The QFFR is a three-phase project: 1) new assumptions panels; 2) working panels; 3) integration panels. Phase 1 finished in October 2004, phase 2 finished in December, and phase 3 should finish in February. The final report is projected for mid-March.

The QFFR effort will have involved 250+ people by the time it is finished. The QFFR is interagency in nature – looking into future (not past) (WUI, demographics, fuels, climatology)

The integration panels will provide horizontal, vertical and oblique assessments for integration of the Three Mission Strategies.

- *Horizontal*: Current Mission Strategies with the Future Alternatives
- *Vertical*: Current Force Structure, Workforce Capability, Organization and Operations with the Future Alternatives
- *Oblique*: Current Program Linkages and Impacts

The Integration Panel will resume work on phase 3 in February to review and summarize the linkages and impacts. The Integration Panel will determine the communication and marketing plan at their February meeting.

After final report compilation, the NFAEB will review and approval (NFAEB chartered review). Other (WFLC or Departmental) review and approval may also be appropriate.

23. Appointment of chair for the Safety and Health Working Team

The SHWT recommends Gene Madden as the new chair.

Decision: Approved appointment of Gene Madden as the new SHWT chair.

Action: Executive Secretary to prepare letters and certificates of appreciation for out-going WT chairs. Draft appointment letter.

24. IBPWT Charter Revision

Correction: change “ten (12)” in section VI to read “twelve (12)”

Decision: Charter revision approved as corrected.

25. Review of AD Pay Plan for 2005 (Hallie Locklear, teleconference)

IBPWT met last week to review comments received, and to reach consensus and provide recommendation to the NWCG and the USDA and DOI HR Offices. The team was unable to come to a consensus.

The proposed plan reduced the rate for 126 of the 157 positions. Of the 126 reduced, 49 decreased more than 25% with 43 decreased by 30-45%. The single highest decrease was the Support Dispatcher at 55.33%.

There is a perception that an attempt is being made to cut costs by dropping the AD rates.

Recommendations from IBPWT to NWCG:

Option 1 – Do not implement until January 1, 2006 allowing time to complete an independent classification review, rate review, and develop a solid marketing plan. Both DOI and FS would continue use of the 2004 pay plan with verbiage changes. (Changes would be determined by the IBPWT in additional work sessions. Issue areas include clarification regarding geographic areas setting their own rates and the difficulty and time-delays when hiring positions not in the matrix.)

Option 2 – Look at critical positions for reclassification and do the leveling of those that have been brought to our attention (including all risk), correct verbiage inconsistencies, have external affairs work on a positive marketing plan addressing the 2005 pay plan and implement the draft pay plan by March 22nd. In conjunction, develop a long-term action plan to include an independent review, look at classifications, rate review, and marketing plan for 2006.. (see letter - HO#1)

If FS HR approval is not given to continue using the 2004 plan (and FS implements the proposed 2005 plan) it is unknown if there will be any problem with reimbursing states who intend to use the 2004 plan during the 2005 season. However, the expectation is that FS HR will approve continued use of the 2004 plan.

Decision: NWCG recommendation is on hold pending further information from the FS.

26. Future meeting schedule

The USFA reported the proposed Harpers Ferry venues are not acceptable for the Fall meeting. Alternatives being considered include Shepherdstown or Hagerstown (via Pittsburgh) or Gettysburg.

The NASF offered to host the Winter (January 2006) meeting in Florida. Location is to be determined, but will be close to a hub airport.

A third day will be added to the Spring (May 2005) meeting for extended discussions and issue resolution. It was suggested to try to schedule a 3-day meeting at least once per year – maybe regularly try for the Spring meetings in Boise.

The Fall 2005 meeting also may need to be a 3-day meeting to accommodate the large number of taskings requiring reports back to NWCG at that meeting.

<i>Meeting / Dates</i>	<i>Host Agency</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Featured WT/AG</i>
Spring – May 10-12, 2005	BLM	Boise, ID	FEWT
Fall – October 18-20, 2005	USFA	TBD	FENWT
Winter – January 24-26, 2006	NASF	Florida	TBD
Spring – 2006			

27. Fire research update (Mike Hilbruner)

- doing work on strategic planning for fire research – had good participation from fire
- carrying forward into other efforts
- looking for review by partner agencies on strategic plan – short turnaround (mid-feb feedback timeline)

28. NASF issue with NWCG publications (Artley)

As a result of the 30-mile lawsuit against NASF, the NASF attorneys have been working to clarify their understanding of what NWCG is and what it does.

The NASF attorneys are asking NWCG to consider no longer putting logos or a list of names of all agencies on the front covers of NWCG publications. It is unclear if this request includes the title page, or just the covers. The changes would be to future publications only. It was noted, however, that this change to Web-based documents could possibly be retroactive.

The list of sponsoring partners is important for public buy-in.

NWCG will wait for clarification before committing to making this change. If removal from inside page(s) is included in the request, further discussion will be needed.

Action: Don Artley to clarify the intent and expected result of this change and report back to NWCG.