

**National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)
Monthly Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2007**

Action	Decision		Item
X		1.	Agenda: Review and Finalize
X		2.	FORS (Fire Occurrence Reporting System): Update on FORS Study
	X	3.	NPSG (National Predictive Services Group): Signature on Cover Memo
	X	4.	JFSP (Joint Fire Science Program): Briefing and Decision on Software Tools and System Study, and Update on 2008 JFSP Task Statements and Roundtables
		5.	AMR (Appropriate Management Response): Update
	X	6.	RCTG (Radio Communications Task Group): Review of Interoperability Plan
		7.	QFR (Quadrennial Fire Review): Review of Working Panel Information
		8.	NIAC (National Interagency Aviation Council): National Aviation Strategy: Update
X	X	9.	WFSA (Wildland Fire Situation Analysis): Update on Red Book Certification on Wording (Approval and Certification)
	X	10.	NWFEA (National Wildland Fire Enterprise Architecture): Review of Project Manager Position and Funding re Project Implementation
	X	11.	National Agreement between Wildland Fire Agencies and the National Weather Service: Agreement Renewal
X		12.	NWCG January Meeting

**National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)
Monthly Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2007**

This meeting of the NWCG was held at the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho.

Members Attending: Timothy Murphy, (Chair) Bureau of Land Management
Tom Nichols, National Park Service – a.m. (Acting)
Mike Wallace, National Park Service – p.m.
Cheryl Molis, USDA Forest Service (Acting)
Becky Brooks, Fish and Wildlife Service (Acting)
Bodie Shaw, Bureau of Indian Affairs (Acting)
Dan Smith, National Association of State Foresters
Wallace Josephson, Office of Wildland Fire Coordination
Mike Hilbruner, USDA Forest Service – Fire Research (Call In)
Jim Erickson, Intertribal Timber Council (Topic #5 Only)
Bonnie Bradshaw, NWCG Executive Secretary

Guests Attending: Tom Wordell, FS
John Cissel, BLM
Nate Benson, NPS
Judy Crosby, BLM
Matt Cnudde, FS
Mike Barrowcliff, FS
Gladys Crabtree, NPS
Shari Shetler, BLM
Neal Hitchcock, FS
Robyn Heffernan, BLM
Sherry Garey, BLM

Call-Ins: Dick Bahr, NPS
Elyse Turkeltaub, DOI
Al Hyde, Brookings Institute

Meeting started at 8:15 a.m.

Note: This is the first monthly NWCG Meeting. These monthly meetings will handle operational issues, whereas the three NWCG meetings a year (January, May, and October) will handle standards issues.

1. Agenda: Review and Finalize (Tim Murphy)

Distributed and reviewed:

Handout No. 1: NWCG Monthly Meeting Agenda(Revised Final), dated 10/23/07

Discussion: The agenda today is shorter than normal because most of the Fire Directors are not available to be at the meeting and have one of their staff members acting in their place.

Changes: Add Robyn Heffernan's topic (Renewal of the National Agreement between the Wildland Fire Agencies and the National Weather Service).

Dan Smith requested that a schedule of the NWCG Meetings for next year be sent out. It would be helpful for planning other meetings.

ACTION No. 07-76: On NWCG 2008 Meeting Schedule, prepare a schedule of meeting dates and send to all NWCG Members, WT Chairs, and GACG Chairs.

Lead: Bonnie Bradshaw

Due Date: October 28, 2007

2. FORS (Fire Occurrence Reporting System): Update on FORS Study (Tom Wordell – FS)

Distributed and reviewed:

Handout No. 2: Update to NWCG/NFAEB, dated 10/24/07

Discussion: Tom stated that the Task Group has been busy with meetings, and he thanked the agencies for providing people to help with the study. The Task Group will have one more session at the end of November for two days to complete their work. Data elements will be reviewed and compared with the NWCG Glossary. Data standards will be delivered this week to the PMO. There have been 48 data elements discussed and reviewed, and 13 have been submitted to the PMO for review. The Working Teams are engaged and have provided feedback. Tom further stated that they are on schedule and within budget, and should be finished by January 31st. An Accomplishment Summary will be prepared at the end.

Tim asked about the first 4 on the 6 “on hold” elements. Tom stated that the Task Group struggled with these elements. Before moving forward, agency agreement is needed. This topic will be put on next month's agenda for a decision.

Tom stated that the Task Group sees the need to be formally established as a recognized

interagency Fire Occurrence SME Group to provide oversight to data standards now and in the future. Tom wanted to know where they would fit in the new NWCG structure. Dan Smith stated that this group is needed, and he will bring it up in the NWCG Substructure Meeting tomorrow. In order to not lose this topic, it will be put on the Action Tracking Table for a decision to be made after the new NWCG structure has been established.

ACTION No. 07-77: On Fire Occurrence SME Committee, make a decision as to where this group needs to be formally established and where it will be placed in the new NWCG structure.

Lead: NWCG Members

Due Date: After New Substructure is established.

AGENDA ITEM FOR NEXT MEETING: FORS – Decision on the Six “On Hold” Elements – Tom Wordell – 15 minutes – November Meeting

AGENDA ITEM FOR NEXT MEETING: FORS –Final Report of the FORS Data Element Task Group – Tom Wordell –20 minutes – January or February Meeting

3. NPSG (National Predictive Services Group): Signature on Cover Memo for NPSG Handbook (Tom Wordell – FS)

Distributed and reviewed:

Handout No. 3: NWCG Memo on NPSG Handbook

Handout No. 4: Predictive Services Handbook

Discussion: Tom stated that the PS Handbook is posted on the web, and felt that a NWCG Memo to Fire Management would provide more validity to the handbook. Everyone was in agreement.

DECISION: On NPSG Handbook, agreed to sign the NWCG Memorandum to Fire Management.

4. JFSP (Joint Fire Science Program): Briefing and Decision on Software Tools and System Study, and Update on 2008 JFSP Task Statements and Roundtables (John Cissel – BLM, Nate Benson – NPS, Judy Crosby - BLM)

Distributed and reviewed:

Handout No. 5: JFSP Agenda Topic Request Form

Handout No. 6: JFSP Software Tools and Systems Study

Handout No. 7: JFSP –2008 AFP Task Statement

Handout No. 8: JFSP – Risk Roundtables

Discussion: A PowerPoint presentation was given. John stated that models keep multiplying and were inventoried to pick the best ones. Software Engineering Institute (SEI) did a JFSP

Study. They have completed Phase I and are starting on Phase II (depth). Gaps are being identified between current and emerging operational needs. Study is looking at technical guidance and design for integrated software systems. The Bluesky Frame was reviewed.

John reviewed the Advisory Council Work Statement (handout). Several key areas of linkage are with NWFEA, the IT process, and QFFR.

John asked two questions:

a) How does NWCG want to be involved?

b) What is the need interest for information sharing?

He stated that NWCG might want a presentation from SEI in a few months, and Dan Smith suggested a quarterly briefing with the Advisory Council and SEI.

AGENDA ITEM FOR NEXT MEETING: JFSP: Update on Advisory Council Activities – John Cissel, Judy Crosby, and Nate Benson –35-45 minutes –February Meeting

The question was asked as to who is the liaison for the Advisory Council. Tom Nichols and NWCG agreed that Mike Wallace would act in this role.

DECISION: On JFSP Advisory Council, agreed that Mike Wallace (NPS) would act as liaison.

JFSP is planning a workshop, starting on January 23rd. Participation was encouraged, and if there is an interest, contact John for more information.

The AFP Task Statement was reviewed (handout). AMR (Dick Bahr) should be engaged to review the proposals. Tim Murphy recommended Tom Zimmerman as well. The Fire Directors should send participant recommendations to John.

The Risk Roundtable was reviewed (handout). The first roundtable will be held in December, and the Fire Directors should send participant recommendations to John.

(Wally Josephson joined the meeting)

5. AMR (Appropriate Management Response): Update (Called In: Dick Bahr – NPS, Jim Erickson – Intertribal Timber Council, and Elyse Turkeltaub – DOI)

Distributed and reviewed:

Handout No. 9: Appropriate Management Response Task Group PowerPoint Presentation

Discussion: PowerPoint Presentation given. Dick reviewed the supplemental guidance to the Federal Wildland Fire Policy (What needs to be changed, the advantage of the change, the consequences of the change, and the required actions to implement the change). Alternatives A, B, C, and D were reviewed.

Dick asked if anything was missed or are there other suggestions. Dan Smith asked what was the AMR group's preference, to which Dick stated Alternative C, then move to Alternative B, and deal with Alternative A if it comes up. Tom suggested a track list of items worked on with a calendar of when things would be done. This would incrementally help to see what has been missed. Timeframes for completion of Alternatives are: Alternative A - 2 years, Alternative B - 1 year, and Alternative C - 4-6 months. Timetable will be presented at the next NWCG Meeting in November.

AGENDA ITEM FOR NEXT MEETING: AMR: Review of Timetable – Dick Bahr – 30 minutes – November Meeting

6. RCTG (Radio Communications Task Group): Review of Interoperability Plan (Matt Cnudde – FS, Mike Barrowcliff – FS, Gladys Crabtree – NPS, and Shari Shetler – BLM)

Distributed and reviewed:

Handout No. 10: RCTG Agenda Topic Request Form

Handout No. 11: The Use of Terminal Server and Thin Clients for Incident Management – Prototype Report

Handout No. 12: Wildland Fire Incident IT Thin Client Pilot Project (PowerPoint Presentation)

Discussion: Matt stated that the CIO Meeting was held a few weeks ago. The RCTG talked with them about communications issues. The Radio Group will probably be renamed to cover a broader array of communications. Power Point presentation was given.

Matt asked the group about: 1) Developing a complete business case, 2) Asking for needed resources starting in January, and 3) NWCG updates. The group agreed to the development of a complete business case, with the costs and timeframes coming back to NWCG for review.

DECISION: On RCTG: Wildland Fire Incident IT Thin Client Project, agreed to the development of a complete business case, with costs and timeframes outlined, and the entire package brought back to NWCG for review.

7. QFR (Quadrennial Fire Review): Review of Working Panel Information (Called In: Al Hyde – Brookings Institute)

Distributed and reviewed:

Handout No. 13: Forum Agenda

Discussion: Al stated that all the panels are set, and he has invited two Canadian researchers to attend. One change is that the Workforce Panel has been placed into the Technology Panel. A replacement is needed for Sandra Brown on Panel No. 3 as she is not able to attend. The possibility of video conferencing with the people at NIFC was discussed, and Tim Murphy stated that this would be valuable. Al will contact Bonnie to arrange the details.

8. NIAC (National Interagency Aviation Council): National Aviation Strategy: Update on Phase III Implementation Plan (Neal Hitchcock – FS)

Distributed and reviewed:

Handout No. 14: NIAC Strategy: Update, dated 10/24/07

Discussion: Neal gave an update. The draft will be available by November 9th. The goal is to tie in the work that has been completed in the past few years. There will be a meeting with the interagency group next week. Items listed in the handout were briefly covered.

Dan Smith suggested that the Strategy include State aircraft assets for initial attack and the utilization of those aircraft. This will give more leverage to our position.

Large Airtankers were discussed with the intention to move toward “younger” aircraft. The goal is to have 25 airtankers by 2020. Cost to convert a plane to an airtanker is about \$10,000,000.

(Mike Wallace joined the meeting)

Information will be ready by next Friday, November 2nd, with final draft by November 9th.

(Wally Josephson left the meeting)

AGENDA ITEM FOR NEXT MEETING: NIAC: Review and Discussion of Final Draft of National Aviation Strategy – Neal Hitchcock –30 minutes – November Meeting

9. WFSA (Wildland Fire Situation Analysis): Update on Red Book Certification on Wording (Approval and Certification) – (Neal Hitchcock – FS)

Distributed and reviewed:

Handout No. 15: WFSA Approval and Certification

Discussion: Tim stated that the language was not consistent per FEC. Neal stated that he has not spoken with Tory Henderson on this yet, but that the Policy Review Team came up with a proposal (handout) to give to the Red Book Committee. There is a discrepancy between DOI and Forest Service (District Ranger is the approver and then Forest Supervisor is the certifier) on the handout. Neal will rewrite it and send out to the NWCG for review. The group asked for one WFSA on an incident.

DECISION: On WFSA (Wildland Fire Situation Analysis), agreed that DOI and FS positions should be similar for approval and certification in the Red Book.

ACTION No. 07-78: On WESA: Red Book Wording, revise handout on approval and certification wording and send to NWCG for review.

Lead: Neal Hitchcock

Due Date: November 1, 2007

10. NWFEA (National Wildland Fire Enterprise Architecture): Review of Project Manager Position and Funding re Project Implementation (Judy Crosby – BLM)

Distributed and reviewed:

Handout No. 16: NWFEA Agenda Topic Request

Handout No. 17: NWFEA Project Charter, dated 10/06/05

Discussion: Judy stated that the final Blueprint will be delivered in December. Work that still needs to be completed is the blending of the NWCG substructure and Strategic Plan efforts with the end-to-end process. More planning will be done in January before the Blueprint is implemented.

Colleen Coggins has agreed to extend the FTE position of the Project Manager until December 2008, but does not have the funding. Jim Douglas, the Executive Sponsor, is in favor of the extension. Forest Service has identified \$300,000 for NWFEA in FY08, which could be used to fund the extension. Cheryl Molis asked Judy to check with Mike Barrowcliff on this. It was agreed to extend the position to the end of the year.

DECISION: On NWFEA Project Manager Position, agreed that Frank Peters will be extended to December 2008.

Judy will brief the architects and have Frank work on a Blueprint Implementation Schedule.

11. National Agreement Between the Wildland Fire Agencies and the NWS (National Weather Service): Agreement Renewal (Robyn Heffernan – BLM and Sherry Garey – BLM)

Distributed and reviewed:

Handout No. 18: Agenda Topic Request Form

Discussion: Robyn stated that the five year agreement between the wildland fire agencies and the National Weather Service is expiring this fall, and negotiations are currently underway on a new agreement. The old agreement has a lot of details in it, but the new agreement will be broader. The AOP (Annual Operating Plan) will have more of the information in it, and the standards will be listed. Training will be handled under a national MOU instead of being in the agreement. IMETs will now have the two days of rest at the end of an assignment.

Developing interagency qualification standards for the meteorologists is still being worked on

with the NWS. There is resistance on this issue with the union. Robyn suggested that a certification process should be developed, and would like NWCG concurrence about pursuing interagency IMET standards with the NWS. NWCG agreed with this. IMETs will still be paid through the old agreement until the new one is in place.

DECISION: On National Agreement between the Wildland Fire Agencies and the NWS, agreed that interagency IMET standards (certification process) should be pursued with the NWS.

12. NWCG January Meeting (NWCG Members)

Discussion: It was agreed that two hours should be set aside at the next meeting to discuss the agenda for the January Meeting, with Judy Crosby and Shari Shetler participating.

AGENDA ITEM FOR NEXT MEETING: NWCG January Meeting: Agenda – Discussion – NWCG Members –2 hours – November Meeting

Location was briefly discussed. Tim tasked Bonnie to look at both Cambria Suites and the facility at Barber Park as far as availability and cost.

ACTION No. 07-79: On Site Location for January NWCG Meeting, investigate availability and cost of Cambria Suites and facility at Barber Park, and report back to Tim Murphy with findings.

Lead: Bonnie Bradshaw

Due Date: October 30, 2007

Mike Wallace stated that a memo should be sent to the WT's to state what happened at the NWCG Meeting in October at Shepherdstown (NFAEB merged, new Charter signed, new MOU signed, etc.). Tim Murphy stated that he will task Shari Shetler to draft a memo to the WT's for NWCG's review.

ACTION No. 07-80: On NWCG October Meeting, task Shari Shetler to draft a memo to the WT's outlining the events that occurred at the October NWCG Meeting in Shepherdstown.

Lead: Tim Murphy

Due Date: October 30, 2007

The NWCG Strategic Plan on the website was briefly discussed. It was mentioned that the front page of the Plan does not reflect the changes made at Shepherdstown, and this should be changed. Tim tasked Bonnie to get with Shari Shetler to make the change and get it to the NWCG Webmaster for posting.

ACTION No. 07-81: On NWCG Strategic Plan, discuss with Shari Shetler the necessity of changing the front page of the Plan to reflect the changes made at the October NWCG Meeting, and have her send the corrected Strategic Plan to the NWCG Webmaster for

posting.

Lead: Bonnie Bradshaw

Due Date: October 30, 2007

ACTION No. 07-82: On NWCG Strategic Plan, change the front page to reflect the changes made at the October NWCG Meeting, and send the corrected Plan to the NWCG Webmaster for posting.

Lead: Shari Shetler

Due Date: November 14, 2007

Meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.