



## NORTHERN ROCKIES COORDINATING GROUP

### NRCG Equipment Committee 2008 Fall Meeting, (12/16 & 17 2008 Kalispell MT)

Attending 12/16; Jim Reuter, Curt Miller, Ryan Tripp, Rick Grady representing the Northern Rockies Wildfire Contractors Association, via video conference, Ryan Sundberg, Tim Murphy, Bruce Mottern, Jane Haker, Jim Blankenship and Kevin Erickson

Reviewed last meetings notes and discussed action items and progress,

Portable radios, issue: some contractors purchasing portable radios that are of poor quality. Kevin will continue working to get the NRCG website updated with list of all portable radios that meet the current specifications.

Pool vehicles, issue: agencies spending money to obtain rental vehicles during fire season while many agency carry-over vehicles sit in compounds waiting to be auctioned. Curt was able to obtain a pool of approximately 10 carry-over vehicles from MT DNRC that were available for fire assignments this year. Slow trial year but the process was working well. These vehicles were only available for DNRC or multi agency incidents. Curt will continue to build on this program.

Kevin was not able to obtain any FS carry-over vehicles this last year because of legal issues. May have better luck this coming season because of new auctioning process.

Ryan will check on options of utilizing carry-over vehicles with the BLM. They recently started auctioning vehicles once they reach 60,000 miles instead of the previous standard of 70,000 miles.

Kevin and Jane will develop a formal request to free up FS carry-over vehicles headed to auction.

Fire season update;

Ryan Sundberg, slow year, no big issues.

Bruce, same for Idaho.

Ryan Tripp, one AMR this year.

Curt, slow year.

Jim, one incident with potable water truck.

Kevin, some issues in California, Northern Rockies went fairly well. Good Dozer Boss course held this spring in Helena. The equipment Committee should get more involved.

Jane, no particular business issues, did clean up some stuff. No opportunity to implement some of the changes because of the slow year. Guidelines are posted on the Business Committees website for AD hiring and rentals. Some issues with fuel tenders and credit cards but going in the right direction.

Charter Update;

Tim pointed out that all the other NRCG committees are composed of zone representatives while the Equipment Committee is composed of agency representatives.

Tim and Kevin will check on the status of agencies with little participation.

Was decided we'll remove the Contracting Officer rep from the charter and will retain their services as needed.

Ryan Sundberg was appointed as Co-Chair of the Equipment Committee.

Montana DNRC  
Montana Firewardens Association  
Montana Division of Disaster  
and Emergency Services  
MT Sheriffs and Peace Officers' Association

Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Bureau of Land Management  
National Park Service  
US Fish and Wildlife Service

USDA Forest Service  
Idaho Department of Lands  
North Dakota Forest Service  
Fire Chief's Association

Graders:

SAC requested the Equipment Committee develop grader specs for 2011. Task Force (Ryan Sundberg) has been working on developing specs. Group discussion determined using horse power as a logical way to type out graders. Task force will continue to develop solicitation to include; breakout of types, list of required items, vantage point items and operator experience required. Will get the solicitation to SAC by approx. 10/09

Smidgines:

Decided not to develop any standards unless requested. Bruce will check to see if there is a need. Will update chapter 20 of the IIBMH to reflect this.

UTV's: Jim will check with the Ops Committee to see if there is a need for additional standards.

National Contract Equipment Task Team: Kevin has brought this group together to standardize equipment requirements nationally. Currently trying to get other agencies more involved. Website is located at [www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/solicitation.php](http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/solicitation.php)

These standards will be phased in as current agreements expire.

Equipment inspection workshops:

Last years went real well, Workshop in Missoula had 48 attendants and the workshop in Billings had 29 attendants. Last year tried to put out too much information in the time allotted. This year's workshops will focus on the mechanical side and will not include the administrative/COTR portion like last year.

There will be 2 workshops offered this year, Bruce Mottern will coordinate 1 session in Coeur d' Alene, April 21-22 and Kevin Erickson will coordinate 1 session in Helena, April 28-29.

In addition to these workshops there will be an advanced workshop in Missoula approximately May 12-13. Intent of this workshop will be to get folks qualified as 5109-17 Equipment Inspectors so number of participants will be limited.

Interagency Contract Project Inspector (ICPI) training:

Previously CAT, scheduled for May 19-21 in the Missouri Room at NRCC. Will also be available via video conference.

NRWCA:

Rick Grady has agreed to function as a liaison between the NRWCA and the Equipment Committee. Some of the issues that came up this year were mostly tied to the inspection process, poorly trained inspectors, no inspector available when equipment showed up at dispatch, double inspections (inspected at time of departure from home unit only to be inspected again when arriving at the incident). There also was some issues of the move/demove process on the Cascade Incident.

Wednesday, 12/17

Attending 12/16; Jim Reuter, Curt Miller, Ryan Tripp, Doug Bolender with PTAC, Rick Grady representing the Northern Rockies Wildfire Contractors Association, Bill and Karen Cousineau and Leonard Oftendahl representing the Northern Rockies Chapter of the National Wildfire Suppression Association. Via video conference, Ryan Sundberg, Tim Murphy, Bruce Mottern, Jane Haker, Jim Blankenship and Kevin Erickson.

Tim Murphy, Best Value update/VIPR implementation

Have dropped the Type 3 Kitchen solicitation. Only 2 bidders. Should have minimum impact.

Dropped the Type 2 Faller Module, will retain the Type 1 Faller Module.

Still cleaning up some issues with the Mechanic solicitation.

Will recommend dropping tents from a solicitation, better off a commercial purchase.

Water handling inspections, currently 4 companies/associations with MOU's in R1. Will only inspect equipment that is currently under contract and being replaced for the 2009 season. W.O. still has some concerns with the use of these MOU's and will be meeting with R1 representatives in January.

Training Providers, currently 38 MOU's in R1. Meeting scheduled for 1/27/09 in Missoula with these MOU holders.

Kevin Erickson was part of a Type 3 Team that went to R5 this last season to assist with the administration of Best Value contract. Some overlap of local COR's and concerns with IMT's but everything was worked out eventually. Kevin sees the need to continue with this type of support and continual educating IMT's (including Finance) on the purpose and role of these positions.

National Fire Equipment Working team (FEWT) is working on getting these COTR's as a NWCG ICS position.

2008 issues

\*Driving times

\*16 hour workday

\*24 hour shifts

\*MT Workmans Comp

\*Dept. of Labor/pay issues

\*Accidents/injuries

4 fraud, 1 racial, 1 sexual harassment, 1 drug offense, 1 AWOL, falsified documents, theft, 1 fire chaser, field promotions were some of the issues Tim got to deal with this last season.

1 vendor recently convicted of falsifying documents on red card and 1 vendor will be tried in the near future.

2009 NR solicitations, only mobile laundry units. Will limit the number of solicitations until VIPR is up and running.

New Generation fire shelters will be mandatory for everyone by December, 2009.

NWCG FEWT engine/tender typing changes will not effect Best Value equipment until 2010.

All contractors are required to get level 2 e Authentication

New performance evaluations (CPS) can be found at <http://cps.od.nih.gov> Will continue to use the current form for now.

Boundary less dispatch system is a new concept being talked about but will be a ways off before implementation.

Karen Cousineau with the NR Chapter of National Wildfire Suppression Association had a couple of questions.

Q. Will age be a limiting factor in future solicitation? A. Kevin, not currently planned.

Questions on Workman Comp issues that Tim was able to give a contact name who could answer the questions.

There have also been some issues with the status of vendors not being correct in ROSS and the ability of vendors to check on what their current status is. Tim said some dispatch centers allow vendors access to check their status in ROSS while other dispatch centers that don't allow access will require the vendors to call the center and have the center check on their status.

Karen also inquired if it was acceptable for vendors to send IMT's fliers of available equipment and Tim replied that wasn't a problem.

Jane, Change agents/Driving factors

VIPR is a FS automated contracting database.

Interior will continue to use their own database and continue to accept each others agreements.

Standardizes equipment specs.

Produces dispatch priority lists.

EERA's now will be handled as Incident specific BPA's

Training and qualifications will not be in VIPR

VIPR will replace EATIS

2009 FS solicitations will be in VIPR.

2009 BLM, DNRC agreements will **not** be in VIPR.

If new FS agreement is needed, it will be in VIPR noting not all agreements require a preseason agreement.

For 2009 FS agreements vendors will need register at CPS and register for level 2 e Authentication.

VIPR timeline

Beta tested in November (with PTAC involvement)

National deployment 12/19/08

R1 CO training January 7-9<sup>th</sup> 2009  
Web overview for PTAC, dispatch centers January 14<sup>th</sup>.  
R1 begins use in January, 2009  
Letter with details sent to vendors in October, 2008

Vendors will not have direct access to VIPR but solicitations will be posted in Fed Biz.

Doug Bolender (PTAC) VIPR updates:

Will be using Jane's power point to provide some training for vendors, will let Tim know the dates

User guide was 80 some pages, will develop a Readers Digest version.

Level 2 access for e Authentication was easy to obtain.

Forms are easy to use and pick up on mistakes.

Took 1 hour to download the software.

Was not able to fully test the system because was not submitting a real piece of equipment.

Willing to work with vendors this winter to get the word out and provide training.

CPS website has some small navigation issues.

Doug did question why the big iron was not using VIPR. Kevin responded that because this is a new system there was a deliberate attempt made to spread the workload out and test run the system prior to full implementation.

Tim, BOD has approved the SAC solicitation timeline.

Kevin, been working on 2009 equipment rates. Wide range of equipment even though typed the same. Working on establishing equitable rates for all. Different states have different wage/ FICA/Workmans Comp rates. Rates based on 16 hour shift, questioned whether all equipment really operate that many hours. Requests any feedback to Kevin by January 16<sup>th</sup>.

Kevin, R5 is requesting a variance on overflows on water tenders. Kevin will draft a letter to the BOD against this proposal.

