

**Northern Rockies Training Committee meeting
October 25-26, 2006 in Missoula, MT**

Attendees:

Out-going Chairperson **Frank Waterman**, North Idaho Zone (Coeur d'Alene Dispatch)
In-coming Chairperson **Beth Card**, North Dakota Zone (Dakota Prairie Nat'l Grasslands)
Bob Cunningham, Northern Rockies Training Center
Jesse Best, Northwest MT Zone (DNRC/NWLO)
Susan Dowler, Northwest MT Zone (DNRC/NWLO)
Carol Bienhold, Northwest MT Zone (Flathead NF)
Jim Clairmont Buttercup, BIA West Representative (CS&K Tribes)
Larry Elder, BLM Representative (Billing Dispatch)
Bert Starr, South Central MT Zone Co-Representative (Gallatin NF)
Andy Randall, North Dakota Zone Co-Representative (North Dakota Dispatch)
Tim Murphy, NRCG Contractor Liaison
Jim Blankenship, DNRC Training Representative
Bryan Connelley, South Central MT Zone Representative
Tim Crosmer, Eastern MT Zone Representative
Robert Rebarchik, F&WS Representative
Judy Heintz, South Central MT Zone
Lily Huskey, NRCG Business Representative (North Dakota Dispatch)
Kelly Hall, Bitterroot NF (Bitterroot Dispatch)
James Barnett, NRCG Fire Use Representative
Kitty Ortman, Southwest MT Zone Representative (Lolo NF)
Robert LaPlant, BIA East Zone Representative (Billings Dispatch)
Angel Becker, CNF (Billings Dispatch)
Debby Atencio, North Idaho Zone (Coeur d'Alene Dispatch)
Maggie McDonald, Northern Rockies Training Center
Paul Fieldhouse, Northern Rockies Training Center
Julia Genre, North Idaho Zone Representative (Coeur d'Alene Dispatch)
Risa Lange-Navarro, Northern Rockies Training Center
Gary Boyd, Northern Rockies Dispatch Center

Special thanks from Bob for those individuals who are here representing other NRCG Working Teams.

Updates

[handout] NRCG Training Committee Members and Technical Specialist 'contact' list was passed around for updates for the following training zones: Central MT Zone; Eastern Montana Zone; North Dakota Zone; North Idaho Zone; Northwest Montana Zone; South Central Montana Zone; Southwest Montana Zone.

Review and approval of Spring 2006 notes

No issues of '06 minutes, current verbiage will stand as is.

Prioritization of NR out of area nominations

Group reviewed and prioritized the out-of-area and national nominations on the spreadsheet. Bob will finalize and send out to the Zone Training Representatives.

Sand Tables (Paul Fieldhouse)

10/12/06 email was sent out to Training Zone representatives, "I have spoken to 1 or 2 of you about an idea I've had since moving into this position here at NRTC. My impression is that there is a fairly high level of interest in utilizing sandtables for learning, AARs, briefings, and other uses at the unit level. I was amazed last year in S-339 Division Group Supervisor and S-404 Safety Officer how many folks said they had never taken part in a sandtable activity previously -- and they loved it!!

I have the impression that there is a significant number of folks who have interest in putting on sandtable activities but don't feel confident that they can jump right in and start using a sandtable. My thought is that sandtables, if used well, can be incredibly effective tools -- and sandtable activities should be going on at the unit level and not reserved for courses here at NRTC or even at the "forest" level. We probably do not have the capacity to train the pool of interested folks very fast here at NRTC. I see that the Needs Analysis for 2007 shows a need for 60 folks to take the Simulation Development and Delivery course, however the class maximum is 25.

So what I'm proposing is that the zones develop a cadre to put on a 1 - 2 day workshop specifically on using sandtables. I would imagine this workshop to be lean on lecture and philosophy but heavy on hands-on practice. I do have access to lesson plans for instruction in using sandtables for Tactical Decision Games. This material could make up a significant portion of the workshop. Some of the zones already have sandtable practitioners that could come together and start putting these workshops on as early as next spring. If a particular zone had a need and an interest, I would be willing to help a zone put there cadre together and even organize a "train-the-trainer" workshop if needed.

So, this is a seed I'm throwing out there. Talk it over in your zone meetings, see if there is indeed a need and an interest, and let me know if I can be of any further assistance."

ACTION ITEM: Please follow-up with Paul regarding your training zones needs/wants on a potential sand table workshop.

S-420

S-420 is being hosted by NR in 2007, there is a tri-regional agreement between Pacific Northwest, Great Basin, and Northern Rockies Geographical Area. The NRTC can facilitate up to 3 teams, upon current review of nominations, we are no where close to full-filling 3 teams unless we get other GA's to help fill certain holes.

ACTION ITEM: Be sure to complete the supplemental form along with NWCG nomination form.

AD's and PTB initiation/certifying (Carol Bienhold)

Question on who certifies contractor and AD PTB's as contractors and AD's want to become certified in higher positions such as STEN. A request to have verbiage added to the operating plan regarding this issue.

- Agencies do not provide additional training to contractors or AD's.
- NR has 48 MOU providers, you can access the web page to see who all can train, initiate and certify any of ICS positions and NWCG courses. These MOU providers must meet the FMCG for unit and lead instructors. In addition, those instructors, if still current, can teach for whatever position they are certified for.
- As we all know, it's the final evaluator who is recommending certification and they must be qualified in that position.

- NRCG does have the recommended list of positions that are a need for AD hires. If there are positions not identified, it is said then there are enough positions within the agencies, however this is a guideline.
- Bottom line: The agency certifier who signs off the PTB is usually whomever initiated the PTB and that can be the MOU provider. The certifier is assuming the responsibility/liability of certification. In addition, they will need to maintain a tracking database, issue incident qualification cards, etc.

Proposed Needs Analysis for 2007/2008

Needs Analysis is based on the NR Training Zone's educated guess (professional judgment). Completed annually in March and it is recognized that the training doesn't occur until the following year which can cause numbers to change. Due to the 2006 fire season, a test pilot did not occur in the IQCS database. GA will look at that in 2007.

WIMS Training

Weather Information Management User Training. Currently there is a January 9-13, 2007 session in Albuquerque, NM. ID-CDC is interested in seeing if NR would like to host this same session. After discussion within the group on possible nomination numbers, NR will host this session.

- Risa offered hosting the session during the same week, May 7-11, as the RAWs Maintenance training. Hold this 15-hour workshop/session prior to the maintenance training (natural understandable flow of information).
- NR will add the training to the web page/catalog
- ID-CDC will help coordinate with Risa. Another reminder with a more developed description on who should attend will be forthcoming.

ACTION ITEM: ID-CDC will help coordinate the session with Jim Brain. More information will be forth coming to the training zones.

Finalize Course Audit Procedure to NR Sessions

[handout]

Two issues: 1) sending a nominee to S-290 who doesn't meet the prerequisites, (but is mentally ready) however, the course is needed for SRB and due to time, finance, etc, will attend 2) attending a session who observes/audits a session and yet tries to gain credit as a student

- Field Managers Course Guide is NWCG standard
- Discussion on qualifications between the IMT levels between Type 2 vs. 3 and how the 'auditor' would be in an advanced course for their current or lacking qualification.
- If 'auditing' a course and the employee will be moving up in that functional area, they are then taking advantage of the system.

ACTION ITEM: Training Committee gave approval for courses such as RX-310 cadre (who are specifically Subject Matter Experts) to earn credit (certificate and training competency) for the course that they themselves have never attended as a student. The cadre requested this will complete all pre-work, unit and final tests just like the student.

ACTION ITEM: Training Committee went line by line on the [handout], made edits and finalized. The NR audit procedure will be added to the web page until incorporated into the operating plan. REFERENCE APPENDIX B for the [handout]

Task Group Presentation (Task Group and Committee)

[handout] 4/19/06 NRCG Training Committee Task Group Recommendations on NRTC Training Costs.

ACTION ITEM: Group reviewed the draft letter (line by line) to the NRCG Board of Directors from the NRCG Training Committee regarding the 'NRTC Funding', edits were made and all approved the letter which will be presented at the December BOD meeting by Cunningham.

REFERENCE APPENDIX A for the [handout]

MOU Provider Question (Frank Waterman)

Question from a MOU provider, upon the MOU provider completing an S-212 session, can they, the MOU provider award faller certification?

- There is language within the solicitation that the CRWB/ENGB be able to buck limbs.
- For 2007, NR is looking at R6's Timber Fallers Association solicitation and attempt to do the same in our GA. One thing that needs to be addressed to the Operations WT is in regards to the module definition, is it 2 FALC's? or a FALC with a swamper?
- NRCG identified that the Montana Loggers Association can certify individuals for FALA, FALB, FALC levels.

ACTION ITEM: Overall conclusion is that yes, if a MOU Provider teaches the S-212 course and they are currently qualified as a faller they can certify that individual up to that level. It is strongly suggested that they utilize the FALA/FALB/FALC position task book to become certified in that qualification (use as supporting documentation).

NRCG Committee Reports

Business Management (Lily) nothing to report as the Fall meeting has not occurred yet.

Equipment (Jim) not too much to report as their meeting is later in November. WT will be discussing Best Value issues, how to train EQPI's, look at contacts for the training certification process, etc.

Aviation. No report.

Fire Use (James Barnett). Fire Use is growing in NR. WT looks forward to helping out as SME on upcoming revisions and any related training. The WT deals more on federal issues vs. state issues and is aware to be sensitive to the curriculum. The WT needs to be aware that State employees generally do not work on Fire Use Teams/Modules.

Operations (Cunningham) nominations for S-520 and S-620 will be coming out soon from NARTC.

Prevention (Crosmer) WT is currently working on the Fire Prevention Workshop in conjunction with Great Basin GA, scheduled for May 1-3 in Coeur d'Alene, ID.

NR Native American Committee (Robert LaPlant). Focusing on leadership, informing IMT's of issues that are lined out in the NAC plan. Committee is to work on conduct issues that are not being addressed, as the receiving agencies are not documenting. Will be updating the 2006 NAC plan and currently receiving comments. Support for CRWB refresh. Best Value buses and dispatch mobilization times were an issue this year. Dealing with internal overhead resources wanting to be a higher qualification.

ACTION ITEM: Comments on the 2006 NR Native American Crew Plan can be sent to robert_laplant@blm.gov or 406-896-2900. Web address for the NAC plan: <http://qacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/dispatch/crews/NACplan.pdf>

Contractor Training Verification/Best Value Problems and Solutions (Tim Murphy)

[PowerPoint presentation]

- Establish an interagency contract award and dispatch system, within the Northern Rockies Geographic Area which provides safe, competent, productive, and cost-effective fire suppression resources.
- BV Definition: A procurement and contracting process which allows awarding contracts based on impartial consideration of various factors such as experience, training, and past performance of personnel and capabilities and condition of equipment, thereby providing the greatest overall benefit in response to the requirements.
- Change Agents & Driving Factors: USFS – OIG Audit, DNRC Legislative Audit, BLM Congressional, IDL Fire Program Review
- 2006 Issues: 4 Major Accidents, 0 Serious Injuries, 2 Fraudulent Vehicles, 1 Sexual Harassment, 4 Conflicts, 2 Colo. Fire chasers, 2784 Rumors, Work / Rest Violations, Length of Assignment Violations, False WCFT, False Training Records, Missing / Stolen Equipment, Performance Evaluations
- 2006 BV Items to Review: Severity Definition, 2 vs. 3 Engine Staffing, System Transparency, Long & Short Day Pay
- 2007 Fire Season: 3 year water handling agreement, Engine & Water Tender, Skidgine, Soft Track & Pumper Cat, 3 year bus agreement, 3 year USFS draft plan, Heavy Equipment ?, Inspection Contract, Training & WCT Contract, NWCG FEWT Engine & Tender Typing Changes (11/06), EaTIS tied to ROSS linked to ISUITE ?, IS-700 Requirement ?
- Training Provider Audits: NRCG Board of Directors Target is 1 Audit / MOU Holder in 2007, Audit Format is on the web at, http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrcg/Training_MOU, Audit Parts (Recording Keeping, Instructor Qualifications & Currency, Training Session Audit, Recommendations & Actions), Zone Audit Plan 1/30/07

Regarding the car rental EERA, GSA has an existing agreement with Enterprise and is a better deal than what was contracted in 2006.

ACTION ITEM: December 4, 2006; Comments back to Tim Murphy on the Training/Work Capacity Testing Verification MOU.

ACTION ITEM: December 8, 2006; Comments due back to Kevin Erickson on draft ICS 224 Performance Evaluation form.

ACTION ITEM: January 30, 2007; Zone Training Representatives prepare their zone training provider audit plan and submit to Tim Murphy.

Testing of IQCS Electronic Nomination Process in NR (Bob Cunningham)

Bob went through the process of nominating an employee through the IQCS process.

Just to point out numbers, there were ~204 out-of-area nominations and ~1500 NR nominations, knowing how time consuming the paper nomination process is, this is a future benefit and shows the potential to be less time consuming.

NRTC identified 6 courses to test: S-404, S-360, S-258, S-491, S-445, and IQCS for FMO's. Some of the Training Zones will be testing the local level training courses.

ACTION ITEM: May 2007 is the next meeting of the GA Training Representatives with the IQCS Change Board. That will be the due date to get your comments into Bob for GA consolidation regarding the IQCS nomination process.

ACE Training 2008 (Cunningham/Buttercup)

Bottom line: Spring 2008, Missoula, MT is on the list for consideration. What will occur now is the National Business Center will complete a cost analysis.

- Missoula 'now' meets the requirements of 3 large meeting rooms

ACTION ITEM: At the March NR Training Committee meeting, need to confirm if the 2008 ACE session in Missoula is a go or not, if not, NRTC needs to make decision on hosting a 2007 mini ACE session. Would Maggie be the course coordinator?

If a mini ACE session is held, NR must have a certified ACE instructor and NR only has 3-4 instructors, would have to have support from other GA's. It's up to the aviation units to pursue ACE instructor qualifications.

MISCELLANEOUS/BIN ITEMS

Procurement Workshop

Dates have been moved to the RTA dates/location. As a reminder it is open to all agencies at no cost.

ACTION ITEM: Cunningham to send out the procedures on how to submit nominations to this session.

IS-700 National Incident Management System, An Introduction

At this time, this is a requirement for the Forest Service. Due date for completion is June 1, 2007.

IS-800 National Response Plan, An Introduction

At this time, this is a requirement for the Forest Service. Due date for completion is June 1, 2007.

IQCS for FMO's

Current session falls on Presidents Day, a federal holiday, suggestion to modify the dates and post on the web.

D-311 Initial Attack Dispatcher

Request from the Center Managers to host another D-311 in 2007 based on the lack of IADP resources out there. NRTC can not host the session in Missoula. The Northwest GA is the only other GA hosting this session and rumor has it they are not accepting that many or if any out-of-area noms.

UPDATE: Pacific Northwest GA is NOW hosting two D-311 sessions.

ACTION ITEM: Consensus from Training Committee, to approve the Center Managers to host a D-311 session if they can find a course coordinator, lead instructor and cadre. It is recognized that this is a SME course. Once finalized with training information, it will be shared with training zones and posted on the web.

Aviation COR session in Eastern Montana?

There are a large number of participants who need this training and a Training Zone has requested to put on a session in Eastern Montana.

ACTION ITEM: Send an email to Cunningham with requested dates, locations and approximate numbers of nominees. Bob will start the process with Kathy Benson who administers the contract, just a reminder that this is a tuition course.

NR Nominations

Request to have the NR course selections sent out sooner or posted on the web sooner. Reasons for this request as it will help nominees make those personal decisions, perhaps will help prevent cancellations and help the Training Representative know if their extra nominations will even have a chance to get selected.

- Note that 'pre-work' is one of the reasons for the late selections.
- Bob agrees that NR needs to do a better job, NR strives for 6 weeks in advance to have selections made.
- NR struggles with the cancellation rate and would like to avoid sending out 5-6 amended selection rosters. Suggestion to have the roster at least posted on the web and then a final selections roster sent out closer to the course date.

Competitive Sourcing

Nationally the federal land base agencies, 'fire management training' will be addressed. They will be looking at opportunities of out sourcing to the private sector. Aviation being looked at, only FS side, not as an interagency (DOI). BLM is taking the lead, starting in a few weeks in Albuquerque. Long term, no one knows. This is the first step in a multi-year process. Most likely we'll be receiving data calls. Not sure what they will consist of just be prepared as we will be impacted.

Cost Analysis, continued...

It was an interagency group who met to discuss the cost for the NRTC. There is a second part, which is reporting to all numerous levels/working teams. A strategic plan was requested on the NR Training Center. NRTC needs to look at the plan as a whole vs. just an agency. Bob is putting together a plan to present to the FS FMO's in November '06 – based on that meeting, will send out recommendations. More information will be forth coming.

Transition with new Training Committee Chair

Welcome and congrats to Beth Card.

NEXT MEETING

March 12-13, 2007 in Lewistown, MT

Note that the Training Committee meeting is tied with the Dispatcher Workshop which is March 14-16.

A list of motels: <http://www.lewistownchamber.com/directory/index.php?cat=145>

APPENDIX A

TO: Northern Rockies Coordinating Group (NRCG)
Board of Directors

FROM: NRCG Training Committee
NRCG Training Committee Task Group

DATE: 10/25/06

REF: Northern Rockies Training Center (NRTC) Funding

Please refer to the attached draft recommendations from the NRCG Training Committee Task Group for further clarification of the NRCG Training Committee recommendations.

The NRCG Training Committee is making the following recommendation for funding changes to the Northern Rockies Training Center.

- 1) Increase the tuition charged to Non-NRCG Member Agencies and NRCG Member Agencies who are not party to the NRCG Training Agreement to \$470.00 per seat.
- 2) Average the cost per NRCG student seat over the previous three years and adjust the tuition on a yearly basis for future years.
- 3) Request the Training Center Manager develop and track the actual cost of putting on each class at the NRTC so the cost of NWCG curriculum and specialized or agency specific training can be fairly charged to the participants.

We plan to implement these items in FY -2007. We appreciate your concurrence.

fs *Frank E. Waterman*

Frank E. Waterman – Chair, NRCG Training Committee
Assistant Center Manager – IA Supervisor
Coeur d’Alene Interagency Dispatch Center
(208) 772-3283

10/26/06

Date

APPENDIX B

NRCG Course Audit Procedure

These guidelines will be utilized when considering a request to audit an NWCG course.

Definition of an Audit (of a training course): attendance at a training course for the sole purpose of observing and listening with no intent to participate in graded activities or receive a Certificate of Successful Completion.

Background

From time to time, it may be appropriate for individuals who do not meet course prerequisites as identified in the PMS 901-1 Field Managers Course Guide (FMCG) to audit an NWCG course. This procedure identifies circumstances when a request to audit a course can be considered by the Course Coordinator or Lead Instructor. NRCG member agency sponsored individuals who meet Field Manager Course Guide prerequisites will receive priority to audit requests.

Audit Criteria

1. An individual sponsored by an NRCG member agency does not meet FMCG course prerequisites, but there will be a benefit to their agency from the skills and knowledge gained from the course. Examples include a fire research scientist who would gain knowledge from attending RX-410 Smoke Management or an Operations Section Chief who attends S-378 Air Tactical Group Supervisor to better understand the position responsibilities of the position they supervise.
2. An individual sponsored by a non-NRCG member agency does not meet FMCG prerequisites, but will benefit from the skills and knowledge gained in the course when required to respond to All Hazard Assignments by their sponsoring agencies. Examples include: U.S. Coast Guard, Fire Department of New York, or USDA Animal Health and Inspection Service.

Documentation of Training

In all cases where an individual is authorized to audit a course, no NWCG Certificate of Completion will be issued and no course certification will be granted.