

JOINT FEWG/FEWT MEETING
CALGARY, ALBERTA

October 20, 2003

Gord Watkins of Parks Canada welcomed everyone to the meeting. Field trip will be on Wednesday and we will visit cache trailers that Gord is responsible for. Dennis Discoll announced that the National Air Group is meeting in Banff this week.

Introductions were made and Serge announced there would not be a vendor this year.

Tory Majors, FEWT Chair, welcomed the group and said she would like to keep the line of communications open for a good working relationship with our two groups.

Barry Marsden, Manager – Fire Equipment Development, Victoria Australia, presented a power point program outlining the equipment that is being worked on in Australia.

Topics covered were as follows:

- Aerial Drip Torch Evaluation
- High lift pumper
- Retardant Mixer
- Hose testing
- Tow plates
- Remote camera
- Bulk Foam Transport Trailer
- Rural Tanks
- Non approved Fire Fighting Chemicals in Australia
- Hand Held Technology for dispensing ping pong balls
- Aerial Incendiary Technology

J.P. Greene, Air Representative, Florida Division of Forestry, did a power point presentation. Florida Division of Forestry has been operating demilitarized AH-1 “Cobra” attack helicopters in the wild land firefighting role with the Bambi Bucket since 2000. Now, a new tool is ready to come on line, the Cobra Tanker. Fitted with 360-gallon aluminum tank (Sheetcraft, Inc. of Santa Paula California) the aircraft can carry more water faster than before. The tank fills in 28 seconds through a 6-inch “snorkel”, is fitted with foam injection, and can drop in salvo, trail, and split configurations. The aircraft is currently undergoing flight-testing at Tallahassee to establish standard operating procedures and checklists for the new configuration, and is expected to be fully operational for Florida’s winter fire season.

George Jackson, Advisor MTDC, reported that the new fire shelter is out. There are about 26,000 of them that are available now. It is 8/10 of one pound heavier. The blue pack will carry the new fire shelter. Pulaski heads were re-furbished over this last summer and will take a look at doing one more round of them this winter. Cost is \$26.00 each. FR Cotton PPE was wear tested in the field during the 2003 field season, waiting on responses back from the field. Flight Following will be on all tankers soon. Portable

radio headsets which attach to helmets are currently being field tested and will be evaluated again in the 2004 field season. Initial responses that they could improve communications and improve safety for dozer operators, fallers and pump and engine operators or any high ambient noise environment. MTDC is also looking at night vision goggles and heat sensing devices. MTDC is also involved with Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program currently looking at a small crawler tractor for fire suppression and fuels which is remotely controlled. George presented the CD on the FEWT's 1984 and 1997 surveys results. Dan Lang asked if we could incorporate with CDF?

Tory Majors reported the NWCG has tasked the Incident Business Practice Working Team with looking at Incident Base Automation (all functional areas). The Forest Service is providing funding in FY 04 for the beginning of re-engineering

Bill McMichael representing GSA along with Bill Hicks said there are 25,955 new generation fire shelters in stock with 26,400 due. In May of 2004 there will 9,876 of the practice shelters in stock. The company that had the contract for fire clothing filed bankruptcy in the middle of fire season. Contracts are being put into place and they are getting stock on the shelf again. There were no problems with BDU's. GSA is moving from Stockton to Sharpe Army Depot soon. It was delayed for various reasons, but all will be in place before the FY04 fire season.

The specification for Long term retardant went out for comments. Comments from CDF, FEWG, vendors, and Forest Service were reviewed point by point. It takes two years to get a product approved. Haven't looked at foam and water enhancers yet. Salt content level is at 10.6 and will be changed to 11.5.

Serge Poulin would like a better line of communications open between the US and Canada. We need to keep the specification the same when we cross boundaries. Using an international specification would make going across boundaries easier. Sometimes a simple e-mail would make things work better between our groups. If a product hasn't been tested the Canadians are not going to use it. Tory will establish a process to share information with Canada through WFCS.

Salt level is a cost issue as well as effectiveness. Corrosion is big issue. One product is approved in the U.S. for fixed tank on helicopters. Canada/Australia won't use gel product until they are fully approved. CDF is testing a cost value analysis on water gels currently.

Specifications 304c, 306, 307 hope to be in final draft in December and out for comments and changes made in January.

What is the time line for approved water enhancers?

Forest Service having to report to a different level on our QPL's. It takes 12 to 36 months to get approvals. Tory will have a briefing paper done and will e-mail it out to everyone.

Canada will not use a foam product if it is not on approved list.

Water enhancers go through a test process as well.

Quality Assurance program is still being used for long-term retardants. Forest Service is still required to send samples even if product is not being used. Can Shirley add to the report that sent in the sample? **Yes that can be done – Tory will work with WFCS.**

CDF is going to use issue their own contracts for retardants this year.

Need to state where a product stands on testing processing as it may save some time. Letters should be sent to all agencies. Canadian Aviation Group will discuss the products on the QPL that contain YPS at their meeting. At present time they intend to continue to use those products.

A survey on foam is being done. Shirley will compile the information. Barry is handing his out now. He will forward to Shirley in March or April. Need a block for mis-information. This is not just a foam survey. Water enhancers are included.

Drinking water a big issue in fire camps. We can get it there: we just don't do it. The cost of bottled water is more expensive than gasoline. Re-cycle of the plastic bottles isn't being done. Therefore there are a lot of bottles out there. GSA has a 55-gallon water bag, but the freight is costly. **George will send a bag as well as a 5-gallon cubi to John in Alberta to test.**

The rest of the time was spent brainstorming of where do we want to be. Some of the points were as follows:

- Meet with aviation people. Send representative to each other's meeting. There is a feeling of being isolated.
- Send some people from CIFFC to some of the meetings. What is the value? If just one idea is found it is very valuable.
- Sharing information with each other. Internet access, pictures, hyper links, need to become efficient at sharing information and not lose ideas, concepts, issues and solutions.
- Develop a task group with reporting back to keep on track and use conference calls.
- Exchanging ideas and objectives. Have minutes on Internet so that sharing information is possible.
- Directory of fire equipment people on both sides.
- Collective list of internet sites
- Exchange of equipment on both sides
- Canada providences need to look at international things, not just providences.
- Do we have the right people at the table? Who do we need at the table?
- CDF sends a subject matter specialist and the looks at the consensus.
- Share ideas on how to think about what can be done rather than equipment.

- Cross-section on different issues, diverse group of people.
- Sharing ideas is important; maybe people can't make meeting every year.
- Need area of specialty on mailing list for members and other contacts (subject matter experts)
- Saving time and money by seeing what else is going on.
- Take a look at what we are doing is a healthy thing to do.
- What if we didn't have this group?
- Corporate knowledge, training, field trips
- Right people here, the guys that do the work.
- Value of moving meetings addressed in minutes
- Like smaller group as there is more interaction.
- We are all doing the same thing
- Savings, efficiency, safety
- What can Serge and Tory do better?
- Location, location, location
- Start meeting on same day.
- Sharing resources
- Serge attend FEWT meeting
- Work more on agenda items, get more information from people
- Agency reports are important.

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October 23, 2003

- Action:** Add program of responsibility to mailing list.
- Action:** Re-do directory of people involved in fire equipment, etc.
Roger has old copy. Send any information to Ricki.
- Action:** Develop a communication strategy to share information.
Include directories, web pages, and bulletin boards.
Identify chairs from each group and forward it to each country and then they can decide what to send on. (**Tory will draft and share with Serge for editing**)
- Action:** Send web sites that are public to Tory and she will get links set up for them on the FEWT web page.

General Information:

Serge liked the aspect of benefits of saving dollars, efficiencies, fire safety and he will use this statement where he can.

The group would like to hold meeting in a more secluded area. It works well and we are more focused.

Tory would like agenda items even if you have missed the deadline.

FEWT is going to develop a system to get information from the ground for feedback. If anyone has questions send all those issues in so they can be addressed early on. Make sure things don't get dropped off the radar screen.

- Action:** Updated mailing list and directory is due March 1, 2004. (**Serge and Tory to oversee**)

Water enhancement specification will be out in December.

- Action:** Tory will forward to Serge and all responses from NWEF will go back to Serge. Les Hoseapple is available to answer questions too.

KEEP THE INFORMATION FLOWING!

Forward any great pictures to John Belanger. He will make CD's and get them out to the groups.

Next joint meeting will be the week of October 17, 2005, and FEWT will host.