

Fire Equipment Working Team (FEWT) Meeting Notes

Fall Meeting: October 28-30, 2008
National Interagency Fire Center
Boise, ID

Attendee's: Tory Henderson, Steve Counts, Ralph Gonzales, Jackie Hawley, Bill Hicks, Mike Smith, Kirk Bradley, Rich Rusk, Leslie Anderson, Kim Christensen, George Broyles, Dave Haston, Bill Yohn and Matt Crudde,
Guests: Jim Erickson, Paul Schlobohm

Tory: Good morning and introductions

Agenda & Action Item list review:

Flexible agenda due to guest schedules and some conference calls.

Welcomed Guests Jim Erickson and Paul Schlobohm

Jim Erickson: Liaison shift with NWCG, under the new organization Branch Coordinators will act in the liaison role and there is intent to empower the committees more than in the past. NWCG is presently working on budget development...with the merger of NWCG and NFAEB we are trying to determine the real number, now have different sources and they feel its important to get numbers so groups have a better idea of their funding early so they can plan work.

The WFLC charter has been extended for 5 years, feel that it will stay relatively intact with a new administration.

The intent for NWCG is to make the transition move faster; it could be a year or more for committee level transition to new title, charters and sub groups to occur.

Paul Schlobohm: Talked about new NWCG structure, the Equipment and Technology Branch (he is the acting Branch Coordinator), and how the Equipment Technology Committee will likely function in the future.

There was discussion on the ETC membership and there is a gap with aviation relative to equipment...should the ETC have an aviation member...should there be an equipment specialist for non-wildland fire apparatus...such as to support all-risk?

Tory: NWCG/NFAEB merger and new governance structure update. In the latest draft of the new sub-structure the FEWT would be known as the Equipment and Technology Committee (ETC). When the process is finalized we will determine the makeup of ETC, the Sub-committee's and the task teams.

NRF/NIMS identified as a program area that needed more focus.

Action Item: Tory will ask Neal Hitchcock for an aviation liaison before May 2009.

ETC needs a replacement for western states

Action Item: Tory will continue to work with NASF for replacement unless they decide that one representative is adequate.

NEW Charters in New format for ETC with its subcommittees and units:

Action Item: Matt will update current charters that are formatted to NWCG guidelines by 3/1/2009.

Action Item: Tory and Matt will develop a group overview document by 3/1/2009.

Decision was made to sunset the logistics task group and add the logistics chair position to the ETC membership.

Action Item: Rich Rusk will draft a letter to ETC Chair to sunset the logistics task group by December 2008.

Matt: FEMA/DHS supply chain update. The Distribution Management Strategy Working Group (DMSWG) continues to have weekly meetings to develop plans to optimize supply chain management for the next hurricane or other significant event. Lessons Learned from this seasons hurricane support pointed to needing to have a better handle on deliveries when the location changed after the order.

BLM: Was not available

Jacqueline Hawley, BIA:

National Fleet management committee has been established. Continue pursuing to filling two fleet center manager positions that are presently vacant. BIA is continuing to standardize the model 52 and looking at a 5 year completion plan and also considering the other fire support vehicles like crew carriers. Purchased some V10 gas powered models instead of diesel and they have performed well so far, getting automatic transmissions and that is working as well and offers simpler operator orientation. Sent some model 52's to SDTDC for testing this year and all had a good experience and information sharing opportunity. Looking to adopt BLM ATV safety and training policies for use. The BIA has completed acquiring the new generation fire shelters for regulars and now working on the AD membership...the goal is to be totally transitioned by end of 2010 as required.

Action item: Jackie will e-mail the BIA information on crew carriers to Tory.

Mike Smith, US Fish & Wildlife: WCF effort to piggyback on BLM program is still ongoing for mobile equipment replacement. ATV safety issues with firing operations and looking for some ideas there from FEWT membership (BLM has established safety courses and other training for ATV that may be useful). The USF&W procured a Tratra engine in Lakeview Oregon.

Bill Yohn, Park Service: Have a Capital equipment group now which will be meeting in mid November and getting a handle on equipment inventory. The Park Service is also continuing to pursue piggyback agreement with BLM Working Capital Fund process as well.

Bill Hicks, GSA 2008 Fire Season Report:

Fire Program sales for FY08 = \$56.2 M (FY07 = \$53.8 M, FY06 = \$56.2 M). Set new record for monthly sales in July - \$20.8M due to California fires.

3/4-INCH WYE VALVE AND SHUTOFF VALVES (NFES 0272 & 0738)

These items were scheduled for upgrading to brass construction this past year but first article issues delayed shipments. We continued to purchase the low-cost die-cast zinc versions in order to maintain availability for our customers. Now, we have both versions in stock and will transition to the brass items once we have depleted the zinc stock. The brass items are significantly more expensive than the zinc products.

NFES 0272: \$16.12 vs. \$4.28

NFES 0738: \$12.70 vs. \$2.36

PORTABLE PUMPS, NFES 0148 & 0601

Wildfire Mark 3 pump vs. Mercedes Textiles Wick 375 pump: This was not an issue as expected due to low sales. Therefore, we have significant stock of both NFES items (0148 – 92 & 0601 – 124). The 2009 GSA fire catalog will include photos of both pumps to further reinforce the statement that customers may receive either pump.

INCREASED FIRST ARTICLE SAMPLE REVIEWS BY SDTD

As previously reported last spring, we had a large number of new water handling equipment contracts that required first article inspections by San Dimas. Due to various delays within the process (both contractor and agency related), we did not meet the planned stocking levels for some items by June 1st. Some of the items were not available until late in the season. However, all FA's have been completed and we will be at full stock levels for 2009.

DRIP TORCH (NFES 0241)

Supplied as new GSA item in 2008. Contractor – Cascade Fire Equipment, price \$ 118.59

NEW BDU'S – Kevlar/Nomex blend

As expected, the new Kevlar/nomex BDU's were not available this year due to contract and first article issues. Another attempt at first article inspection is expected shortly. Once first article samples are approved, orders will be placed with the contractor (120-day delivery time). Ten sizes will be offered at first. NFES numbers and NSN's have been assigned. Remember these will only be available through GSA and not stocked in the National Interagency Support Caches.

CHAINSAW CHAPS

Color change from green to orange is complete. Material delays slowed production early in the season but all three sizes are currently in stock.

FIRE SHELTER PULL STRAP RETROFIT

Regular size complete shelters (NFES 0925) retrofitted to date: 40,320

Shelters at contractor to be retrofitted: 5,760

Remaining shelters to be retrofitted: 4,320

All regular single shelters (0926) have been retrofitted; Current stock – 9,749

FIRE SHELTER SALES FY08:

Regular complete – 12,834

Regular single – 1,961

Total Regular – 14,795

Large complete – 6,753

Large single – 1,038

Total Large – 7,791

FIRE SHELTER SOLICITATION

Solicitation to be issued soon. It will require a source selection panel.

FIRELINE PACK CONTRACT

New contract for fireline pack was awarded to Weckworth (previous contractor for fire shelters, current contractor for waterbags, face/neck shroud, chainsaw chaps, etc.). First article samples currently at MTDC (or in transit) for evaluation. Delivery 60 days after FA approval.

GLOVE MODIFICATION

Revised Forest Service glove specification incorporated into FPI contract. First article samples have been approved. Future orders will be filled with the new rough-out design. Existing stock should be depleted sometime during 2009 fire season. Due to increases in leather production costs, the selling prices will raise significantly. Final pricing is not available at this point.

NEW GLOVE DESIGN

Wildland fire glove offered by Shelby Glove (NFPA compliant) will be available next year. Initial purchase orders to be awarded soon and delivery required 30 days afterwards. The new gloves will not be stocked in the NISC at this time.

NEW GLOVE DESIGN – PART TWO

Wildland fire glove offered by The Glove Corporation (NFPA compliant) will also be available next year. NSN's have been assigned and we are in the process of procuring the initial stock quantities.

YELLOW FIELD PACK AND COMPONENTS

Remaining stock: Complete pack = 4,459; Main pack = 297. All other components are sold out. Need to survey the national caches to determine remaining pieces and complete packs.

Action Item: Tory will obtain numbers from the NISC to determine if consolidation within the cache system makes sense. 3/15/2009

PSYCHROMETERS

Future orders for psychrometers will incorporate non-mercury thermometers. Existing stock of belt weather kits (1,277) have psychrometers with mercury thermometers. After these are sold, future kits will include the non-mercury psychrometers. NFES still needs to develop phase-out strategy for current inventory if necessary.

State and Local Agency use of GSA Advantage

The GSA Advantage website was updated last April and now state and local activities can register as a state or local user. Once they have registered as a state/local, then they will only see the products they are eligible to purchase under the cooperative programs (and not the fire program). The fire program allows state and local activities to purchase items from GSA's stock program (aka GSA Global Supply) using an Activity Address Code (AAC). The cooperative purchasing program allows state and local governments to purchase off specific schedules without an AAC. Additionally, they will be able to purchase online with their state or local credit card (but just through the cooperative programs). They are not required to obtain an Activity Address Code (AAC) in order to register on GSA Advantage as a state/local user.

GSA's State and Local Cooperative Purchasing Program, authorized by statute, allows state and local governments to purchase under specific GSA Schedule contracts to save time, money, and meet their everyday needs and mission. The Local Preparedness Acquisition Act expands the scope of the GSA Cooperative Purchasing Program, to allow state and local governments access to Schedule 84 for total solutions for Law Enforcement, security, facilities management, fire, rescue, clothing, marine craft and emergency/disaster response and marine crafts and equipment as well as Schedule 70 for information technology equipment, software, and services.

As Schedule 84 vendors accept the mass modification a  icon will appear next to their company name and products and services in GSA E-library and GSA *Advantage!*®

The new law opens up Schedule 84 without the previous restriction of disaster relief or recovery efforts only. Therefore, state and local activities without an AAC will be able to purchase Wildland fire equipment from schedule vendors. However, they will have no assurance that the equipment meets applicable Forest Service specifications, that it has passed first article inspection requirements, and their only avenue for discrepancy resolution will be direct with the schedule contractor. Also, the equipment will typically be more costly as they lose the benefit of consolidated purchasing through GSA Global Supply.

The GSA Fire Program website contains a notice warning state and local fire program users not to register as a state or local user on Advantage. If they do, then they will not be able to purchase the fire program items via the GSA Advantage or Global Supply websites.

STATUS OF STATE/LOCAL CREDIT CARD ISSUE

Basically unchanged from previous reports. The Forest Service has put together a list of AAC's that need to be verified before they allow us to move forward on the project. Our suggestion was to push for one region to complete the task and then we could run a pilot program within it. Since the new rollout of Advantage will allow state and local credit cards, a modification to verify the AAC should not be difficult.

NEW AAC ORDERING REQUIREMENT (Only applies to online and Call Center orders)

Customers ordering using a new AAC will be prompted to seek supervisory approval. This requirement will apply for online customers (GSA Global Supply, **GSA Advantage!**) as well as phone orders to GSA Global Supply. This change is tentatively scheduled to take effect on November 10, 2008. Supervisory approval must be renewed every 6

months to continue ordering. Steps are underway to streamline this process and minimize any “manual” actions. In all cases, the goal is to strengthen GSA control and assist customer agencies with oversight of their AAC spending. Additional details will be forthcoming as we approach the implementation date and resolve some technical questions.

GSA Fire Program Website reminder

The GSA Fire Program website (www.gsa.gov/fireprogram) will be updated periodically to include new items of interest. Please encourage people to view it on a regular basis.

GSA EXPO

The GSA Expo will be held in San Antonio, Texas June 9 – 11, 2009. It offers multiple opportunities for training. The 2008 GSA Expo included a specific state and local training track plus a ceremony attended by the GSA Administrator that honored the fire shelter contractors and a firefighter who deployed a shelter in 2007 (Alabaugh Canyon Fire).

Bill Hicks
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Steve Counts, Southeastern States/Virginia: Had a single day in 2008 that was equal to an average season in terms of fire suppression. Serious budget issues...other Southeastern States have similar situation. Closing down prisons, could impact firefighting due to using convict crews to fight fires. State of Virginia is not filling positions and also laying off personnel...potential that equipment like engines may not be staffed. 5 inches below average rainfall this year so far...12 inches below average rainfall last year. The 130/190 on line course in conjunction with 16 hrs of field training is proving to be effective...fire in the field website: <http://www.itm-info.com/fireinthefield/virginia.htm>. provides a link to CD-Rom training.

Kirk Bradley, Roscommon Equipment Center: Kirk presented a powerpoint on current REC projects. Had a successful and productive REC workshop this fall, REC website: <http://www.roscommonequipmentcenter.com/>
The Federal Excess Property Program (FEPP) workshop is November 17 in Tucson, Arizona.

Kim Christensen, NFES/Dispatch presentation:

NFES meets next week...looking at SOPs for the group to include new item introduction and transition/disposal planning. NFES will discuss group membership and the Chairperson under the new NWCG substructure.

Dispatch: trying to stay ahead of Viper/best value/typing and how to status in Ross.

Continue to access wildland fire decision support reports and procedures.

Leslie Anderson: Ignition report: Wes said the group is meeting first week in November. FS sent official request to OSHA on a couple of fuel handling items for

alternative standard. OSHA has taken the matter under consideration with no time frame for response and the Fuel Handling Guide remains delayed for official signature.

NFPA: Dave Haston & Leslie Anderson

Working on synchronization of pump requirements with NWCG typing standards. Discussion on respirator standards...The safety and Health Working Team has asked group of specialists to make recommendations for addressing CO levels on the line and in camp. Need to consider a test for monitoring CO on the fireline in order to be prepared when respirator standards are published. Appropriate actions will also include monitoring and moving people out of area.

Action Item: Dave to draft a letter to Tory on a proposal to test CO on the fireline.
3/1/2009

Leslie: The proposed wildland PPE standard includes:
Driving gloves for wildland firefighters...the performance of the current flight gloves were used to develop the new standard.

Fit requirements for garments have changed...smaller cuff on pants...total heat loss requirement taken out of standard and put awareness language in the annex.

Selection Care And Maintenance (SCAM) document: 10 year expiration from manufacturer date for stuff and not allowing the laundering of fire garments at home are two items that will likely be in the proposed document.

Mike Smith: PFD (personal floatation devices) for firefighters...discussion on new NFPA standards...need to research standards and perform a market search for PFDs that considers firefighters needs.

Action Item: Tory will task T & D to look into NFPA PFD standards and perform a commercial market search for appropriate PFDs for firefighters.

Tory: Chemicals discussion in relation to planning and zoning...ingress/egress, construction materials...those kinds of standards.

It would be useful to have more representation from the agencies on other NFPA committee's so that decisions made get a federal perspective.

1906 standard for wildland fire typed equipment...NFPA requirement additions for wildland fire engines would render a lot of agency and cooperator equipment unavailable due to DHS typing...need to identify/quantify how much impact in terms of unavailable assets because of significant existing stock don't meet the 1906...staffing concerns on qualification standards as well.

Dave will be on a conference call the next week with the DHS engine typing group...he will continue to point out concerns with new standards.

Note: Dave was successful on retaining wildland fires typing standards for engines.

Leslie: There is a new rule that goes into effect Nov. 2008 that requires any worker in a road right-of-way to wear a vest that meets visibility standards. There are issues with

this requirement as no vests meet the wildland fire protective requirements and the visibility requirements. We are working through the issues and possible solutions and the implementation of meeting the rule is unique for wildland firefighters versus other resource program areas.

George Broyles: Crew production study status report, need to get additional data in Eastern/Southern fuel types. There was discussion on combining CO2 testing on the fireline with the production study.

Dave Haston: Wildfire is looking at making a exhaust system modification to meet emission standards for the 2-stroke mark III.

Prarie fire engine platform: products that offer a safer method of tactical operations on grass fires by using restraints to reduce fall potential. Comments on harness...bulky...restraints expose the head area...

A hybrid chassis for vehicles like the crew carrier are available from Freightliner...LA County to purchase and evaluate.

Mobile Equipment group membership status, added Bill Yohn from the Park Service. Discussion on maintaining the group focus on wildland fire engines but knowing that other taskings for typing of other equipment is likely, in the future there may be a need to look at membership for additional equipment expertise.

Action Item: Equipment group...tasked to mobile equipment group to build an electronic catalog that categorizes specialized equipment that includes pictures and product specifications. Preliminary work is available to take advantage of. **October 2009**

Dave Haston: Tasked with compiling information and look at what format would work to assemble information for users to access over the web and make comments. Gather information into single database...online survey with consumer report type of concept and have links to additional resources.

ARF (crash rescue) and what kind of stuff it should come with.

Action Item: Dave Haston will research and offer recommendations to the ETC on Normal Unit Strength (NUS) for crash rescue vehicle. **December 1st**

Kirk Bradley: Update on the work done with SDTDC on chemical emissions and potential toxicity that might result inside a vehicle cab when higher temperatures are introduced. Australia has done studies in this area that are also incorporated into the project.

Rich Rusk, Logistics Task Team Update:

Members:

- Jim Starling, NPS rep.
- Laurel Simos, BIA rep.
- Tony Doty, BLM rep.
- Sally Browning, USFS rep.

John Lillehaugh, Western States, rep
No Eastern States, Rep.
Mike Smith, Liaison to ETC

Provided input for AED review and EMT kits

2010 National Logistics Workshop: locations are being researched but no agenda planning has begun.

Rich was selected to a NIMO Logistics Section Chief position and offered to the ETC that NIMO teams can serve as field testers for programs or projects if needed.

Some opportunities have already been offered by others:

- Testing .25 watt ICOM radios for the NIFC radio shop, both Boise and Portland NIMO teams have tested these radios.
- Working with Matt Cnudde on firenet website, ThinClient and Google applications, along with Bob Roth MTDC on remote camera and GPS projects.

Leslie, MTDC project update:

F&AM project update:

- New Fire Shirt styles and fabrics being evaluated.
- Glove field test completed, changes made in current glove design. Have added 2 additional designs to catalog.
- Undergarment study is complete. Tech tip will be published soon.
- Developed good inspection criteria on used shelters and shelter packaging
- Continue to evaluate alternate folding and packaging for fire shelter
- Boot standards review and risk assessment document produced
- Hardhat study –review of standards for protection
- Shift food pilot project continues to improve quality
- Hydration study
- IMT stress study
- ATV helmet for firefighters has been identified and now looking into integrated communication options
- Continue to work on a helicopter grapple
- Annual Situational Awareness poster completed

Life cycle discussion: Looking at the matrix and made decisions on items up for consideration.

Action item: Ralph, Leslie and Bill will look to synchronize procurement cycles with life cycle plans for items procured through GSA. **May 2009**

Discussion on Shift food packages for T3 incidents

Action item: Tory will add consideration of Shift food for T3 incidents as an agenda item, will need to consider flexibility as the range for T3 support varies significantly and usually are of short duration.

Ralph Gonzales, SDTDC projects:

- Publication shift from hard copy to electronic downloadable process
- Production rates for fire crews ongoing and looking at similar New Zealand study
- Fuel Berm(s) study for more durability
- Hydration study in combination with MTDC is on-going
- Weather kit market research for a non-mercury thermometer for the sling psychrometer completed, specification change made, GSA procuring new thermometers.
- 2 Vehicle Wash Specifications have been completed. Next step is to rewrite for contract folks that needs to include requirement to dispose of the gray water & solid waste.
- SDTDC: Looking @ tool handles

Action Item: Ralph to write up Vehicle Wash specifications in contract format. Additional documents to include inspection criteria and contractor performance form.

May 2009

Ralph: Foam curriculum: the present 7 videos that currently are available could be trimmed to 3...also all 3 could be put on a single DVD and/or be available for download. Also need to coordinate with Wildland Fire Chemical Systems for curriculum updating and changes as we are moving toward a more user based approach by different levels and applications.

Action item: Ralph to move forward on the change that edits curriculum and make available by CD/DVD but coordinate with WFCS before moving forward to ensure all parts complemtn every curriculum to be developed. **October 2009**

Fuel Tender dispenser containment requirements have become a question as to what is required. The dispensing can either be from a container or a fuel tender. Need to identify the containers size and spill containment requirements for future use in contracts.

Action item: Ralph will research requirements for spill containment based on quantities. **January 2009**

Tory, AED update: The contract piece has been developed but still looking at options for internal employees to support this capability. We have made contacts to coordinate with DHS with their Urban Search and Rescue authorities to support EMT and AED Incident needs but they have not addressed this issue. We have met with Jan Peterson (Incident Emergency Medical Task Group) and discussed options for internal employees to provide AEDs.

Action Item: Tory to provide IEMTG website information:
<http://www.nwcg.gov/teams/shwt/iemtg/index.html#>

Tory, Innovative Ideas: Have continued to work with Paulicia and Brenna at the lessons learned center on finishing the process. The forms are there on the site, recently did a test submission. (Thurs)

Action item: All members need to send historical Innovative thinker archive data in electronic format to Tory. **May 2009**

Tory, Cache Strategic Plan: Continue to work with contractor (MAI) that will help model, develop operational cost computations, and develop visual products for the options/scenarios that the Cache Community have proposed. Have received a lot of data so far from the caches and the model is starting to take shape.

Tory: Chemicals curriculum and updating the NAFRI chemicals course: There are several new products & how they can be used in different situations and conditions. Tory has tasked the Chemical program manager to develop informational documents that show advantages and properties of all the products on the Qualified Products List.

Foam (solid/sticks) have not been tested and are not on the QPL so are not available for use. Consistent mix ratios are a concern when solid product is dissolving. There was discussion of awareness of the field of available chemical products that are approved for use.

Action item: Tory will send letter on engine curriculum to address QPL awareness and application of foams and water enhancers to James T Lerke. **May 2009**

Old generation Shelter Recycling/Disposal will include all components including the practice shelter and videos.

Action Item: MTDC will work with caches and other organizations on additional market search to recycle items and other innovative approaches to disposing/recycling all components. **February 2009**

Tory: Website: NIFC webpage now has an equipment button...currently it goes to the fire shelter information.

Action Item: Tory to email request to ETC members for a follow-up to the number of shelters still needed for full conversion in order to update NWCG and work with the vendors. **December 2008.**

Leslie: Boot study and report...Tory has forwarded it to Bill Waterbury of the USFS Fire & Aviation Risk Management Division for consideration. The report is large in its present format.

Action Item: Ralph will convert the report into PDF format and e-mail to Tory to forward to the ETC membership. **December 2009**

There was discussion to consider turning NFES Cache Catalog into an electronic document...currently very large...has scanned pictures...also as a NWCG publication it would be required to meet those requirements for format and search features.

Action Item: Tory will work with Jeri Billiard on potential options and issues and have SDTDC assist when decision is made we can move into this format. **May 2009**

Matt, Sign Kits: Matt presented the update on Incident road sign kits for local and national IMT needs. Attempt is to develop specifications and have GSA carry sign kit

components for procurement to help facilitate the standardization. Color, size, weight, bulk and deployment method are part of the analysis.

Action Item: Matt will send George Broyles information so that SDTDC can research and/or design a system to use roll up signs with a post. **December 2008**

Meeting Schedule:

To reduce travel it was recommended to host the Fall meetings in Boise when possible. It was agreed to move the Spring meeting to Boise from Missoula and the combined meeting with the Canadian FEWG will be the first full week in October at the technology center in Missoula.

Tentative Meeting Schedule:

Spring 2009, Week of May 4th in Boise...may be cancelled or be a conference call

Fall 2009, First week in October with FEWG, location MTDC in Missoula.

Spring 2010, TBD

Fall 2010, Boise.