

*NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP
FIRE INVESTIGATIONS WORKING TEAM
MEETING MINUTES*

Roseburg, Oregon
July 14-18, 2003

Members Present:

Paul Steensland, United States Forest Service, Chair
Brian Garvey, IAAI, Co-Chair

Gary White, United States Bureau of Land Management (Ret.)
Ken Ness, Saskatchewan Environmental Resources Ministry, Saskatchewan, Canada
Howard Herman, Alberta Environmental Training Centre, Alberta, Canada
Alan Foster, United States National Park Service
Gary Hilton, United States Bureau of Indian Affairs
Jim Nanamkin, United States Bureau of Indian Affairs
Chris Parker, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, California USA
Richard Gibson, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon, USA
John Carpenter, FLETC
Gary Jagodinsky, United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Noble Dunn, US National Wildfire Coordinating Group, Training Development Unit

Discussion of issues with course presentation materials being presented in Oregon Dept of Forestry, ongoing FI-210 course (Beta Test). STEENSLAND

- There clearly is too much information in the Power Point files for presentation by people who have not had intimate familiarity with the material. Expertise is there, but the slides are bogging them down time wise. Howard has done significant editing of units already presented and additional fine tuning will be made.
- There will be very little change to the instructor guide, however the slide numbers will have to be modified to correlate with the changes to the Power Point.
- Changes to the master instructor guide must be forwarded to Noble Dunn.

Discussion of how the course appears to be going

- GARVEY: too much emphasis on Power Point no video had been used
- We may be emphasizing too much information flow

- Instructors are not getting the opportunity to interact with students, due to volume of slides being presented
- Railroad videos would be highly useful if included into course
- Discussion of what level of information to present
- Next meeting we will begin the process of developing a CD Desk Reference to provide to students, containing all the reference material we can get hold of for the students to use back home
- Terminology question

Type II Course Outline: Is the old model outline still on track in relation to what has developed in the Type III? STEENSLAND

- GARVEY: Proposal to develop FI-310 and FI-410 more closely to simultaneous in order to shorten the production cycle
- WHITE must meet requirements of Taskbooks, so therefore we must first review the Taskbooks too
- A review of the Taskbooks is essential to begin development of the Type II and Type I courses
- We have made a philosophical shift to identify each of the Types as a different job, rather than basic, intermediate and advanced levels of the same job.
- The differentiation of expertise at the Type III and II levels is significant with respect to juvenile fire setters and railroads (and probably other specialties). Additional information should be provided in 210 to help the students understand who to call for assistance and when to do so.
- Also Type II investigators will not necessarily have the expertise to develop useful information in all specialties, this information should be communicated in the presentation
- Discussion of “Flanking” vs. “Lateral” terminology. Lateral is established in our area of influence. Page 2.3 in the instructor guide should include language change in definition of Lateral Fire.
- Methodology describes process to work from the fire run in toward the origin. Should presentation develop the (rare) fire which has no run. Consensus is that

this is covered sufficiently.

Type II Course Objectives Review STEENSLAND

- Review of headings, Unit 12 Practical Exercise discussion of whether training fires should be used for training or whether a set of documentation should be presented to the students
- Is the outline on the right track at this time?
Consensus: Yes, but some work needs to be done to refine it between now and the next meeting.

Working Team members should delve deeply into the course outline before the next meeting and come prepared to discuss necessary changes.

Working Team members should identify areas they want to work on within the course outline to bring it up to speed.

- Do we want a training fire?
Consensus: No. Time constraints, logistics and timing of courses (within a particular venue) preclude training fire. Experienced investigators are attending this class and don't need to see a fire in this application.
- Do we want a continuous thread of practical exercises linked to course presentation throughout the week?
Consensus: Yes. Provide a box of disorganized information at the outset, teach concepts and provide additional information and training exercises throughout the week and have them produce a final product at the end.
- Do we want the students to be responsible for a final product individually or as a group?
Consensus: Course should include practical exercises which include both individual and group exercises.

Consensus: Instructor/student ratio should reflect the need for evaluation and mentoring of students.
- Do we want to limit the length of time the course takes to present?
Consensus: Let the material drive the course length at the outset. If the course justifies longer time, it may be justified. Pre-work package should include requirement to come ready to go to work.

- Should we delve into a Civil or Criminal case as an example course?
Consensus: Criminal case. More opportunity to manipulate and create complexity. Burden of proof is higher and encompasses the civil issues. Also civil issues are woven into the course throughout.

Question discussed and motion brought by Steensland as to whether a proficiency exam should be included into Type III certification - tabled for a final vote for Friday.

- Suggestion by Herman to include proficiency into Type II prerequisite
- Discussion of exam administration overseen by the cadre leader.
- Proposal to develop a list of questions from which a subset would be selected
- Motion modified to include a prerequisite exam for acceptance into FI-310 along with a copy of a closed case report which has been submitted for prosecution or civil action. Seconded. Vote unanimous with quorum.

John Carpenter has accepted transfer to ASAC with Forest Service in R-1 Missoula and will be leaving the Working Team. It is unknown who will be replacing him at FLETC.

Extensive review and discussion of presentation material took up several hours each day during the week. Extensive editing of presentation slide material and instructor guide was accomplished by Herman, White, Steensland and Garvey (FI-110) which was reviewed and further edited by FIWT.

FIWT will table grant proposal discussion to winter meeting. Other project proposals and issues are on track. FIWT will wait until current fire season ends to continue progress with other proposals. It is important to maintain forward progress with course work at this time

FIWT met with FI-210 Beta Test course cadre to receive feedback concerning course content and other aspects of the presentation. Overall, feedback was in agreement with observations of working team. Revisions completed or planned. Steensland and Dunn will meet in Boise within next two to three weeks to make final edits.

Special thanks to the Roseburg Beta test cadre for their valuable contributions to this process.

Both FI-110 and 210 will then be ready for certification.

Next meeting will be in either January or February 2004, location to be announced.