



**Risk Management Committee
Meeting Minutes
Missoula, MT
April 22-24, 2014**

Ted Mason	FWS, NIFC	Tim Blake	NWCG, NIFC
Michelle Ryerson	BLM, NIFC	Larry Sutton	USFS, NIFC
Chad Fisher	NPS, NIFC	Wayne Ching	HI DOF & Wildlife
William Troup	US Fire Administration	John Owens	BLM, NIFC
Hope Spriggs	USFS, NIFC	Joe Domitrovich	USFS, MTDC
Corey Butler	NIOSH	Mark Goeller	OK Dept. of Agr.

Absent Committee Members:

Tony Beitia	BIA, NIFC
Wesley Keller	PA Bureau of Forestry

Meeting Guests:

Tony Petrilli	MTDC
John Kopelicki	
Paul Moore	NIOSH
Dave Haston	USFS, NIFC
Joe Saul	MTDC – Heat Stress Study
Ari Mangan	MTDC
Several U of M Faculty and Research Assistants	

Tuesday, April 22, 2014

NWCG Update – Tim Blake

2014 Budget: \$2000 remains for Dr. Upchurch travel.
Allocated amounts for NWCG in 2015 should be the same as in 2014.

Not Funded:

- Firefit Podcast Literature.
- Roadway Operational Safety for Wildland Firefighting.
- Smoke Transport Funding.
- Volunteer Fire Service Health/Safety Issues (USFA will fund this).
- SAFENET Server – will be covered by BLM. Should not need to be requested through NWCG in the future.
- 2015 Budget requests are due April 28. All documentation is on My Fire Community.
- All IT requests are done separately.

NWCG Executive Board

Proposal to modify 10/18 to incorporate urban interface:

- Tim will draft a response from the Exec Board (the decision was not to modify the 10/18) and will vet through the RMC.

South Canyon 20th Anniversary / Yarnell First Anniversary, awareness of previous fatalities:

- What is the RMCs role to provide review topics, alerts, historical information? What can and should be done? Or should a safety theme of learning be emphasized rather than specific events?
- Tim has offered RMCs assistance if needed.
 - Difference between 9 months post-South Canyon vs. 9 months post-Yarnell.
 - Safety and operational protocol that are in place now, 20 years after South Canyon.
 - Recommendations from investigations have changed.
 - Recognize what information/data firefighters can process in the fire environment and support technological advances that will work within those parameters. (Resource tracking, for example).
 - USFA Nat'l Safety Culture Change Initiative – working on website to promote fire service culture change, reduce risk taking, improve decision making.
- Review video done 9 months post South Canyon (hosted on the LLC YouTube page).

May: Strategic NWCG Meeting: Tim will emphasize 1) Standards, 2) Training and 3) Products.

Joint Fire Science:

- What issues from Yarnell need to be studied? If RMC members have ideas, contact Tim.

Air (Quality) Resource Advisor Workshop next week

- Smoke committee's work in coordinating firefighters and Air Resource Advisors with smoke monitoring equipment may need to be clarified within their charter. (some of the work may currently fall under RMC responsibility).
- Issue with Air Resource Advisors being sent to incidents without IMTs knowledge. There is a need to identify their role in working with the IMTs.
- Send any ideas/action item bullet points to Ted or Tony in the next 7 days.

Separation of duty between Air Support Modules (ASM) and Air Attack:

- NWCG response has been sent to NASF, awaiting response.

Technical Tips on using Very Large Airtankers:

- Existing guidance to be emphasized instead of creating new tips.

Resource Tracking Technology

- Ralph Gonzales from San Dimas is providing info on currently available technology to track ground resources. Would tracking devices help to reduce radio traffic (location updates) during incidents?
- Tracking App: ESRI product called "Collector" will be tested in 2014 on a limited basis with the Oklahoma Dept. of Forestry. Photos and video can be attached to the transmission.

NWCG Committee Member Participation in NFPA Groups:

- Are the participants acting on behalf of their NWCG committee or their agency? (Travel funding would be needed) Tim is collecting info on who are serving on NFPA committees.

Fallers:

- The Incident Business Committee needs to validate the PDs for fallers to determine pay rates for the AD Pay Plan. If they are not correct, a request for updated PDs will be tasked to the Hazard Tree Subcommittee.
- Falling positions have been approved by OWDC. It has been proposed to change the existing FALA/FALB/FALC pneumonics to adhere to standard NIMS typing and naming conventions. The proposed change would name fallers like this: FAL3/FAL2/FAL1 (where T1 is the most experienced). The agency specific mnemonic may remain, but IQCS/ROSS NWCG positions will use new nomenclature.
 - Alternatively, cease use of the agency specific pneumonics, and leave the falling position nomenclature as it is now, with the NWCG minimum standard: FALA, FALB, FALC. Much simpler, most likely to be the option chosen.
- The three new faller positions will be included in the 10/2014 310-1. Transition plan is up to the agency. Position taskbooks available, not required if agency has an alternative documentation process.

NIOSH Update (Paul Moore)

- NIOSH does not have enforcement authority, and investigations/recommendations are not mandated. Investigations are done in cooperation with local, state and federal agencies only, and used to assist and facilitate learning.
- Identify causal/contributing factors and make general recommendations that may apply to similar situations to minimize similar incidents.
- Investigation priorities: Structure firefighting, multiple fatality, vehicle fatality
- Reports are available on the NIOSH webpage.

NIOSH (Corey Butler)

- Preparing a paper comparing the reported FF fatalities between NWCG, NIOSH and NFPA. Criteria used for reporting is included.
- Twitter: Would distributing information via Twitter be helpful? Who is the audience and what sort of information would be most helpful?
 - The announcement of Safety Alerts or general announcements with a link to further information may be the most useful.

Long Term Health Questionnaire (Joe Domitrovich)

- Awaiting OMB approval to be able to send to recent retirees.
- Questionnaire was slated to be sent to employees, but has been held up by a concern within the FS. Joe is working on resolving the issue for the FS and distribution to other NWCG agencies.

April 2014 Safety Gram Update (Owens)

- Working to post the updated S-G each month.
- Five fatalities to date in 2014. VFD, RFDs.

RMC Action Log Review (Mason)

- Shift Food Contract being reviewed. May need to amend FY16 contract. There will be a 6 Minutes for Safety module on shift food. (Joe D).
 - Another food item will be added in 2014 (fruit/vegetable).
- Draft criteria for firefighter health and wellness training/guidance and send to the RMC for review.
 - The Academy has included a wellness training module within their Basic Academy. Propose to meet with Academy personnel and discuss what to incorporate in this module.
- Submit Risk Assessment Models to NWCG for acceptance as the new standard.
 - Developed online training module, not yet released.

Rhabdomyolysis information flyer update (Campbell/Ryerson)

Target release date: **June 1, 2014.**

- Addition of Compartment syndrome and medication information.
- USFS Heat Illness flyer has been distributed.

USFS Short Haul Briefing Paper (Sutton)

- Short haul capability being developed for USFS to evacuate injured personnel from fireline. NPS already has this ability, and has been helping the FS to develop a short haul program.
- In development: Operations guide, SOP, acceptable aircraft- by Short Haul Oversight committee and Ops Group.
- Goal to have two short haul capable aircraft (with qualified crew?) available in 2015.

Safety Officer (Line) SOFR Fitness Level Rating (Mason)

- Propose to change SOFR fitness to Arduous.
- Need to complete OWDC form and submit for consideration.
- Grant SOFR to all SOF2 qualified employees who meet Arduous WCT rating.

Re-use of Water Bottles with Powdered Supplements: (Dave Haston)

- The Western Collective gave a presentation at the R6 IMT meeting on reducing use of water bottles at fire camps by reusing water containers.
- Concern at using powdered supplements in water bottles/water bladders from a health and safety standpoint. When sugar/carbohydrates are introduced into a reusable container, the bacterial growth increases exponentially.

- If reducing waste is a concern, emphasizing plastic recycling is a more feasible solution.
- Prevent any policy that potentially limits the availability of water in any way. Bottled water and refillable containers should both be allowed and available.
- Joe is working on a paper describing use of carbohydrate and electrolyte supplements on incidents, and what products should be not be provided at incidents.
 - Draft should be out in early May.
- This is a proposal that has arisen repeatedly. The RMC/ETC should draft an Issue Paper with recommendations on what should and should not be done.
 - Dave to contact Shelby to ensure this proposal is not implemented in the PNW.

Corrective Action Plans from Investigations – Equipment Issues (Michelle R)

Water Tender (Big Windy) and equipment transport (Vale, OR) fatalities:

- The VIPR contract language included a description of the wildland fire environment, and that the contractor self-certifies that they are medically able to work in that environment.
- Need to address issue that self-certification applies to working in the fire environment, not just operation of equipment.

FireFit Charter: (Joe D)

- Revision of FireFit Charter to encompass whole health: fitness, nutrition, mental wellness.
- Goal is to produce a unified message for all health and wellness programs.
- FireFit subcommittee will rewrite charter for chair's signature, then to NWCG By May 1st.

Fire Shelter / Technology Update (Tony Petrilli)

- New Generation Shelters first distributed in 2004, then on a larger scale 1-2 years later.
- Many of the early shelter deployment statistics were not consistently recorded. Highest temp recorded in the Yukon Territory (black spruce fuel) at 2400 degrees.
- Temperatures experienced at Yarnell estimated at up to 2000 degrees.
- Shelter stories are now hosted on the Lessons Learned site.
- Fire shelter information posted on the WFSTAR site.
- Future: Shelter was slated for review in 2015, but has been moved up to 2014.
 - Request for Information submitted to source new types of shelter material that will be tested in the fall. So far, newer, better performing materials tend to be heavier.
 - Test plan contract set, establishing parameters for what is needed in next shelter. Increased protection = larger size, heavier weight.
 - Survey created to gather information on what is wanted in a shelter from fireline personnel, (all agencies, VFDs, contractors included). Survey will be posted on Survey Monkey. Will ask as to type of FFTR, agency, home state and normal pack weight, as well as include questions on behavior while carrying a shelter and what type of shelter is wanted for future versions (light vs. heavier for less vs. more protection).
 - Two sizes of shelters in a similar shape as currently used is most likely.

Fire Shelter Definition Proposal: Clarify definitions in regards to fire shelter use. (Tony)

- **Fire Shelter Deployment:** Deployment is defined as unfolding the shelter from the case and using it to protect from heat and flames. An investigation is conducted.
 1. *Life saved.*
 2. *Injury prevented*- shelter prevented burns and/or smoke inhalation.
 3. *Precautionary* - deployed with a perceived threat, but FFTR most likely would not have been injured or burned without a shelter.
 4. *Fatality* – fatality occurred in a fully or partially deployed shelter.
- Defining the Deployment/Deployment zone is assigned to the RMC for the Glossary.

Technologies for Air Temperature Reducing Devices:

- MTDC has been approached from a vendor that is developing a can-sized device carried by FFTRs and designed to lower the ambient temperature near the FFTR. Joe will be working on this project in the next year.

Saw Chap Update

- Determining appropriate length.
- Most chain strikes occur when bar is being lowered and chain is slowing down.

Neck Shroud Update

- Prototypes from a new design to be tested this year. Goal is to make the shroud more convenient to wear.

PPE

- Evaluation and reporting over the last few years of testing new PPE is nearing completion. No major changes anticipated for pants and shirts. The t-shirt had good reviews.
- Silk screening tends to block heat permeability through a shirt.

Research Funding Criteria (Domitrovich)

- More private/public funding for fire research is becoming available. There is a need to develop agency guidance for research criteria, an identified contact for research proposals within the agency, and what information should be made available. The researchers need a contact apart from contacting the local area directly.
 - Should separate contacts be identified by study topic (safety, equipment, personnel, etc) or should there be one research point of contact who passes the request to the appropriate agency contact?
Possible Contact Needs for:
 - NWCG.
 - MTDC.
 - Joint Fire Science.
 - How are requests to study contract resources handled?
- Create Standardized Research Request Form/Guidance.
 - Basic study information questions, need (based on science?) agency (s) of study focus, benefit to the agency, timeline (does there need to be deadline in advance of research commencing?)

- Include guidance and/or Request form in publicly accessible location.
 - Form/Guidance approval process and determination where to locate this information.
 - Joe will work on a Briefing Paper/draft form.

Subcommittee Updates:

- **Hazard Tree-** Completing regional tree epidemiology, and determining what future projects will be.
 - Larry has done some research, and in the last 20 years, all FS hazard tree fatalities have involved trees falling on their own that were either on fire or recently burned, not during the actual falling of the tree. In several cases, the tree that caused the fatality was already identified as a dangerous tree.
- **Fire Shelter-**
 - Delete “deployment zone” from the glossary and update the deployment definitions. Larry will submit the proposal to Tim.
- **Six Minutes For Safety-**
 - Any issues on the helicopter accident handout, submit to Kathy.
 - Suggestions/comments about the program also send to Kathy.
- **SAFENET-**
 - 12 SAFENETs reported for 2014 to date.
 - Should the system be continued?
 - App development is a high priority. Seek funding for development/hosting.
 - Approval and Posting standards: SAFENETS should not be posted on incidents that will have an investigation. Casey has some suggestions, and if approved, will pursue funding to make approval/editing change capability.
 - The RMC will review the proposal, and if acceptable, will send on.
 - Need the ability to approve and edit submissions more than 48 hours from submission.
 - Need ability to begin report and come back and complete later.
- **IEMS-**
 - Working to develop interstate compact to recognize EMT qualifications across state lines.
 - Develop scope of practice ability to take care of our own employees.
 - Line going EMT positions implemented and working.
 - EMTI/AEMT change of nomenclature from Intermediate to Advanced EMT. Agency vetting ongoing now, and when implemented agency qualified EMTIs will be transitioned automatically to AEMTs. I-200 new course requirement, available online.

EMTs Working Across State Lines- USFS

- The FS Medical Officer, Jennifer Symonds, is pursuing the ability to allow USFS EMTs to work anywhere in the U.S. within Federal jurisdiction with a State EMT licensure.
 - Determining Medical Director need within the USFS.

- Would this apply to non-USFS EMTs working on USFS jurisdiction incidents?
- FS to share information on developments with the other NWCG agencies.

C & GS Incident Emergency Accident Plan and Checklist (Chad Fisher)

- Standardization of medical emergency response plan and preparation.
 - Will be sent to the ICs and GACCs for review. Comments to Chad.
 - Was implemented on a few incidents in 2013.
 - Meant as a foundation for individual plans, with ability to customize for individual area special circumstances.
- Timeline: Fall, 2014, after feedback is received, Chad will bring back to RMC for with recommendations for use.

206 Form:

- Some trouble finding the form on the forms website. Ask if IEMS can link directly to the form from a link on their website.

Barriers to Fitness – MTDC / U of M

- Identify common barriers at the individual, crew and unit level.
 - Interviews will be conducted to multi-agency fire employees across R-1, to determine common factors and differences between agency programs.
 - Consider including contractors and ADs in survey during fire camp visits.
 - Potential online survey for further data analysis.
 - **Timeline:** data collection done summer of 2014, analysis complete spring of 2015.
- Improve fitness programs already in place.
- Examine existing policy that promotes health and fitness and if potential barriers exist
- What education/training are we providing our employees and supervisors with in regards to performing PT safely?
 - FFTRs allowed more time than militia to work out each week.

MTDC

Heat Stress Study (Joe Saul MTDC)

Study was unique in ability to monitor firefighters on the line during their shift and observe how observations vary during different activities or environmental changes.

- Data collected: Heart and breathing rates, skin temperature, core temperature.
- Researchers had fire experience so quickly developed rapport with crews, and provided data back to study participants.
- Correlate temperature/data observed can be tied with activity performed.

2014 Heat Study: Detailers begin in early May, should be deployed by 5/28. May monitor crews during preseason PT or project work if there are no ongoing incidents.

- Joe will notify regional/state fire personnel if moving into their area.

Athletic Trainers in Fire Camp

- Diagnostic capabilities under their licensure.

- Prevention, treatment, exercises, and return to work. May minimize time between injury, treatment and rehab. Most treatment is for musculoskeletal conditions.
- No issues travelling across state lines.
- PD has been developed for AD classification within a THSP description. Will most likely work under the MEDL in conjunction with EMTs.
- Decrease load on EMTs while providing AT expertise to more specific AT issues, and possibly limit transport to medical facilities if issue can be treated at ICP.

Action Items:

- (All) Air Resource Advisor: Send ideas/bullet points on how best to work with ARAs or Smoke issues to Ted or Tony in next 7 days.
- (Joe/Dave H./Larry/Ron) RMC to create an issue paper on the reuse of water bottles and powdered supplements. Distribute to regions and IMTs.
- (Joe) Research Criteria: will draft briefing paper/form request criteria for research requests to review for next RMC meeting.
- (Larry) Update the Deployment language and definitions for the NWCG glossary.

Topics for next conference call:

- Consider what RMC response/focus should be for South Canyon/Yarnell/other fatality awareness.

Next Call:

- May 15, 1300 MDT.

Meeting adjourned.