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Fall 2023 Complex Incident Management (CIM) After Action Review (AAR)

Date: 31 October 2023

Participants: See list on page 7

AGENDA

1. Training and Qualification

a. CIM Positions and Qualification Standards

- i. Decision needed on when to close NWCCG pathway to Type 1 qualifications.
 - Revisit with the states, especially CA, who aren't prepared to lose that avenue yet.
- ii. Decision needs to be made by early spring to ensure system changes occur and information is shared promptly and efficiently.
- iii. Clarify what it will mean to close the pathway, including clear message that any agency can maintain the qualifications in its respective systems as well as in IROC/IQS/IQCS.
- iv. A survey was sent out through ICSC regarding the transition from ICT3 to ICCI and there was no consensus on the recommended pathway or alternative options.

b. Training Courses

- i. The new IMT Course Steering Committee met last week and received clarification on their tasked expectations. Timeline for training availability is 2025 for the basic course and 2026 for the advanced course.
 - Participants discussed potentially adding another course, in addition to the two tasked.
- ii. IPSC is working on clearing up mixed messages regarding course need.
- iii. Recommendation from IWDG for members to join the IMT Course Steering Committee to assist with consistent messaging and intent.
- iv. Recommend reducing classroom training in favor of increasing and improving on the job training in the field. Perhaps the task book should take longer to complete with performance-based system rather than trying to bridge the gap with training.
- v. There is currently a pathway to CIM qualification; now we need to fulfill the need for basic training for the T3 and advanced training that bridges from T3 to CIM.
- vi. All non-federal agencies are ready to fill the training gap between T3 and CIM.

c. CIM Field Evaluation

- i. Feedback indicated the implementation continued to be challenging by inconsistent evaluation processes and a wide range of engagement. Evaluator variance is the biggest challenge.
- ii. Clear leaders' intent and expectations would alleviate some of the inconsistencies.
- iii. The premise of what is on the CIM Field Evaluation is functional and has been effective on T1 and T2 complexity incidents.
- iv. The expectation that the environment needs to be stressful, complex, high tempo, etc., for a Field Evaluation to be adequate is not the most productive.

- v. There are advantages to Field Evaluations on slower incidents as there is quality time for feedback and mentoring while being less intrusive to other team processes.
 - vi. Advanced training should still be encouraged, even if additional to the Field Evaluation.
 - vii. Communication needed on what must be completed by the January 1, 2025, deadline which includes whether there is a strict expectation for when the Field Evaluation should be completed in relation to the position task book (concurrently or only after, for example).
 - viii. Consider whether the deadline for completing the Field Evaluation should be extended.
- d. Alternative Pathways to Qualification
- i. We need to do a better job at communicating the availability of and utilizing alternative pathways to access additional resources though there are currently barriers to address.
 - ii. Regarding ICT3 to ICCI, there was a 50/50 split for utilizing an alternative pathway and leadership should be prepared to move forward with decisions based on multiple recommendations.
 - iii. There are many job positions that require high levels of leadership skills in their everyday jobs regardless of having incident qualifications and experience.
 - iv. Ultimately the efforts are trying to create a more year-round workforce and increase the competency of our IMTs.
 - v. The Wildfire Commission Report references alternative pathways. In some ways, this effort was ahead of its time but should continue to be a focus.
 - vi. Need to look at ways to get non-traditional personnel qualified quickly without sacrificing quality. Look at exercises that accelerate personnel, especially in state and local government.
 - vii. IWDG is working on a tasking response to NMAC with recommendations for increased use of alternate qualifications pathways and non-traditional resources in part.
- e. IMT Standards
- i. IWDG's AAR had much discussion regarding the need to standardize processes for all IMTs.
 - Waiting on CGAC and ICAC to provide input on IMT standard recommendations before submitting to NMAC and NWCG, both of whom have oversight of certain elements.
 - Anticipated timeline for a draft is spring 2024.
 - ii. The speed to competency decreases without standards and is a key aspect to the training.
 - iii. The NWCG contract for IMT training was written to be able to continue to work with developers and update the training as needed past the initial design.
 - iv. Including standards and field performance expectations in training will assist in implementing them through CIMTs nationally. Too many different creative approaches lead to inconsistencies in processes and products if not formalized through governance bodies.
 - v. NWCG has a tasking issued to develop standard strategic planning.
 - vi. CIMT mobilization practices, roster negotiations, performance expectations, and CIMT evaluation require standardization for consistency among the coordinating groups and AAs.
 - vii. Consider whether tasking and deadline are necessary to ensure completion. Discussion needed on where IMT standards development lies in priority of tasks.

2. Mobilization

- a. 2023 National Rotation
 - i. This year's rotation was a challenge because there were three types of teams, which led to misperceptions and miscommunications about needs and availability.

- ii. It's harder to manage teams in the national rotation when it's slow.
 - iii. Overall, the 7 days of unavailability after assignments received highly positive feedback.
 - Not all liked it, however, and would rather make teams available again after their agency-required days off are met.
 - iv. Many of the implemented CGAC national rotation rule recommendations were beneficial and take the human element out of the rotation management.
 - v. Managing 7 days of unavailability led to a higher number of IMT prepositions.
 - vi. GACC rotation adjustments need ensure overlapping CIMT availability to alleviate stress.
 - vii. Recommend reviewing how prepositioning days count towards length of assignment.
- b. CGAC Recommendation for 2024 National Rotation
- i. NMAC approved most of the recommendations with majority agreement but will revisit based on AAR discussion and input.
 - ii. Memo will be sent to reflect decision and include verbatim national rotation guidance that will be published in the *National Interagency Mobilization Guide* in March 2024.
 - iii. Additional changes to the national rotation rules may continue to be phased in after 2024 based on further discussion and need to respond to unforeseen challenges.
 - iv. Additional clarification needed to support emerging incident processes and ensure national rotation usage does not cause unnecessary delayed response.
- c. Geographic Area (GA) Standardization
- i. Have received mixed results from the CGAC tasking regarding GA standardization and will be issuing follow up taskings as part of the winter work.
 - ii. Taskings will be drafted from NMAC to CGAC for preparedness level (PL) criteria standardization and priority trainee programs.
 - iii. Follow up discussions will occur on the different CIMT roster negotiation process recommendations from the AA Subgroup and ICAC.
 - iv. AAs recognize their narrow scope and inexperience and strongly encourage the participation of a third party during CIMT roster negotiations.
 - v. Many AAs don't have the operational experience to right-size a roster during mobilization. A third party would represent the needs of all other AAs nationally and their potential upcoming need for personnel which will go unfilled if they're stacked unnecessarily.
 - vi. Need to ensure expectations between AAs and fire management staff are clearly understood.
 - vii. AA Subgroup recommends documenting negotiation outcome in the delegation of authority.
 - viii. Roster decisions are not intended to limit any participants but to make participation options more flexible and ensure all incidents receive the personnel needed to be successful.
 - ix. Recommend standardizing team naming nomenclature for consistency and better tracking.
 - x. Don't want to get into situation where IMTs are consistently having to decline assignments for any reason, whether it be experience level relative to complexity or composition of membership.
3. CIMT Configuration
- a. Heard concern that the approved standard configuration (35-35-20) is not enough. IMTs that tested it this year said it was adequate and gave plenty of room for negotiations.
 - b. There are some that fear the IMTs will be held at a roster of only 35 and it won't be enough personnel to manage the scope of the incident successfully.

- c. Clear communication on the decision and expectations is needed; most of the concerns can be traced to misunderstanding of the configuration and negotiation process.
 - d. CIMTs and ICs who participated in the configuration sharing their experience may help quell some of the rumors and fears.
 - e. ICAC discussing rostering of local government and fire departments and processes that ensure those personnel can be committed to and mobilize with the CIMT.
 - f. Unclear what ICAC intended in recommendation as NMAC continues to hear that ICAC doesn't support the 35-35-20 despite the recommendation coming from them. There was representation from each GACC during the tasking work.
 - g. Recognize that the tasking requested suggestions for roster configurations that would lead to scalability while trying to maximize the number of teams we can roster.
 - h. Recommend messaging and clarification to ensure a smooth transition and decrease fears.
4. Systems and Documents
- a. IROC
 - i. Program ready to support full implementation.
 - ii. Naming conventions can be changed once NMAC approves a standard team nomenclature.
 - b. ICAP
 - i. ICAP should be ready for implementation for next year.
 - ii. It's worth the extra effort to get it right and create consistency.
 - iii. Each year a manual data request is sent to each GA for IMT composition and participation. ICAP availability will automate this request. Continued need to ensure all the data is gathered through the program to assist in leadership's decision making.
 - c. *NWCG Wildland Fire Risk and Complexity Assessment (RCA)*, PMS 236, and WFDSS
 - i. For the roster scalability to function correctly, there should be an RCA that compliments the complexity decision process. Strong emphasis placed on the need for the next generation WFDSS program to include revisions to support scalability and CIMT.
 - ii. Minimal feedback has been received on the additional functional complexity components that were added to the RCA this year.
 - d. *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations*
 - i. Red Book committee makes sure all the edits come through the federal agencies.
 - ii. Need to understand what the source governance body is for the associated documents and ensure the appropriate and current forms are being utilized.
 - iii. The IMT evaluation should be updated and streamlined then utilized more frequently and consistently across agencies. Process for submission of the completed form is unclear.
 - e. Mobilization Guides
 - i. The 2023 National Interagency Mobilization Guide captured much of the CIM guidance and will have additional changes for 2024 based on adjustments from this AAR.
 - ii. Several of the GAs tier their mob guides off the National Interagency Mobilization Guide.
 - iii. For GA drawdowns, each GA can always make their national rotation slot unavailable as they see fit and to meet their internal priorities first.
5. Agency Purview, Policies, and Directives
- a. Agency Administrators
 - i. Standardization of AA qualifications for all agencies would help the system overall.
 - ii. AA Subgroup will have additional discussion on prescribed fire implementation.

- iii. AAs believe GA in-briefs for out-of-area CIMTs would be highly beneficial.
 - iv. The high turnover rate of AAs and ICs causes concerns for experience as well. More pre-season interactions between ICs and AAs is encouraged.
- b. Agreements
 - i. Agreements made at the GA level between several GAs can work at lower PL but cause issue nationally as the PL increases.
 - ii. Agreements or lack thereof can prevent teams getting assigned across GA borders.
 - c. Increased Agency Participation
 - i. It becomes problematic when one agency or GA disagrees and refuses to budge on their position despite how much work the interagency task groups have completed.
 - ii. Decisions need to factor in critical base operations and the lack of available personnel. There's also an increasing lack of interest or availability from non-fire personnel.
 - iii. AAs across the agencies have a real interest and recognize the need to support fire to the best of their abilities but everyone is critically stretched thin.
 - iv. IWDG response to the tasking for increasing incident support capabilities will recommend options for shorter duration assignments, especially for high-demand positions.
 - v. Chartering the AA Subgroup has been a phenomenal help.
6. Communication
- a. There continues to be a common theme of miscommunication which seems to be the biggest issue overall and the cause for much of the pushback.
 - b. Collectively there should be consideration and focus on how to better communicate the implemented changes besides only through formal correspondence channels.
 - c. Consider different information delivery methods to provide multiple means for hearing/seeing the information.
 - d. Review the groups that are being engaged for feedback and review.
 - e. The challenge is figuring out what the specific concerns are and how we target those groups.
 - f. Once next decisions have been made, it will be easier to communicate more thoroughly.
 - g. Constructive feedback is critical to a successful feedback loop.
 - h. Recommend continued participation by IWDG and NMAC at IMT meetings to share information and answer questions.
 - i. When possible, issue consolidated memos rather than several for distribution.
 - j. Direct communication to the coordinating group members or chairs from the group creating the document would be beneficial to ensuring the messaging is clear and avoid miscommunications.
 - k. Recommend another WFSTAR module to incorporate all the vital information.
 - l. Communicating directly with the field in a live session could be beneficial.
 - m. Continue to reference IWDG webpage and StoryMap for consolidated information and FAQs.
 - n. Anticipating leadership memo for 2024 to be released in January, outlining completed implementation actions and expectations for continued improvements.
7. Other Feedback
- a. Anchor back to the successes that have been seen over the past year.
 - b. People enjoyed the 7 days of unavailability, spending time with their families, and catching up on their day jobs, as well as feeling like they had more robust teams that were better rostered.
 - c. We are on the verge of something historic but to ensure its success need to continuously evaluate our actions, encourage feedback, and respond to recommendations.

- d. Fall 2024 AAR is equally important to successful implementation.
- e. Field is anxious for clarifications and clear direction on decisions that need to be made in timely fashion after the AAR.

ACTIONS

- Timeline for closing Type 1 qualifications pathway
- Guidance on Type 1 qualifications in 2024
- Clarify what has to occur by January 1, 2025, CIM Field Evaluation cutoff
 - Discuss extension if necessary
 - Clarify that CIM Field Evaluation can be completed concurrently to or after task book
- Review and revise CIMT Evaluation Form
- Finalize 2024 national rotation direction
- Finalize CIMT roster negotiation process
- Update CIMT Action Plan for Implementation for Phase 2 actions
- Issue tasking to CGAC for standard PL criteria
- Issue tasking to CGAC for priority trainee program standards practices
- Assign IWDG reps to IMT Course Steering Committee
- Follow up discussion on transition from ICT3 to ICCI
- Develop timeline for IMT standards
- Ensure ICAP ready by fall 2024
- Timeline for ordering of Type 2 and 1 personnel for CIMTs
- Standardize nomenclature for CIMTs
- Ensure RCA and WFDSS ready for spring 2024
- Recommend minimum AA qualification standards
- Continue to evaluate and improve communications and messaging

Present:

Group	First	Last
AA Subgroup	Chad	Stewart
AA Subgroup	Clay	Jordan
AA Subgroup	Tanya	Thrift
NASF	Jim	Karels
ICAC	Matt	Rau
IPSC	Marlene	Eno-Hendren
IPSC	Mike	Ellsworth
IPSC	Michael	Froehlich
IPSC	Craig	Daugherty
IWDG	Jesse	Bender
IWDG	Cole	Belongie
IWDG	Dave	Celino
IWDG	Colleen	Gadd
IWDG	Shane	Greer
IWDG	Steve	Griffin
IWDG	Mike	Haydon
IWDG	Norm	McDonald
IWDG	Mike	Minton
IWDG	Sean	Peterson
IWDG	Jim	Prevette
IWDG	Carol	McElroy
IWDG	Chuck	Russell
IWDG	Carl	Schwope
IWDG	Aaron	Thompson
IWDG	Melissa	Wegner
NMAC	Jeff	Arnberger
NMAC	Dave	Haston
NMAC	Josh	Simmons
NMAC	Eric	Fransted
Notes	Nicki	Johnston
NWCG	Shane	McDonald
NWCG	Aitor	Bidaburu
NWCG	Heath	Hockenberry
NWCG	Erik	Litzenberg
NWCG	Heath	Cota
NWCG	Jim	Shultz
NWCG Staff	Katie	Wood
NWCG Staff	Annie	Benoit
NWCG Staff	Katy	O'Hara

Not Present:

Group	First	Last
AA Subgroup	Sam	Leneave
AA Subgroup	Kim	Pierson
AA Subgroup	Lynn	Polacca
DMC	Roshelle	Pederson
FMB	Sarah	Fisher
FMB	Ed	Christopher
FMB	Aaron	Baldwin
FMB	Meagan	Conry
FMB	Jason	Fallon
FMB	Erin	Horsburgh
FMB	Brad	Koeckeritz
ICAC	Bea	Day
IWDG	Zeph	Cunningham
IWDG	Rich	Harvey
IWDG	Joe Sean	Kennedy
IWDG	Hank	Rowland
NMAC	Kim	Christensen
NMAC	Greg	Smith
NWCG	Sarah	Brown
NWCG	Jim	Durglo
NWCG	Garth	Fisher
NWCG	Anne	Jewell
NWCG	Kim	VanHemelryck
NWCG Staff	Sarah	Lee