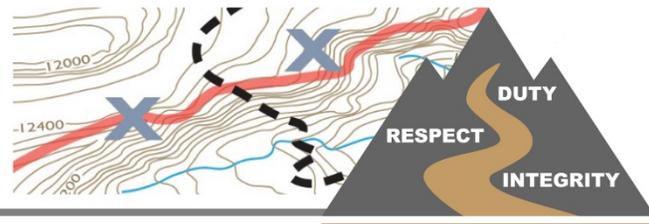


Tactical Decision Games



Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program

CONTINGENCY PLANS – CARLSBAD FIRE

INITIAL FACILITATOR INFORMATION—NOT TO BE SHARED WITH STUDENTS

Author(s)

- Nic Anthony, Pacific Northwest Training Center
- Pete Gordon, Coronado National Forest
- Dave Owens, Sawtooth Hotshots

Target Audience

Strike Team Leader

Training Objective

Given the following scenario, players should recognize ineffective operations and react to that situation. Players should verbally communicate their decisions to the appropriate individuals. This can be used as a drill to discuss Standard Firefighting Orders #2 and #3.

Resources Referenced

- **Strike Team Leader – Crew (Player Role)**
- 2 Type 2 Handcrews
- 1 Hotshot Crew
- Division Supervisor (Facilitator plays this role with inside intelligence)
- Air Attack

SCENARIO INFORMATION TO BE SHARED WITH STUDENTS

Facilitator Briefing to Student(s)

It is June 3rd and you are a Strike Team Leader for two Type 2 handcrews on the Carlsbad Fire. You've already attended the morning briefing with the Incident Management Team. You were informed of a Red Flag warning for winds at 1300. You have noted that some resources may be available from adjoining divisions and there are several aircraft shown available today on the Air Operations plan. You were given the assignment to punch easy indirect line south, along a slight ridge from the Division A-E break toward the dozer line coming from division D. You are to be on the line by 0700 and are assigned to complete 24 chains of line before assisting the Smokey Bear Hotshots with firing this piece of line at 1100. This will tie together the dozer line from Division D to the south with the paved road you are anchoring from the north. You can assume

that the fire's current location is of no concern to your safety today, even in the face of the Red Flag warning.

Due to problems with one of your bus drivers, your crews are late and you are not ready to begin your assignment until 0730. In the tactical briefing with Division E Supervisor, a trigger point of completing 12 chains of line by 0930 has been established. As the line cutting progresses, the crews are running into thicker brush than anticipated and some of the inexperienced sawyers are frequently "rocking" their saws. The morning is hotter than expected and a few crewmembers are experience fatigue due to the heat. By 0925, you estimate that your two crews have only completed 8 chains of line, and you are now concerned about meeting the 1100 deadline.

Since Division E Supervisor failed to present options or contingencies to reaching the identified trigger point, assess your situation, your relationship to the plan, and present options to Division "E" supervisor. Do you have any questions on the information given? You have 3 minutes to assess the situation and prepare any communication contacts you think are necessary.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR FACILITATOR ONLY

Facilitator "Murphy's Law" Suggestions

The "Murphy's Law" suggestions listed below can be added as what-ifs at any time during the scenario to raise the stress level of the leader. You can also use one of your own:

- Weather: Red Flag wind event may materialize sooner than predicted, local influences not anticipated/known, etc.
- If the Strike Team Leader – Crews or facilitator introduces contingency/support resources to Division E, there may be difficulty (e.g., vehicle breakdowns, lost resources, aircraft unavailable, or higher priority needs of resources) in timely response
- Medical problems or injuries.
- Communication failures; no contact with Division E Supervisor, adjoining resources, aircraft, etc.
- Division E Supervisor has an attitude problem and fails to see the inability to complete the original task.

Facilitator's Notes

The focus of this TDGS is recognition of the need to change tactics and the importance of having contingency plans. It is important to note that the associated map and the sand table may not be to scale. This may raise questions by the role players. Assure the role players that the main fire is of no concern today and that the sand table may not be to scale.

This TDGS is designed to be a simulation type. The scenario is intended to be a dynamic set of circumstances that may include several decision points. Lead the role players or "hot seat" STRC to assess the situation and recognize the failure of the indirect line assignment, then report back to the Division Supervisor. The facilitator may assign the roles immediately or after the facilitator briefing. Consider other role players as listed above if the scenario is allowed to play out longer to draw upon solutions toward the objective.

The omission of a contingency plan by the Division E Supervisor, for the trigger point is intentional. The facilitator should be prepared for questions regarding this at the beginning of the scenario. The facilitator may want to indicate that the Division E Supervisor wishes to “jump off that bridge when we get there.”

The facilitator can introduce “Murphy’s Laws” at any time, especially if the role players appear to be ahead of the learning objective. It is assumed that the role players are likely to suggest to the Division E supervisor to request more resources to complete the indirect line. If this should occur, the facilitator can allow this to play out but introduce some of the suggested “Murphy’s Laws” to further the simulation and challenge the role players with more decision points.

Caution by the facilitator should be exercised, in order to not set the role players up for failure in the TDGS. The intent of this simulation, its decision points, and suggested “Murphy’s Laws” is to allow the role players a “way out.” If the role players have demonstrated some good analysis, situational awareness, and sound suggestions, they should be allowed to succeed in this TDGS. Possible outcomes that will meet the objective include, but are not limited to: withdrawing from this location in favor of another location for the indirect line; or suggesting more resources to complete the line on time, or finish prepping the line on this day and suggesting the possibility of burning it out during the next operational period.

After Action Review

Conduct an AAR with focus on the training objective. Use the AAR format found in the *Incident Response Pocket Guide* to facilitate the AAR. There are four basic questions in the AAR.

1. What was planned?
2. What actually happened?
3. Why did it happen?
4. What can we do next time?

Focus the AAR on identifying the failure of the indirect tactic or facing the identified trigger point. Encourage the role players to contribute the possible suggestions that could or were made to the Division Supervisor. There are several items that can be referenced. To name a few items available in the IRPG that the facilitator should be familiar with include the turn-down protocol, risk management process, and the direct and indirect attack strategies. Possible AAR questions the facilitator can incorporate are:

- What more about “trigger points” can we learn from this simulation?
- What were the various levels of situational awareness among the role players?
- Why are contingency plans and trigger points important?
- How often do we fail to recognize ineffective tactics?

TDGS shouldn’t have a single solution, keep the focus of the AAR on what was done and why.

