

Interagency Dispatch Improvement Project Meeting Notes

Location: State Director's Office, Phoenix, AZ

Meeting Dates: July 26-27, 2010

Members Present:

- Jim Douglas, Project Chair: Asst. Director F&AM, BLM, Washington DC
- Tom Wordell, Project Coordinator: BLM, Boise, ID
- Jim Kenna, Arizona State Director: BLM, Phoenix, AZ
- Kim Thorsen, Director of Law Enforcement, DOI, Washington DC
- Dan Smith, NASF Fire Director: NASF, Boise, ID
- Vaughn Stokes, Chief Information Officer: USFS, Albuquerque NM
- Kim Christensen, NICC Center Manager: USFS, Boise, ID
- Tim Lynn, Assistant Director of Investigations: USFS, Arlington, VA
- Dean Ross, Branch Chief of Emergency Services: NPS, Washington DC
- Gilbert Zepeda (for Corbin Newman), Deputy Regional Forester, USFS, Albuquerque, NM --- *via conference call/LiveMeeting*

Guests (Present or by Conference Call)

- Shari Shetler, Systems Program Manager, BLM, Boise, ID (meeting facilitator)
- Betsy Walatka, Strategic Planning, Budget & Accountability, USFS, Alaska
- Roshelle Pederson, Program Analyst, BLM, Boise, ID
- John Noneman, Program Manager, BLM, Boise, ID

Members Absent:

- Cam Sholly, Natchez Trace Parkway Superintendent: NPS, Tubelo, MS
- Mark Stanford, Fire Operations Chief: Texas Forest Service, College Station, TX

Notetaker:

- Kelly Castillo, State Fire Management Officer, BLM, Phoenix, AZ

Meeting Agenda Topics:

1. Welcome
2. Meeting Objectives
3. IDIP Project Discussion
 - Vision and Goals
 - Review/Revise Charter
 - Scope of Work
 - Defining Success
 - Strategies
 - IDIP Governance and Decision Making
4. Integrated Reporting of Wildland Fire Information (iRWIn)
5. Dispatch Optimization
6. Computer Aided Dispatch
7. Discussion/Decisions on Task Group efforts and Briefing Papers
8. Future Meeting Schedules

DAY 1**Agenda Item: Welcome and Introductions – Jim Douglas**

See Exhibit A: IDIP July 2010 Meeting Agenda.docx

Jim welcomed the steering committee members and guests

Agenda Item: Meeting Agenda & Objectives – Jim Douglas

Jim provided a brief overview of events leading up to the formation of the IDIP. He said the I-Chiefs (IAFC) were interested in participating with the project. He then discussed a number of issues that needed to be resolved:

- Review and validate the mission and charter
- What are the project “boundaries”?
- What defines success?
- What are the appropriate deliverables?
- Role and involvement of non-federal partners
- IDIP governance

Agenda Item: IDIP Project Discussion – All (facilitated by Shari Shetler)

The following topics were briefly covered to refresh the steering committee on history and issues

- History of dispatch issues
- CIO Sojourn
- SW Border Study
- Booze Allen Hamilton report on LEI dispatching for FICC, Lake Mead, and Phoenix
- Summary of 2009 IIOG Jan Meeting presentations and discussion
- Need to move away from single sided dispatch and combine law enforcement and fire, get Federal and non-federal on same page.
- Four main issue areas that need to be addressed:
 - Governance
 - Technology
 - Business Practices
 - Staffing (Workforce Management)
- USFS radio systems
 - Many are 20 years old - Time is ripe to replace
 - IT/Radio standardization between agencies is needed
 - FS has \$250 million dollars to upgrade radio systems
 - Have known about radio issues for a long time. Northwest worked on radio interoperability in 2006. Analysis from IT showed systems had quite a few differences, moving pieces patched together to create Swiss cheese effect
 - Threshold costs will initially be high but in long run will be cost savings
- Field is waiting impatiently to see actions from team
- Qualifications are not standard, and the technology varies and is not up to date.
- Expanded dispatch is still using ‘old model’. Need to utilize new technology to change business practices
- Things *are* being done.

- II0G has 2 initiatives
 - Access Authentication project to eliminate 2 desktop computers for interagency centers (to roll out soon)
 - Radios Agreement between USFS and BLM integrating radio systems, combining the two – Central OR Project
- The fact that nobody owns dispatch is biggest stumbling block
 - Initially want to craft a governance structure similar to NWCG. Concept to bring folks to table and pull it forward to formulate process to get buy off from senior leadership, need to set standards to get projects funded.
 - Need to have leadership sitting together to be on same page to line projects
- Look at pilot programs that will show progress and show leadership samples that can be showcased.
- Need to know where the problems are before we can fix them
- 80% of recommendations in the Dispatch Mgmt Efficiency Study (MES) could be completed fairly fast given dedication of time, people and money
 - Many of those recommendations will need to be fixed no matter what the future of dispatch is
 - Don't lose sight of MES in the quest for a longer term vision
- Group is designed to be strategic, and to come up with solutions to present to leadership
- Need to better communicate the progress made with the group, what are things we can do now

IDIP Charter Discussion: See Exhibit B: IDIP Charter May 1 Version.docx

Goal of project discussion. Who are the customers, functions dispatch supports, and levels that need to be in place?

- **Business users (customers)** = Fire, LEI, EMS, SAR, Local Resource Managers (Admin and other field going personnel), Aviation, State/Local, Tribes, etc
- **Functions (lines-of-business)** = Situational Awareness (collecting and disseminating information and reports), Status of Resources (availability, location, etc), Preparedness, Day-to-Day activity support, Off Unit Dispatching, etc
- **Levels/Tiers: The State, Local, Interagency and Federal dispatch office structure (excluding NPS) has the following “Tier” schema:**
 - **Tier 1:** National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC)
 - **Tier 2:** Geographic (currently 11 Geographic Areas)
 - **Tier 3:** State, Zone, Interagency and Local Centers with varying complexity
 - Eastern US – local offices are typically state dispatch offices
 - Western US – local offices are typically interagency or local units
 - **Tier 4:** Sub-Local Centers - (e.g. ranger district offices)

NPS uses the following “Levels” to designate their dispatch organization:

- **Level 1** = Minimal Dispatch Service - Dispatch operations typically limited to interaction with local, regional, or State dispatch systems through established PSAP's and procedures.

- Level 2 = Occasional Public Safety Dispatch (PSD) Service - These parks rely on the local, regional, or State authorities to provide dispatch services. Park employees need to be able to receive the report, provide initial activation of dispatch services, and have limited capability to perform NCIC check or other queries.
- Level 3 = Active Dispatch Service - Dispatch services are immediately available, whether they are provided by NPS personnel, outside organizations and agencies, or a combination of both.
- Level 4 = Active and Complex Dispatch Service - Dispatch services are immediately available, 24x7, provided by NPS personnel, such services require unique training and experience (emergency medical dispatcher, etc...).

Comments on dispatch structure:

- The local and sub-local dispatch centers have the greatest potential for consolidation.
- There's a need to standardize the dispatch structure and naming schema between all agencies to mitigate confusion

A question was raised to find out what the LEI/Public Safety issues are with current dispatch operations.

- Federal dispatch training and hours of operation often don't support LEI needs
 - Law Enforcement often doesn't pay for dispatch services, so staffing and hours are not available to support them
- Facility security is an issue since many state/federal criminal systems require secure facilities before access is granted.
- Scale of LEI/Public Safety support requirements vary widely place to place
- Basic training and qualification standards are needed
- For NPS, 80% of dispatch support is for EMS/LE while only 20% was for fire.
 - Parks with exclusive jurisdiction require a different approach
 - Certain Parks dispatch and coordinate EMS/LE resources for other parks (similar to geographic area centers)

Does our committee (and our agencies) want to fully support dispatch operational requirements for LE/EMS/Public Safety?

- General response was "Yes".

Comments on dispatching non-fire resources:

- We need to be able to "roll up" and provide accurate reports when non-fire, non-LEI, or non-agency resources are engaged
- Need same or integrated tracking systems
- Deep Water has been largely successful because positions & resources were entered into ROSS
 - ROSS doesn't work for NPS because the appropriate position codes aren't available
 - For example, NPS has 28 SAR positions that aren't in ROSS. Every state is going to adopt these new positions and qualifications since NPS has taken the lead on developing them

- ✓ Group agreed to the following vision for the IDIP Project:
“Efficient and cost-effective interagency dispatch capability meets the business needs of stakeholders at all levels through standards, integration, and interoperability.”
- ✓ The group agreed to develop a strategic plan with the following goals:
 1. *Technology and Applications: The interagency dispatch community has reliable, integrated and interoperable technologies and applications that meets their business needs*
 2. *Operations: Dispatch operations are structured and standardized to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of all stakeholders*
 3. *Workforce Management: The dispatch community is highly skilled, motivated, productive and a service oriented workforce*
 4. *Governance: Effective governance results in leadership, accountability, and operational efficiency.*
- ✓ The group then agreed to the following deliverables for IDIP Charter:
 - A permanent governance structure to meet the mission requirements of local, state and national stakeholders in order to provide leadership, accountability, and operational efficiency for dispatch (needed now)
 - Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) study for each level of dispatch that included all stakeholders, including state/local partners and non fire business areas (long-term solution)
 - Short term actions that can be implemented now which are consistent with the long term strategic vision for dispatch.

It was agreed the vision, goals and objectives for dispatch should be part of an overall strategic plan and the charter should simply state the vision, approach and deliverables.

- ➔ **Action Item# 23: Edit/Update Charter - route to steering committee for review**
Responsible: Tom Wordell
Due Date: July 2010
- ➔ **Action Item# 24: Route final charter for signature**
Responsible: Jim Douglas
Due Date: August 2010

Summary and Categorization of IDIP issues:

See Exhibit C: IDIP Process DrawingV5.2.1_projects.vsd.

Tom presented high priority issue “Process Diagrams” organized them by the four main IDIP issue categories:

- Governance
- Technology
- Business Practices
- Staffing (Workforce Management)

The process diagrams highlighted individual “projects” within each category. They emphasized that every one of these efforts needed to be considered a separate project, each with an appropriate project team, funding, and timeline. Some of these projects are already being addressed by IIOG. Other projects can be handled by small, informal groups (e.g COOP strategy and templates for each dispatch center to use). However, some projects will need IDIP support to request they get addressed by other groups such as NWCG or project teams assigned to get them accomplished.

Comments on “Process Diagram”:

- Need to develop a Strategy that addresses time, order, scale and implementation methods (e.g. policy change, pilot projects, standard operating procedures, etc)
- Need to charter new permanent governance body chartered, but escort projects along until they can be handed off.
- Developing a “Qualifications Guide” for dispatch would be one way of addressing the inconsistent training and qualifications issue
- Timeline needs to be established for tasks (short, long term)
- We need to intersect with IIOG and other entities to be successful

DAY 2Integrated Reporting of Wildland Fire Information (iRWIn) project:***See Exhibit D: Integrated Reporting of Wildland for IDIP July 2010.docx***

Roshelle Pederson and John Noneman joined by conference call/LiveMeeting and presented an overview of the iRWIn project. An analysis was conducted and the most cost effective method was determined to be a data centralization process that collects information from individual systems and makes the data available to other systems. This provides a single location for queries which will increase the consistency of wildland fire data. The design architecture is scheduled for 2011, which DOI has targeted \$1.5 million to fund. They expressed a concern that there still appears to be a lack of interagency support for the project at the FEC level. They also addressed the interagency links to other systems like WildCAD and the FS Data Warehouse that will be required to make the project successful. Tom shared a recent memorandum from NWCG to FEC requesting funding and support for iRWIn.

See Exhibit E: NWCG#034-2010_Memorandum_iRWIn Recommendation_2010_07_19.pdf

See Exhibit F: NWCG#034-2010_Attachment_iRWIn Executive Summary_2010_07_19.pdf

Roshelle and John requested IDIP steering group contact FEC in order to express their support for the project. Tom has submitted a letter of endorsement to the IDIP Steering Committee directed to FEC expressing their support for the iRWIn project:

See Exhibit G: IDIP BP iRWIn Draftv3.docx

➔ **Action Item# 25: IDIP request FEC support the iRWIn project**
Responsible: Jim Douglas / Kim Thorsen
Due Date: August 2010

Need a proposal brought forward to FS IRB board in order to add to portfolio. We are not adding capacity; we are combining and being more efficient. Appears the approach is not understood.

➔ **Action Item# 26: Set up conference call with Mike Barrowcliff and Laura Hill**
Responsible: Vaughn Stokes
Due Date: August 2010

Dispatch Optimization BPR Discussion:***See Exhibit H: IDIP Dispatch Optimization BP.docx***

Jim Douglas set the stage for the BPR discussion by providing some background and historic perspective. He highlighted the fact that the USFS Chief had accepted the recommendations of the Dispatch MES and made a commitment to go forward with a BPR while the DOI had accepted the recommendations in principle, but did not make department or bureau commitments to do a BPR.

Betsy Walatka briefly described the process and project team needed to complete a Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) study to analyze workload in order to provide solutions to

optimize dispatch locations, processes and functions. She said the USFS currently has \$300K in FY10 funds that are available to get the project started. She also indicated there was additional FY11 funding available to see the project through completion. She said it would take a number of leadership positions on the project team (including line officer involvement) from all affected areas to be successful. Generally, these project team positions require half-time commitment for 12-18 months (one week long meeting per month and one week/month for each team member to follow up on tasks).

The following issues/topics were discussed:

- Need to take a look at doing business differently.
 - Frame new business process at national level and pilot with early adopters in a phased approach to bring agency partners on board
- MES identified potential approaches to assess workload and make consolidation recommendations
 - Need to incorporate other business support functions not addressed in the MES (LE, EMS, Resource Mgmt, etc) to determine what data is required to fully analyze the dispatch business process
- Need to establish long term vision and then use pilot studies to assess methodologies
 - Pilot approach can be used to capture congressional support
 - Pilot projects could be used to infuse discussions on technology and architecture or determine where priorities are ripe
- DOI Senior Leadership is looking at FY 12-13 for consolidating budgets and looking for efficiencies.
- USFS Regions 5 and 3 (California, Arizona, New Mexico, and west Texas) would be good pilot areas due to complexity and border issues.
- Analysis need to be comparable at every pilot location with quality assurance or controls out of each pilot.

A discussion about what options are available followed. It was agreed there were four basic BPR alternatives to consider:

1. No BPR: Get what we can from previous study recommendations
2. Traditional BPR – National Scope
3. Sub-National BPR – with suggested study area to include Southwestern US from the top of California east to the Mississippi (essentially USFS regions 5,4,3 and 2)
4. Pilot BPR – to just include California (USFS R5), Arizona, New Mexico, and possibly western Texas (SW Geographic Area or USFS R3).

➔ **Decision: The IDIP Steering Committee agreed to endorse Alternative 4 – the Pilot BPR approach.**

It was noted there was a very short time to get the FY10 \$300K committed, so it would be very important for the steering committee members to engage the appropriate line officers and other senior leadership in the DOI and USFS to make sure the WO, State Directors, NASF, and Regional Foresters were all supportive. Need to put a plan together and identify the core project team.

- ➔ **Action Item# 27:** **IDIP steering committee to make appropriate Agency & Departmental contacts to get support for Pilot BPR.**
Responsible: **All Steering Committee Members**
Due Date: **EARLY August 2010**
- ➔ **Action Item# 28:** **Stand up BPR Project Team and identify a team leader**
Responsible: **Jim Douglas, Betsy Walatka, Bob Kuhn, Tom Wordell**
Due Date: **August 2010**

Governance Discussion:

Jim Douglas led a discussion on the need to design and establish a permanent dispatch governance structure. He felt this was crucial to the long term success of this effort and needed to happen as soon as possible. He agreed to take the lead on developing a proposal for review by the committee.

- ➔ **Action Item# 29:** **Develop permanent dispatch governance proposal**
Responsible: **Jim Douglas**
Due Date: **September, 2010**

Strategic Plan Discussion:

The steering committee reviewed the draft strategic plan format that was developed Tuesday morning. They want Tom to complete the plan, including a list of action items under each goal. Once that is reviewed, they want Tom to develop a decision paper they can review, have Jim sign, and deliver to FEC or NWCG recommending action be taken on issues specific to wildland fire.

- ➔ **Action Item# 30:** **Develop Strategic Plan for Dispatch**
Responsible: **Tom Wordell (with assistance from Sheri Shetler)**
Due Date: **September, 2010**
- ➔ **Action Item# 31:** **Develop Decision Paper for short term action items**
Responsible: **Tom Wordell**
Due Date: **September, 2010**

Future Meeting Topics and Logistics:

Meeting Topics

- Working draft of governance
- BPR pilot progress
- Strategic Plan review
- Decision paper for action items

Next meeting: October 13-14, 2010 in Albuquerque.

End Meeting