



Connections Call

April 4, 2024

Executive Board: Jim Durglo (ITC), Steve Shaw (BLM), Jon Wallace (FWS), Greg Smith (NASF), Erik Litzenberg (IAFC), Dave Haston (USFS), Kim Van Hemelryck (OWF Liaison), Heath Hockenberry (NWS), P.K. Kopardekar (NASA)

NWCG Staff: Katie Wood (NWCG Program Manager), Sarah Lee (NWCG Deputy Program Manager), Annie Benoit (Training Program Manager), Toni Suminski (IPTM Project Manager), Carmen Thomason (Coordinator), Dave Schultz (Coordinator), Erica Lamb (Publications Manager), Eric Coulter (Communications Lead), Omaira Falcon (Webmaster)

Committee Chairs/Reps: Carrie Bilbao (CEPC), Roshelle Pederson (DMC), Nick Nauslar (FENC), Marlene Eno-Hendren (IPSC), Sean Peterson (NCSC), Steve Griffin (NIMSIC), Kelly Woods (RMC), Mark Jackson (FMC), Pete Lahm (SmoC), Peter Dutchick (TDC), Julie Bennett (IBC), Matthew Woodrich (NIAC)

Topic & Notes

Annual Meeting:

- Thank you to all who attended and contributed. Feedback will reflect in changes to this call's future format and other internal changes. Additional information to be shared during the July call.
- Appreciated topics that were received for future meetings.
- Annual meetings will be in-person during even numbered years and virtual in odd numbered years going forward.

Staffing:

- Announced Kim Thibodee as the new NWCG Administrative Assistant.
- Currently filling 3 A/V Specialist positions. The announcement has closed, but have not yet received the cert.

Incident Performance and Training Modernization (IPTM) update:

- Discussed the need to stick to the established schedule for contracting requirements and cost
- 2023
 - 10 positions have completed analysis, and most are in design or development phase
 - Thank you to committees and SMEs for their commitment – which is critical.
- 2024
 - 16 positions will start analysis at the end of the month and start of May.
 - Recommendation reviews will occur June-July for the Incident Position Description (IPD) updates, and development of Next Gen PTB and Incident Position Standards (IPS). Then that will move into the review phase 1 (due July 8-Aug 5).

Next Gen PTB:

- Quick review of IPTM Performance Support Package for NWCG incident positions
 - Incident Position Description (IPD) is the 'what', Incident Position Standards (IPS) is the 'how', and Next Gen PTB is for evaluation.
- Next Gen PTB is structured into three main sections
 - Front verification page – consolidate what was the first few pages to one page to streamline.

Additional information beyond these meeting notes (i.e., handouts, presentations, maps, etc.) will require a FOIA request to ensure proper privacy regulations are followed. Please request via FOIA Online website at <https://www.doi.gov/foia/make-a-request>.



Topic & Notes

- Evaluation Table – four ratings for each task. Includes only required tasks for successful performance, noted in the IPS by an asterisk, designed to be used in conjunction with IPS baseline standards for operation in the position.
- Evaluation Records – very similar to the older “classic” PTB version. The added Remarks Section enhances feedback to the trainee and home unit to support constructive conversations.
- Can use multiple codes for type of assignment flexibility (new S code for simulations).
- Must rate each task, even if N/O, and must have M or E for all tasks for certification.
- If more than four columns are needed, add another position evaluation table (not required to use all four evaluation columns).
- Transition from Classic PTBs to Next Gen PTBs:
 - Classic PTBs will go away when the Next Gen PTB is published through IPTM.
 - For combined PTBs, the classic position-specific duties will be removed from the combined PTB.
 - Completed common tasks in classic PTB (i.e., the Single Resource Boss positions) will not need to be repeated.
 - Start and finish in the same PTB, no need to merge or start a new PTB.
- Spring 2024 and moving forward
 - Many more IPTM positions are slated for completion soon, including CRWB, OPBD, MEDL, and RXB2
 - See position pages for all products.
- Will post transition plan and video to the PTB page after web migration has finished.
- Reminder to sign up for NWCG emails by functional area to get information.

EB meeting prep and handouts:

- To better prepare for Exec Board meeting, handouts are due 6 weeks in advance.
- Allows other committees and NWCG staff to have time to coordinate, answer questions, and review.
- A checklist is being drafted to facilitate the process (from an annual meeting feedback suggestion).

Web Migration Update:

- Started January 2023 and is very close to finalization.
- Rebuilding required going from Drupal 7 to 10 which adds functionality.
- Also involved moving to a cloud AWS server through the domain team.
- Delayed from November 2023 due to the change from Drupal 7 to 9, then Drupal 9 to 10 new requirements during the migration for InciWeb and LLC sites before the web team could continue working on NWCG.
- Resolved 99% of tickets and built over 7,000 pages.
- Attempted to go live on April 2nd but only the development server was live and had to delay. Awaiting a green light from Amazon (AWS server) for critical web traffic to flow. Current site is kept live in the meantime.
- Improvements:
 - Large file upload support with centralized storage.



Topic & Notes

- Three environments: production, development, and staging.
- Webforms now allow attachments.
- Improved printing as single PDF download sitewide.
- EDG/Drupal full integration – can now view NWCG Glossary in viewable web format.
- Announcements now have a create once and share throughout the site option.
- Navigation now has landing pages and streamlines to main audience needs.
- Queries and filters (PMS 504 directory as example) in content and contact lists.
- Post-migration: team continues to meet and make corrections, analytics, feedback, testing to allow other sites to embed our content, and more ED6 integration.
- A BIG thanks to Rhonda, the development team, the Amazon team, EDG data team, the server team, and everyone's tremendous work through some incredible and unforeseen challenges.

Committee Reports:

- **CEPC:**
 - In-person annual meeting scheduled for October in Maine.
 - Working with DMC on Fire Cause categories.
 - Stood up the Fire Cause Task Group with DMC, FRSC, and agencies to address large numbers of undetermined causes.
 - Fire Prevention Education Team Subcommittee (FPETSC):
 - P-101 course not being required.
 - FS Prevention updating agency position standards.
 - PETM and PETL excited to start IPTM – looking for members.
 - Public Information Officer Subcommittee (PIOSC):
 - New chair: Kerry Green
 - IPTM focus for May 2024: PIOT & PIO3 position analysis with large number of SMEs.
 - Vacant agency rep for FWS. Recently filled BIA and BLM
 - Wildland Fire Investigation Subcommittee (WFISC):
 - FI-110 course is live on the portal.
 - X-900 and FI-210 course revisions with developer.
 - PMS 412 being revised, target completion Spring 2025.
 - Wildfire cause studies are being driven by private interests, issues, and engagement.
- **DMC:**
 - Updates to national base layers for release April 2024.
 - Org Reference Data consolidation work continues (USFS OIS and BLM Unit ID) for one data set.



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- Was able to generate an IPD from EDG in the correct format.
- DMC and FENC working to better support committee work with data and glossary standards.
- Data Summit next week in Boise (DMC co-sponsor) – all are welcome in-person or virtual.
- EGP Next Gen transformation for geo data.
- **EMC:** N/A
- **ETC:**
 - Nate Hess, is the new chair behind Bill Yohn.
 - Working on subcommittee and roster updates.
 - UTV typing standards.
 - Innovative ideas submissions.
- **FENC:**
 - Memo to NWS for removal of Haines Index and Lightning Activity Level. Comment period likely May – July.
 - S-x90 series rewrite work continues.
 - Submitted an RFC for S-491 to be required for FBAN.
 - Reorganizing FENC to have better agency representation and subcommittees for SME focus.
 - New FEMS data from FRI (fuel moisture database live soon).
 - Looking at data standards and terms under FENC.
- **FMC:**
 - FUSC working on two tasks: finalizing the RT-300 video storyboard and the RXB1 review.
 - Working with EB on Prescribed Fire Practitioner alternative pathways.
 - Review of Rx qualification standards as an opportunity to move all agencies closer to the same standard.
- **IPSC:**
 - PMS 310-1 errata (expected release in June).
 - Positions moving from the Fed Supplement to 310-1 (ARCH, READ, REAF, REAC). Will not be in the errata.
 - 2 OPBD pathways and the Next Gen PTB.
 - Other RFCs for decision April/May.
 - IMT Courses
 - The advanced course will start analysis this fall for Dec 2025 deadline (reminder: Field Eval goes away in Jan 2025). S-320, Intro to IMTs, is on schedule for the Dec 2024 deadline with the alpha pilot June 25-27 in Sacramento, CA and the beta pilot September 3-5 in Madison, WI.
 - Working on an RFC for LOFC and the ICCI pathways.
 - Spring annual meeting is next week in Bend, OR.



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- **IBC:**
 - Spring meeting was all last week.
 - Revised *NWCG Standards for Interagency Incident Business Management*, PMS 902 and the DOI/USFS AD pay plans (ETA 30-45 days).
- **IFPC:** N/A
- **LC:**
 - In-person spring meeting this week.
 - 2024 Professional Reading Program ready and out soon.
 - Leadership Campaign starts April/May.
- **NCSC:**
 - Annual meeting 2 months ago in Boise, including subcommittees and National Dispatch Academy task group.
 - Highly involved in EDSC, EDRC, IADP, and ACDP IPTM efforts.
 - Local dispatch just hanging on, so the Dispatch Academy targeted for Spring 2025.
 - DCAD (dispatch cost analysis tool) after 6 years of work it is close to release for business by agency cost analysis standardization, and the app expected in the next 6-8 months.
 - Consolidated dispatch applications training saw more than 200 people attend in Reno.
 - In-person spring meeting was held in February.
- **NIAC**
 - California in-person meeting was held in February with subcommittee report outs.
 - Developing Committee SOP document (voting, rotation, management of groups, etc.).
 - Restructuring Airtanker and SEATs into one subcommittee with units.
 - A permanent position for chair being explored as largest committee with 27 subgroups.
 - As this committee addresses both fire and non-fire/resources workloads.
- **NIMSIC:**
 - In a lull right now. Nothing to report.
- **RMC:**
 - SafeNet Admin Karma Hope transition while on detail – big thanks to USFS.
 - Wildfire Health Effects Study report-out and impacts to mental health (with ties to environmental hazards).
 - Big Creek/Rum Creek Taskings: Working with EMC and NWCG Training on AA Risk Acceptance – response back to EB soon.
 - SOFF position's arduous duty line safety design plan completed and working on Next Gen PTB.
 - OSHA Emergency Response standard's public review work continues.
 - Draft safety bulletin for respirators (with SmoC) highlights the lack of approved respirators for wildland firefighters.
 - 6 Minutes for Safety Subcommittee (6MFS):

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- Ben Evans is the new chair behind Jennifer Myslivy
- Finalizing the 2024 Week of Remembrance posts
- Mental Health Subcommittee (MHSC):
 - Working on the *Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management*, PMS 926.
- Hazard Tree and Tree Felling Subcommittee (HTTFSC):
 - Working on the FAL3 Florida test course revisions for second test course and the Next Gen PTB draft is with the SMEs.
- **SmoC:**
 - Reviewing the new national ambient air quality standards and air quality index, and how it impacts land managers.
 - Looking at air curtain incinerators and other administrative changes.
 - Working on IMT smoke exposure video.
 - Continuing to build and expand the interagency smoke contacts page.
- **TDC:**
 - *NWCG Standards for Course Delivery*, PMS 901-1:
 - Modernized with COVID – virtual and distant delivery updates.
 - Streamline processes (i.e., digital signatures and tracking learning).
 - Document ready for review and to EB in a few months.
 - Membership was not standard (formed during pandemic), so looking at restructuring and engaged in succession planning.
 - Educational Technology Subcommittee (ETS):
 - Looking at industry standards to incorporate going forward to modernize training delivery
 - Seeing struggles to get cadres (and students) in winter with year-round wildfire and prescribed fire – looking for ways to get better access to trainings
- **WUIMC:** N/A
- **Executive Board and Closeout**
 - Acknowledge NWCG pressures and complexity as a collateral duty, it is difficult BUT impressive, especially in a collaborative platform. -Katie Wood
 - Reiterate sincere appreciation, as a former chair, we understand the hard work (and you do a ton). Thank you! -Dave Haston
- **Next call – July 11, 2024**