

## April 2020 Task Force Meeting

4/2/2020

1000 – 14:00 Webex meeting

Task Force: Seth Grimm, Cory Berg, William Glesener, Kurt Fogelberg, Chase Marshall, Mike Macke, Leanne Langeberg

Other agency attendees: Brian Wise, USFS, Shelly Serich, MN DNR, Kevin Carlisle, MN DNR

AGENDA ITEM	NOTES
<p><b>Building / Budget Update</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The uncommitted funds noted in the April budget spreadsheet do not include the bids for the security system upgrade.</li> <li>• There are no new building updates since the March Task Force meeting.</li> <li>• The building is well stocked with supplies and will be ready for employees as they return from teleworking stay-at-home orders.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2020 MNICS Annual Meeting</b>                      - <b>Agenda items</b>  <b>Key note speakers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2020 Meeting will follow the same agenda schedule as 2019.</li> <li>• Monday - separate Board of Directors (BOD) and Task Force (TF) Meetings, the joint BOD and TF meeting, and the TF meeting with Type 3 Team's incident commanders and the IMT Working Team.</li> <li>• Tuesday - the TF will host a one-hour meeting with the Working Team Chairs from 8:00 am to 9:00 am, then Working Team meetings will begin after the meeting.</li> <li>• Kevin Carlisle will send out to the Task Force the History of MNICS PowerPoint developed by Tom Kaase and Ron Stoffel.</li> <li>• Travis Dotson has been requested to speak on mental health awareness. Travis is seeking approval from his Regional director. William Glesener will reach out to Travis to ask for an update on status of the decision. .</li> <li>• Alternate keynote speaker consideration – Nelda St. Clair – CISM topic. Cory Berg will reach out to Nelda. She is a BIA agency employee, and her speaking expenses would only require travel costs.</li> <li>• Task Force is considering presentations focused on individual MNICS agency's history and their connection to MNICS (possibly one agency per year).</li> <li>• Task Force is considering updates from each Board Member after the opening comments from the Task Force Chair.</li> <li>• Task Force is planning to host the 2020 MNICS meeting, but will continue to monitor the pandemic situation.</li> <li>• Task Force will email each Working Team Chair and request them to submit their expected meeting room size and anticipated length of meeting time to Kevin Carlisle by 4/30/2020.</li> </ul>
<p><b>MNCC Manager – Delegation of Authority</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acting center manager, Mike Mackey, requested clarification from the Task Force about legacy responsibilities that are essential for the center manager's position – e.g., agreements. Acting center manager will continue to work directly with Task Force representatives, and if it is determined that more structure is needed, the Task Force will define the direction.</li> <li>• The logistics dispatcher position will be filled through the State DNR and is at the HR level.</li> <li>• Dispatcher availability and filling voids this season is a concern with many agencies now restricting travel. The Task Force is recommending MNCC compile a list of local resources trained as dispatchers and utilize them to the fullest extent possible, and to request all who have dispatch training to complete IROC training.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>MNCC Manager – Delegation of Authority – cont.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type 2 Initial Attack Crews, the application period ends April 3, 2020. Task Force recommends selecting crew members, but ask that each selected individual be advised that they may not roster in June but must be prepared for August and September.</li> <li>• Acting center manager and purchasing authority               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Past center managers had purchase card authority to help crews out with emergency purchases.</li> <li>○ The acting center manager will route all purchase needs necessary to support the Type 2 IA crews through the DNR’s Larry Himanga, or Kevin O’Brien.</li> <li>○ The acting center manager will reach out to Laura (Forest Service) to ask about the Forest Service Central Billing Account’s ability to support MN Type 2 IA Crews.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• MNCC is working on completing the COOP plan this will follow the FEMA federal template. The action will cover the COVID-19 pandemic and future events that could impact and temporarily close the MNCC.</li> <li>• Fire and incident communication for MNCC is critical, Dave Jalonen with the Forest Service is working to set up communication capabilities at the Chippewa and Superior National Forest locations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aviation – co-op letter</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Forest Service and DNR are working together to draft a letter for the Board of Directors to send to the Eastern Area and the NMAC in response to the recent language changes in the Red Book regarding the shared use of aircraft resources.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2020 preparations for wildfire operations during COVID-19 response</b></p>	<p><b>Forest Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency guidance is ever-evolving. Most recent guidance received provided information on social distancing changes to bunkhouses and vehicle use.</li> <li>• Agency wide the Forest Service is hearing from more seasonal firefighter who are expressing concerns about pulmonary issues how the pandemic may impact their effort to fight fire this year.</li> <li>• We are starting to see an increase in FEMA requests for support.</li> </ul> <p><b>National Park Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency management is also talking about shared housing; every park has different housing needs.</li> </ul> <p><b>MN DNR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• William sent out the COVID-19 Best Practices document to the Task Force. The document categorizes what DNR firefighters can do as we respond to fire this year.</li> <li>• The State has postponed all prescribed burning across all divisions. This will free up other division staff to help where needed, including three wildlife burn crews who will be available for suppression.</li> <li>• The DNR ELM crew program has been canceled this year, and training effort will involve teaming up entry level employee with a seasoned firefighter where possible.</li> </ul> <p><b>BIA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tribal governments are making their own decisions, which will create a mix of travel restrictions.</li> </ul> <p><b>FWS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zone FMOs have been tasked with developing regional plans.</li> <li>• Agency continues to follow the CDC guidelines.</li> <li>• The agency has not provided much guidance about travel restrictions.</li> <li>• MN FWS seasonal employees have returned as March 30, 2020.</li> <li>• MN FWS will default to step-up plans for initial attack. Supporting fire is the default priority this year.</li> </ul>
<p><b>MNICS prevention messaging strategy for 2020</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each agency has a different protocol for how they are communicating COVID-19 response. The MNICS PIO asked for guidance on how MNICS should focus on Fire Prevention messaging to stay in adherence to each MNICS agency’s protocols related to COVID-19.</li> </ul>

# Notes

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Task Force feels that messaging coming from MIFC/MNICS is valuable, especially wrapping in the messaging around health and safety.</li> <li>• MNICS PIO will work with agency efforts to promote fire prevention and coordinate communication plan efforts.</li> <li>• Cory Berg is looking into funding sources from the Regional BIA that could be put into the coop for radio messages.</li> </ul>
<b>MNICS Conference Calls and telework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task Force considering Microsoft Teams for the next MNICS conference call on Tuesday.</li> <li>• Will make a stronger effort at the beginning of each call to remind attendees of conference call etiquette – mute all phones and computers, plug in headphones, etc.</li> <li>• All presenters will be asked to call in via phone for their reports to improve sound quality.</li> </ul>
<b>Aviation frequency changes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BIA reported that NIFC's National Interagency Communication Division (NIICD) changed the air-to-ground frequency 70 to the air-to-ground frequency 22. These changes were not communicated to the MN BIA fire program.</li> <li>• BIA has requested they revert back the air-to-ground frequency 70, but were advised the air-to-ground frequency 70 infringes on the Canadian border zone frequency, and the change is not negotiable.</li> <li>• This air-to-ground frequency change will require all of Red Lake, Superior National Forest and Bois Fort to switch to the air-to-ground frequency 22. BIA has made the switch.</li> <li>• Cory Berg is requesting the Task Force draft a letter for the Board of Directors to request the NIICD communicate and finalize these all changes in advance of the Minnesota spring fire season to help minimize communication impacts to fire operations.</li> </ul>
<b>Agency Updates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NPS</b> – Regions have shut down prescribed burning. There is no word on travel restrictions. Kurt Fogelberg is continuing to work at the office.</li> <li>• <b>USFS</b> – The focus continues to be centered on COVID-19 response. ADs can now support prescribed burns. The vacancy announcement has been released for the center manager position.</li> <li>• <b>BIA</b> – There were three fires on the White Earth Reservation. BIA will be conducting some prescribed fires on reservation land where plans were already in place. A known case of COVID-19 has prompted the Red Lake Tribe to enact the Tribal Marshall Law beginning tomorrow afternoon. All fire personnel are considered essential to respond to fire suppression efforts. The contract helicopter is coming on next week.</li> <li>• <b>HSEM</b> – Roy has been extremely busy with HSEM workload and was unable to attend this Task Force meeting.</li> <li>• <b>FWS</b> – Developing a regional response plan. Telework will most likely continue through May 1. The GS-07 position for MN Valley will hopefully start May 1, 2020.</li> <li>• <b>DNR</b> – Same as all the other agencies, focusing on how we will respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> <li>• <b>MNCC</b> – Working on the COOP plan. Many MNCC staff are teleworking. Aviation assets are now on as aircraft are positioning throughout the state. The operations dispatch is talking about the time frame dispatcher will return.</li> <li>• <b>PIO</b> – Continuing to work with MN DNR information staff to develop a communication plan for approval by the DNR IMT related to COVID-19 messaging and fire prevention. May be asked to help out the DNR Joint Information Center, and have been asked to take the PIO role for the DNR IMT after fire season – June timeframe.</li> </ul>
<b>Agenda topics for May</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MNICS meeting</li> </ul>

Next meeting: May 7, 2020 hosted on Webex