MNICS News

Minnesota Incident Command System

Spring 2014

Legacy Award to honor lasting contribution to MNICS

by Jim Hinds

2014 is the 30th anniversary of the Minnesota Incident Command System. It began as an idea, a quest, to improve wildland fire response and better serve the public through a partnership and a co-location at the Minnesota Interagency Fire Center. That successful partnership of state and federal agencies has grown, evolved and improved.

At the 2014 MNICS Annual meeting, we will recognize some of the people who shaped the organization by presenting them with the Legacy Award. We will invite the individuals being recognized (or their representative) to attend.

Circumstance is not always met with the leadership and perseverance necessary to create positive change and to move forward. The Legacy Award intends to thank those who did accept that challenge. We hope this reminder of their achievements will inspire those who serve in the future.

To nominate an individual/s for the Legacy Award, please submit their name along with a brief statement of their contributions. Please keep the narrative to a paragraph or two. See nomination form, page 3.

The criteria for nomination for the Legacy Award are twofold. 1) The individual, through leadership, must have made a significant and lasting contribution to the MNICS organization and/or emergency response associated with the MNICS mission. 2) The individual shall have been substantially divested from the MNICS organization for at least three years.

Protocols and selection process:

- Nominations must be received by July 1, 2014.
- There is no limit on how many individuals may receive the Legacy Award, however, we set the bar high, with measures for the award being significant and lasting contribution.
- Selection of Legacy Award recipients will be by consensus of the MNICS Task Force, with a focus on merit, not a "vote tally" of how many times a name is submitted.
- The Task Force will complete selections for the 2014 Legacy Award by Sept. 15, 2014.
- Nomination does not ensure receipt of the Legacy Award, however those not receiving the award this year may be considered in the future.

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NEW DATES

MNICS Annual Meeting

Tuesday - Thursday
Dec. 2 - 4
Duluth

IMT Meeting

Feb. 18 - 19
Central Minnesota
Host: Team B
Greg Peterson, IC

MNICS launches new Awards program

In May, the MNICS Task Force formalized an awards program that specifies awards and sets criteria and forms of recognition for individuals, teams and partners.

The Legacy Award recognizes former MNICS leaders. Other awards acknowledge current achievement, outstanding performance and service to the MNICS organization.

SOLICITATION

MNICS will send information about the awards to MNICS participants, associates, and past incident commanders through the MNICS publications, the Web, email and direct mail.

NOMINATIONS

Nominations must be completed in writing, include the name of the person making the nomination, and submitted to the MIFC dispatch coordinator by Oct. 1 of each year. *However, for 2014, Legacy Award nominations are due by July 1.*

SELECTION

The MNICS Task Force will review nominations and make award selections. Decisions of the Task Force are final. *Not all nominees will receive an award. Not all categories will have an award recipient. There may be more than one award per category*.

CRITERIA

Selection criteria vary and include leadership, impact on the MNICS organization, individual and team accomplishments, and commitment to the MNICS mission.

PRESENTATION

Award presentations will be at the MNICS Annual Meeting.

AWARDS

LEGACY AWARD

This award honors those few who provided outstanding leadership in wildfire response, guided state and federal partnerships, and helped MNICS evolve into a nationally recognized emergency response organization. The recipient has provided significant and lasting contributions, exhibited exceptional service, and enhanced the MNICS mission. The recipient has been substantially divested from MNICS for at least three years. Recognition: Plaque.

TEAMWORK

Award recognizes all or part of a MNICS incident management team, working team, crew or project group for advances in incident command and emergency management; outstanding performance; spirit of service; and enhancing MNICS mission. Recognition: Plaque for group and individual certificates.

PARTNERSHIP

Award acknowledges exceptional service or assistance to the MNICS organization by a partner, vendor or support organization. Recognition: Plaque.

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

Individual exhibits outstanding performance and service to MNICS; embodies an exceptional spirit of service; enhances MINICS' mission and goals. Recognition: Certificate.

LEADERSHIP

The award recognizes the leadership of a member of a MNICS incident management group, working team, crew or project team. The recipient exhibits outstanding leadership in emergency management and incident command; enhances the MNICS mission; supports safety. Recognition: Certificate.

SERVICE to MNICS BOARD of DIRECTORS MNICS TASK FORCE

This award recognizes those who have served on the MNICS Board of Directors or Task Force for at least one year and have resigned from the Board or Task Force through retirement or job change. Recognition: Certificate and knife.

RETIREMENT

This award recognizes those who have been part of the MNICS organization and have retired during the past year. Recognition: Certificate and knife.

SAFETY

This award is for individuals or teams that exhibit exceptional safety awareness and/or performance and enhance the safety of others. Recognition: Plaque.

HEADLESS PULASKI

Award appreciates that things do not always go quite as planned. *This award is all in fun and is not meant to embarrass anyone.*

Prevention Working Team *Mike Beaulieu*

At this time the Prevention Working Team has one event scheduled. It is Smokey Bear Day at Itasca State Park, on Thursday, July 24 from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm.

The team discussed these possible events: Tall Timber Days in Grand Rapids in August, Bearhead State Park in Ely-Tower in June, MIFC Open house in October and a Minnesota Lynx game. The working team is still in the process of contacting the organizers of these events.

The Red Lake Prevention Program participated at the Bemidji Tanker Base on Saturday, May 31 from 10 am to 3 pm. The program honored Smokey's 70th birthday.

There were also Smokey's 70th birthday events at the air tanker bases in Hibbing and Brainerd.

MNICS AWARDS

NOMINATION FORM

Due by October 1 for recognition at MNICS Annual Meeting

For 2014, Legacy Award nominations must be submitted by July 1, 2014.

Name of nominee (individual, team or crew):

Date of nomination:

Nominated by:

Please check box indicating nomination:

MNICS LEGACY AWARD

☐ MNICS LEGACY AWARD

TEAM AWARD

☐ MNICS TEAMWORK AWARD

PARTNER AWARD

☐ MNICS PARTNERSHIP AWARD

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

☐ MNICS LEADERSHIP AWARD

☐ MNICS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AWARD

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS

☐ MNICS SAFETY AWARD

☐ HEADLESS PULASKI AWARD

SERVICE AWARDS

☐ RETIREMENT

☐ SERVICE TO THE MNICS BOARD OF DIRECTORS or TASK FORCE

Please provide a narrative outlining the contributions of the individual/team nominated:

Supporting documentation:

Include only one individual or one team/group in this nomination.
Attach additional narrative or documentation pages as needed.
Submit nominations to MIFC Awards, MIFC Coordinator, 402 11th Street SE, Grand Rapids, MN 55744, or to tom.fasteland@state.mn.us. For further information contact MIFC Dispatch at 218-327-4558.

Information Management

The www.MNICS.org Website is an ongoing project for the Information Management Working Team. Four team memberss received training so they will be able to provide site administration. Team members will also look into website costs and perform an annual archive of the site. An update of www.MNICS.org standard operating guidelines is complete along with training on Wordpress for authors and editors. The team will update the "What's New" section of the home page.

The team held the Annual PIO meeting and training which featured an incident-within-an-incident simulation and developed a Media Tip sheet for media coming to a fire. The tip sheet includes information on getting the story, field visits, PPE, flying a fire, information sources, frequent questions about wildfire and basic wildfire terms.

Team members are working on an anniversary presentation for GLFFC (September) and the MNICS Annual Meeting (December), a display and a feature section of the Annual Report on the MNICS history.

The team is also developing a PIO mentor program to help increase PIO numbers.

Keep up-to-date on fire and all risk incidents,
Incident Management Teams
Working Team projects

www.MNICS.org

Communications

Mike Hamilton

The replacement for the COMM1 trailer is in the works and the trailer will be set up as soon as it arrives. The COMM2 trailer is ready to go should we need it in the meantime.

The Communications Working Team will meet in June to train on setting up the new 100-foot antenna and to refresh skills on interoperability with cloning software and internal changes/updates of each agency.

We are waiting for a report on the interoperability exercise held in Cook County this spring. A few working team members participated.

Training

Some of the current MNICS instructors have been added to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) database so they can continue to teach as some incident command system classes move to the FEMA system.

The Wildfire Academy, June 2-6, has 19 classes and 659 students. This is the largest number of students ever. The Academy is hosting a special session for all attendees featuring Amanda Graning, Fire Weather Forecaster, National Weather Service, Duluth.

Six courses will be provided this fall.

Operations

The MNICS Task Force approved funding to print and bind the *Minnesota Fire Suppression Pocket Guide* so it looks more professional. The team finalized the T2IA crew rosters and held a team cohesion meeting in late May. The team also developed an Operations perpetual calendar.

January
- Appplication open for MNICS crews

February
- Operations WT selects crew bosses
- Crew bosses select crew overhead

March/April
- Conference call to develop crew cohesion meetings

May
- Crew cohesion meetings

June
- Wildfire Academy
- June 9, T2IA crews available

October
- Write annual report
- T2IA crew AARs
- Compile crew evaluations

November
- Receive assignments from Task Force
- Schedule an Operations WT conference call
- Compile crew evaluations
- Develop annual meeting agenda
- Review Task Force assignments

December
- MNICS annual meeting

Air Operations

The Air Operations Working Team has the following annual tasks on their agenda:
- Create articles and update records and Mob Guide
- Provide training for State Patrol
- Provide MNARG pilot/crew training
- Provide EMS/media pilot briefing
- Prepare MNARG rate summary for MNDNR operating plan
- Prepare Letters of Approval from federal agencies for MNARNG, State Patrol, DNR
- Produce roster of aviation resources
- Update and distribute communication plans
- Host annual MNICS/GLFFC aviation meeting
- Update emergency response aircraft source list

Other tasks for 2014 include:
- Determine Helispot locations for EMS approval/use
- Provide EMS landing zone training for agencies
- Determine need to revise MNICS all-risk plan
- Update night vision goggles (NVG)
- Seek approval of MN DNR hover exit for interagency partner use
- Post retardant avoidance map, concerns and use on www.MNICS.org
- Secure pre-approval for use of Canadian aircraft
- Provide 800 MHz training for USFS pilots, responders
- Provide UAV update, briefing (MNICS/GLFFC meeting)
- Outline CL-415 operations
- Update MAFFS

Prescribed Fire / Fuels *Scott Weyenberg*

The Prescribed Fire & Fuels Working Team will be updating the *Minnesota Smoke Management Plan*. The team is working with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to make changes to air quality regulations and add documentation to prescribed fire reporting. The last major revision was in 2008.

The working team is assessing proposed changes to the Red Flag Warning criteria. The proposal is to add wind gusts to the Red Flag Warning. Wind elements in the warning are sustained 20-foot winds of greater than 20 mph and/or "frequent" (generally three hours or more) of gusts of over 25 mph in wooded areas or more than 35 mph in grasslands (Red River Valley and SW Minnesota).

Finally, the team will continue to address prescribed fire reporting needs, working with the MPCA to determine what is required or needed. It is likely that data from SMARTFIRE will be sufficient.

Minnesota
Incident Command System
402 11th Street SE
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
218-327-4436
www.mnics.org

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Chris Mursu

The GISS Working Team held their annual spring GIS refresher March 25 at MIFC.

The working team has recognized a shortage of willing and qualified GIS specialists (GISS) on the 2014 IMT roster. Efforts are underway to provide quality incident experience for GISS trainees in an attempt to provide a larger pool of candidates available for dispatch with MNICS IMTs.

If the 2014 fire season limits GISS trainee dispatches, a simulation may be warranted to help with training efforts for next season. Like last year, there is also remote assistance available for MNICS GIS needs within Minnesota.

Four primary assignments are underway:

- $ Increase number of qualified GISS available for assignments. Provide GISS trainees quality training experience on incidents and/or through simulation.
- $ Provide MNICS IMTs with functional, reliable plotters for GISS use. A new T120 plotter was purchased, tested, and is ready for deployment from MIFC. A T1100 is available as a second or backup plotter. All plotters have a standard supply kit order and maintenance plan assigned.
- $ Identify, implement, and share best practices for file sharing between federal and state laptops on incidents. A Buffalo drive or network-attached storage device (NAS) will be available for dispatch with MNICS GISS, as will USB thumb drives. Responding GISSs also need to ensure they have administrator rights to their laptop prior to arriving at incident. This is also important for sharing the I-Suite database.
- $ Develop recommendations for mobile device application and products on MNICS IMT incidents.
  - e Mobile Applications: Georeferenced PDFs allow the mobile user to download a GIS product such as the ops briefing map to an iPad or smartphone and view the user's current location on the map using a mobile app such as Avenza PDF Maps.
  - e Products: Georeferenced PDF products can be posted to an external server and downloaded via a link or Quick Reference (QR) code placed on the paper map.
  - e Systems: Enterprise Geospatial Portal (EGP) is an NWCG beta version web portal for GISS to create quick maps during the initial setup phase of an incident and before other GIS data is consolidated into a daily product.
  - e Productivity: Fire responders collecting data via GPS should upgrade to GPS units that use USB cables and clear the GPS unit's data memory before creating incident data for the IMT's Situation Unit. Getting georeferenced data on a map is the priority, not sorting through data from previous fires.

Information Technology

CTSP spring refresher

Ann Sampson

The Information Technology Working Team held their computer specialist (CTSP) spring refresher on April 15, after cancelling an earlier date due to snowstorms. We are happy to see new faces with new energy in the group.

As always, the spring gathering included review of kit components, setup of mock incident network and I-Suite network setup. This year included a lively discussion of the perfect "network in a box", standardization of setup, and the new national task book. With technology and incident needs always changing, we are looking forward to the highly-anticipated rollout of a formalized standard task book (no official one since 2002 draft) and e-I-Suite this fall.

CTSP teams across the nation are testing the new online application, running it alongside the traditional "standard" network version of I-Suite.

National CTSP training

Jonathan Lord

In homage to the command, “Keep Portland Weird,” the participants in the 2014 national CTSP training class serenaded their own graduation with Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance on Kazoo. Highlights of the session focused on surviving fire camp, setting up a network, installing and configuring I-Suite, making SURE to do at least an hourly backup of the I-Suite database, and applying the 15-minute rule: “If you've messed with it for 15 minutes and aren't making headway, try a different approach."

Notes shared with the Minnesota CTSP community: I-Suite 14 is not backwards compatible with version 13 because the Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS) has dropped Social Security numbers (SSNs) from the database in favor of employee common identifier (ECI) numbers. There is a way to have ROSS email a fresh extract every hour for importing, and there is no reason to get duplicate resources in the database, if the ROSS import is done properly. All CTSPs need a National Enterprise Support Service Application Portal (NAP) account with access to ROSS. And, the I-Suite server will not run on Microsoft Windows 8 no matter how much you curse the machine.

An e-I-Suite demo was very informative. Not having to install the application on every machine that needs access to the database will be a great time saver, as the only requirement for client machines is to have a web browser installed. The expected rollout for e-I-Suite will be this fall for all modules except supply.

The class was useful and the instruction cadre fun, kooky, and informative. I recommend the class for anyone wanting to increase their understanding of the CTSP role, unfortunately next time you'll have to travel to Sacramento instead of lovely Portland.

Logistics

Mark Seger

The Logistics Working Team has set up a schedule and assigned agency chairs and vice chairs through 2018.

Like many teams, the logistics section is still struggling with recruitment, particularly in the supply unit. We are also down one person in Ground Support with the loss of a good friend and colleague Lenny Hill in November 2013.

We are forming a sub-committee to come up with an informal informational class to be put on at the Wildfire Academy, with a target date of 2015. The class would introduce and spark interest in working in Logistics. Once the committee is formed we will be working with Todd Manley to produce materials for Logistics Unit Training.

The committee is also developing a program for currant logistics members to mentor trainees to help them get task books signed off.

If you have questions, thoughts or comments please contact your MINICS representatives.

Dispatch Working Team *Ronda Estey*

Dispatch training
Several training sessions were available to dispatchers:

- Approximately 30 dispatchers attended the ROSS Refresher for Dispatchers on March 12.
- A WildCAD Refresher was held March 13 with 30 dispatchers.
- The spring Dispatchers Meeting brought in 65 dispatchers on March 13
- Sixty-five attended the Aircraft Dispatcher Refresher March 14.

Upcoming dispatch training and dispatch-related events

- D-110 Expanded Dispatch Recorder (EDRC) will be June 2-4 and Basic ROSS – June 4-5, 2014 at the Wildfire Academy at Itasca Community College (ICC), with 16 to 20 students.
- D-312 Aircraft Dispatcher (ACDP) will be offered in 2015 instead of 2014. The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) is recommending that D-312 be held back-to-back with D-311 Initial Attack Dispatcher (IADP) because the curriculum is being combined to complement both. The MNICS Training Working Team will set dates.
- The Status Check-in (SKCN) course, S-248, will be offered June 2-3, 2014, at the Wildfire Academy, ICC.
- Radio Operator (RADO) course, J-158, will be offered June 2 at the Wildfire Academy.

The Dispatch WT will hold a joint meeting with the Training WT to plan future dispatch courses and set up a five-year rotation plan for these courses.

The MNICS ROSS Refresher for incident management was cancelled in March due to severe weather. It will be rescheduled for late fall 2014 (after fall fire season).

The Dispatch WT is working with the Prevention WT to host a joint Fire Prevention Open House during Fall Fire Prevention Week. The open house will be on Oct. 8, 2014 from 3:30 pm to 6 pm.

Lead dispatchers from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resource (DNR) Northeast and Central regions are statusing their own resources in ROSS on a one-year trial basis. MIFC Dispatch will oversee the overall ROSS program and statusing, but is encouraging DNR regions to do the statusing for their regions. We will reassess statusing after the trial year.

The Red Lake Agency Fire Program has adopted WildCAD into their daily dispatching program. A trainer helped dispatchers learn the new WildCAD dispatch system. The Red Lake Agency and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) fire management officers are using WildCAD successfully and have given the program high reviews. The Minnesota DNR has been looking into WildCAD also.

Other dispatch news
MIFC Dispatch has been busy with supporting the National Park Service (NPS) and US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) with resource orders for their prescribed burns. Other resource orders have been for radios, supplies, and a few overhead name requests to Colorado, New Mexico, South Dakota, Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin.

MNICS DWT Chair Rotation
2014 – Chair BIA Ronda Estey
VC FWS Kim Muirhead
2015 – Chair DNR, VC BIA
2016 – Chair NPS, VC DNR
2017 – Chair FS, VC NPS
2018 – Chair FWS, VC FS
2019 – Chair BIA, VC FWS
2020 – Chair DNR, VC BIA
2021 – Chair NPS, VC DNR
2022 – Chair FS, VC NPS

Finance

The Finance Working Team Write prepared an article for the *Minnesota Fire Chiefs Magazine* on what a local fire department can expect when called to a fire with an Incident Management Team (IMT). It appeared in the May/June issue.

Working team members also created a brochure for local fire departments and contractors with information and a check list of things they need to know when working on a fire with an IMT.