



Minnesota Incident Command System (MNICS) Task Force

Meeting Minutes

Date and location

Jan. 25, 2018 at 0930

Minnesota Interagency Fire Center (MIFC) Grand Rapids

Attendees

Kurt Fogelberg (NPS), Seth Grimm (FWS), Roy Holmes (HSEM), Tom Kaase (DNR), Paul Lundgren for Ron Stoffel (DNR), Rebekah Luedtke (DNR), Chase Marshall (USFS), Todd Manley (DNR), Greg Peterson (BIA), Christi Powers (DNR), Tom Remus (BIA), Shelly Serich (DNR), Ron Stoffel* (DNR), Brian Wise (USFS), Tasha Woodwick (BIA) *by phone

Building update

Sprinkler

The fire sprinkler system at MIFC malfunctioned alerting the City of Grand Rapids with an alarm multiple times. It appears the check valve is broken which pressurizes water throughout the system. Repair costs are approximately \$9,800. The entire system is more than 10 years old and complete replacement costs are between \$70,000 and \$80,000. The Task Force approved the \$9,800 repair cost to replace the check valve and \$1900 to fix the security gate sensor in the back of the building.

MIFC first floor

Bids for first floor office remodeling are between \$8,000 to \$10,000 and approximately \$2,000 of labor costs for electrical wiring. This exceeds initial estimates by the MIFC Building Committee. Tom Kaase recently obtained the quote through a vendor. Kathy Wemhoff, state design planner, may have surplus walls for reduced cost but this route could take longer than working directly with a vendor. Task Force members discussed whether existing walls and equipment for the Minnesota Interagency Coordination Center (MNCC) could be repurposed. Tom Kaase said the first and second floor décor is different so the walls would not match. The Task Force authorized Tom Kaase to get bids for carpet and paint for first floor remodeling.

MNCC dispatch remodel

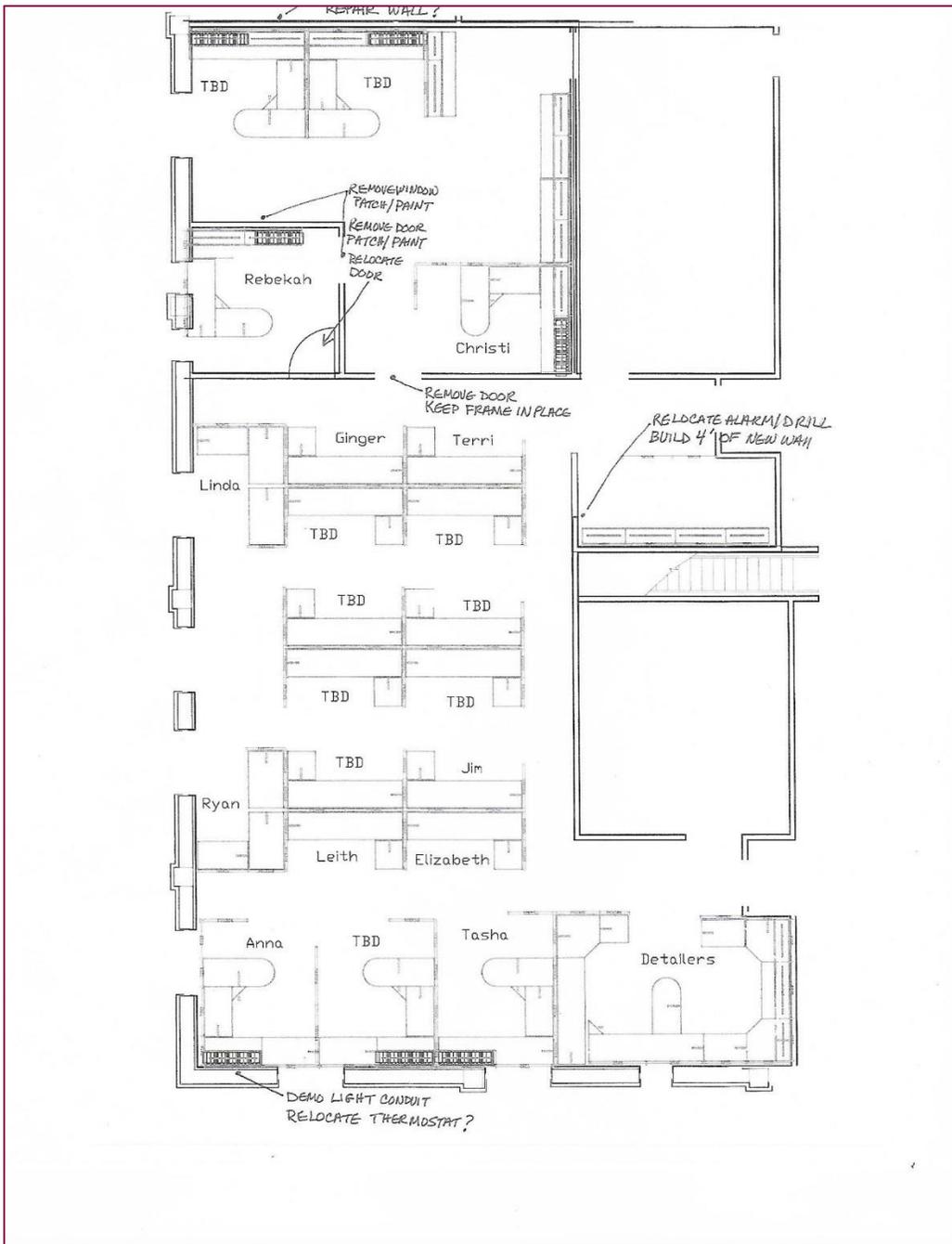
Kathy Wemhoff visited MIFC to inventory cubicle walls, desks and storage bins for MNCC second floor redesign. Blake Freking has been contacted about the latest plan which involves no change to the HVAC system or foundational support walls. All MNCC dispatchers agree on the current design.

Repurposing of existing office walls, desks and furniture reduced costs to \$99,000 including electrical wiring. Currently there is \$70,000 set aside for the project. The Task Force will need to approach the Board of Directors (BoD) about additional funding. Approximately \$7,000 reserved for MNICS website redesign will be shifted to the dispatch remodeling project.

Undesignated spots near the Center Manager's office will be used for wildfire-related occupancy. All desks within the 'pit' area will be similar to the ergonomic ones in the aviation desk area. Additional printers and fax machines do not need to be purchased with the current plan. The BIA has approximately \$47,000 to contribute to the project.

MnCC design

January 2018



Phased redesign

With remodeling projects taking place on both the first and second floors of MIFC, a phased approach will be used. Ideally, MNCC redesign will take place after spring fire season but before the end of the 2018 calendar year. Paul Lundgren will check with DNR-Division of Forestry leadership to approve plans and investigate availability of funds. Chase Marshall will also check with USFS forest supervisors in the Duluth office.

Kathy Wemhoff has overseen similar projects and will be on site during the remodel. Rebekah Luedtke said first steps for the MNCC redesign is to open the space between the 'pit' and air desk. The walls around the aviation desk will not configure to the first floor cubicle area. The DNR Material Resources Division can handle surplus goods. It was suggested that tankerbases and forestry offices may have a use for the 80-inch walls from the aviation desk.

Replacement or upgrade of dispatch radios are a separate undertaking. BIA may also have earmarked funds for radio upgrade later on. The Task Force approved moving forward to obtain bids for first floor redesign. Time is of the essence with the arrival of two new (permanent) assistant fire management officers (AFMOs) in February. Tom Kaase estimates that first floor cubicle redesign, paint and carpeting may cost approximately \$35,000. Currently there is approximately \$83,000 in unencumbered funds in the MIFC co-op account. Future federal fiscal budgets will likely be limited. Task Force members agreed it is important to finish the project in 2018.

Budget

Chase Marshall said a ticket will need to be generated in CIO for rewiring of federal equipment in the dispatch area. Tom Kaase suggested that a data person from MN-IT should do an inventory of live/non-live wires. Roy Holmes inquired about funds for office furniture upgrades. In the past, each agency has been responsible for employee furniture costs. Recent MIFC expenditures include:

- MNICS annual meeting = \$4,910.50
- Fire cache LED emergency light replacement = \$760
- MNICS annual report printing = \$1,180
- MNICS website redesign = \$3,200

IMT meeting

Tom Kaase distributed a draft agenda for the MNICS incident management team (IMT) meeting, Feb. 6-7, 2018 at Breezy Point. Registration is at 55 persons compared to 90 in previous years. Greg Peterson, incident commander for IMT-B will review team expectations, rosters and processes. There will be a focus on IMT standard operating procedures (SOPs). Chase Marshall said that administratively determined (AD) team members are approved to attend.

MNICS annual meeting

The Task Force reviewed evaluations from the 2017 MNICS annual meeting in Duluth where approximately 135 people were in attendance. Critiques were above average. Suggestions for future presentations include:

- Continuing with human factors, leadership and organizational change topics
- Add a half day for possible IMT training
- Keep working team reports short
- Continue presentation topics related to the history of MNICS

Working team composition

The Task Force discussed whether all working teams need to have Charters. Rebekah Luedtke and Tasha Woodwick highly encourage them. Task Force members discussed working team member composition. For efficiency, members should add value and help with working team projects. Voting members remain at one per agency. Seth Grimm said two agency representatives on the Operations Working Team are advisable because of retirements. Paul Lundgren conveyed that DNR Division of Forestry is limiting travel expenses to these events because demonstrated return on value is necessary. Having folks who can help with working team projects is needed. Smokechasers can participate on working teams but there needs to be prior approval from Rebekah Luedtke or another supervisor. Chase Marshall is not authorizing ADs to attend MNICS annual meetings but they can attend IMT meetings if serving in an alternate or primary position.

Chase Marshall asked Todd Manley about MNICS Training Working Team (TWT) chair rotation and getting other agencies involved to increase diversity. Currently Todd is a member of multiple training teams (EACC, GLFFC) but does not necessarily occupy a vote on all teams. Roy Holmes said a new training officer was hired at HSEM and he will mention TWT participation.

Training

The Minnesota Wildfire Academy continues to expand. Seth Grimm said that requests for FWS instructors need to factor in pre-established workloads especially at that time of year. Also, he is focused on getting the right folks registered for classes so that incident command system (ICS) qualifications are met. Task Force members discussed incompatibility of state and federal IQS/IQCS systems, building duplicate class rosters and allotments of class seats by agency.

Todd indicated that most every class roster is built and maintained in the IQS system. He and his staff do not have access to IQCS. Batch exports can be done from either system but upload is not always functional. Students need to submit class completion certificates for proper credentialing. This is their responsibility. Seth inquired about duplication of effort. Greg Peterson said that at one time USFS, FWS and BIA all had their own qualification/training systems. Roy Holmes added that Learning Management System (LMS) is used by HSEM. Also, the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) and Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) issue duplicate certificates for interchangeable courses. Cohort information is also maintained by the Emergency Management Institute (EMI).

Meadow Kouffeld-Hansen has been hired by Itasca Community College to handle Minnesota 2018 Wildfire Academy (WFA-2018) registration and preliminary logistics. She will be introduced at a future Task Force meeting. ICC is subcontracting with Itasca Community Education for online registration (no manual registration with print materials).

Aviation Working Team

Air Operations Working Team (AOWT) members Cory Berg, Rob Heavirland, Tom Remus and Darren Neuman presented Operational Control considerations for use of aircraft at WFA-2018. The Forest Service Manual (5720.5) states: "The exercise of authority over initiating, conducting or terminating a flight (14 CFR part 1.1). This includes direct management oversight, supervision and accountability for a specific task, mission or assignment."

The Task Force discussed which entity has aviation operational control at WFA-2018. In the past, the state wildfire aviation supervisor has approval to delegate authority to the incident management team overseeing the Academy. AOWT is recommending that one agency has operational control. Line safety officers also need to be implemented. Darren mentioned that MNICS aviation agreements refer to combined use for mutual benefit but this applies to suppression and not for training.

DNR is the jurisdictional agency. It is understood that state aircraft are not federally red-carded. Paul Lundgren will confer with Ron Stoffel and Darren Neuman. The AOWT will draft a unified Project Aviation Safety Plan for Task Force review and approval.

Radio frequencies

With the MnCC integration, the AOWT discussed acquiring or renewing frequencies. Three licenses expired for DNR. BIA has requested six new frequencies from the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC). AOWT should hear back by Feb. 23 and the frequencies are issued by or before Oct. 31st by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). AOWT recommends that DNR not renew its three licenses. Paul Lundgren will discuss this potential change with Ron Stoffel before a final decision is made.

Rob Johnson worked with Joe Hennesey from Life Flight on a "How to Work Safely and Effectively with EMS Helicopters in Minnesota" fact sheet. A focus is drone use. The information will be incorporated in the 2018 MNICS Mob Guide and distributed at the DNR Fire Team Leaders meeting for wide distribution.

MNICS IMT roster

Tasha Woodwick distributed a draft roster based on incident commander selections on Jan. 3, 2018. IMT sections are separated by page. With approximately 100 applicants gaps remain for primary positions and in command and general (C & G) staff. There was extensive discussion about possible candidates but availability depends on

interest, level of commitment, supervisory approval and positions on out-state teams. Tasha will continue to take email applications but the Incident Command Application Program (ICAP) has closed.

Although there were email, website and social media notifications to recruit applicants, perhaps other methods can be used for outreach next year. Direct phone calls from incident commanders typically generates interest. The One Call Now system could also be used. Rebekah Luedtke said from a dispatch standpoint, for several years there have been challenges to roster a long team (44 positions) or even three short teams. Considerations have been a long process taking into account interagency succession planning documents and the reduced number of applicants. With retirements, Tom Remus said there has been similar discussion at the National Multi-Agency Coordination (NMAC) meeting about IMT shortages. The following options were considered:

- Remain with existing format (three long teams)
- Three short teams with discretion over additional positions
- Two long teams plus one Type-3 IMT
- One long Type-2 IMT with two Type-3 IMTs
- A long Type-2 IMT, a short Type-2 IMT and a Type-3 IMT

For 2018, it was decided to move forward with two teams. A Jan. 30 follow up conversation will take place with the MNICS Board of Directors for final approval.

Miscellany

The Task Force quickly made the following decisions:

- The Northeast Minnesota Integrated Response Plan will sunset.
- Minnesota will beta test the NFDRS 2016
- MNICS C & G should attend the online "Working with ESF #4: Command and General Staff" training. This will be discussed at the IMT meeting.
- Attendance has been approved for at least one MNICS IC to attend the ICAC Council Meeting in Medford, OR on Feb. 12, 2018.

Task Force to do items:

- Provide roller banner design feedback to Christi Powers by or before the Feb. 6 IMT meeting
- Update Rebekah Luedtke on the number of print 2018 MNICS Mob Guides needed by each agency

Agency updates

FWS: Steve Schumacher retires formally next week.

DNR: Mike Aultman's retirement party is Saturday, Jan. 27th.

USFS: Chase Marshall is waiting on final authorization of AFMO positions. There will be seven additional positions through fire hire.

Adjourn

Seth Grimm adjourned the meeting at 1608.