



Notes

December 6, 2021 MNICS Task Force Meeting

Attendance:

Task Force: William Glesener, Kurt Fogelberg, Cory Berg, Seth Grimm, Chase Marshall,

Board of Directors: Rod Skalsky (NPS) Russ Langford, U.S. FWS, Joe Neuberger, Tom Remus (Chair) Shannon Rische

Non-Task Force Attendees: Mike Mackey (MNCC), Leanne Langeberg (Notes), Brian Wise, Shelly Greniger, Kevin Carlisle, Ron Skalsky, NPS (Border Park Zone FMO), Greg Carlson, NPS – Prescribed Fire and Fuels Specialist, Aaron Mielke, Ben Roy, Ernie Schmitt, Jim Edgar, Tasha Woodwick, Tom Roach

DISCUSSION ITEM	NOTES
<p>Building and Budget Update</p>	<p>Building Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No additional projects have been added to the building update. - The air handler project bid fell through. - The generator worked properly during the latest testing session. - Outstanding projects include requesting a quote on the roof repair and modernizing the current fire alarm system. - The issues with the training room door keypad not functioning in the cold temperatures have not been resolved. The contractor plans to schedule a site visit during the week of December 06, 2021. <p>Budget Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviewed the non-committed MIFC coop funds. - The amount committed for the MNICS Meeting guest speaker will be returned to the non-committed funds as no fees were incurred this year. - The ASAP Air Handlers bid has been canceled. Kevin Carlisle will reach out to Rapids Plumbing to confirm their bid has not changed.
<p>MNCC after action review updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work continues to identify a successful path to move forward with the after-action review. Progress is moving forward with plans to conduct a teambuilding session in January or February 2022. A funding request will be presented to the Task Force when a vender has been selected.
<p>Incident Management Use of Type 2 and Type 3 Teams.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MNICS agencies overall recognized early in the season teams were more likely to mobilize with a team resembling a Type 2 level. As the season progressed, the teams adjusted their team staffing to meet actual needs and scaled up when appropriate. - Wildfire complexity throughout Minnesota is variable and DNR has recognized there is a specific need for more Agency Administrator (AA) training. Training will focus on aiding the AA with how to right-size the complexity involved with their incident and what the mission request should entail for an extended attack to draw in support from either a Type 3 or Type 2 incident management team, as well as considerations for what the local unit can provide from their local staff to support the team, i.e., logistics support. - Task Force agrees that training for all MNICS agencies AA focused on expectations and defining the options available to determine the appropriate request based on the need is important moving forward. - Task Force is committed to supporting the Type 3 teams with what they need and ramping up as appropriate. There is considerable value in knowing when it's appropriate for a full team mobilization over a need for a scaled back team – Type 3 IC and team members – to support the local need (Information, Logistics, etc.).



Notes

DISCUSSION ITEM	NOTES
Incident Management Use of Type 2 and Type 3 Teams Cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Having a list of available Type 3 ICs outside of the Teams to step in to help can greatly improve rightsizing the initial callout. - Task Force will work with the MNICS Type 3 IMT Working Team, MNCC, and Brian Pisarek to consider ways to offer more AA refreshers, including topics on how to right-size a team request. - Chase Marshall will make the Forest Services' 2021 season AA lessons learned available to the Task Force. - Task Force is open to including a section or a checklist for the AA in the MNICS Mob Guide. - The ICs did develop an AA checklist, but there is not much feedback on how well it was utilized. - MNCC requested to be involved in the training development to help identify what agency administrators need from MNCC.
MNICS Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Task Force Chair sent the consolidated list of agreements that was developed in 2017 to all Task Force members. - The USDA Forest Service Washington Officer released new requirements in 2021 of what must be included with operating plans. All MNICS shared protection agreements with the Forest Service are now appendices to the Operating Plan. - There is a mutual aid agreement clause in the master agreement that allows for initial attack response within the first 24 hours of response. - DNR and BIA will review and update the share protection agreements with Tribal Nations and include DNR planners and Tribal Consultation specialists. - DNR is hiring a new rural fire protection position. The position will include management and coordination for DNR's fire agreements. - Forest Service is considering options to hire an agreement coordinator that will cover up to four national forests. Considerations are also being made on how to distribute the administrative and agreements management under the two vacant positions at MIFC. No decisions have been made on how best to proceed.
Large Aircraft Preposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MNICS Board of Directors shared the topic with the Task Force to discuss the proposed aviation dispatcher requirements and whether MNICS agencies would be able to acquire a Large Air Tanker for Minnesota needs if not in compliance with the new requirements. - Several conversations between DNR and MNCC coordinator about staffing interagency versus agency-specific vacancies and the opportunity to crosswalk the functional units with enough qualified people, it may overcome issues by circumstances. Task Force has come to agreement to proceed, and Task Force will reach out to the Board of Directors for concurrence.



Notes

DISCUSSION ITEM

- NOTES

<p>MNICS Type 3 Incident Management Team After Action Review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aaron Mielke and the MNICS Type 3 Team’s share a review of the MNICS Type 3 Teams’ section after-action reviews. - The AARs focus on the common themes arising from the AAR’s including rostering personnel, hosting agency and agency administrator expectations, random items, and team equipment needs, and successes. - Trailers were critical to the team’s success and are especially needed to provide separate space for communications. - Office equipment, including portable scanners, portable printers capable of printing up to 11X17” maps, satellite phones, jet packs and AV equipment to support remote and in-person meetings were viewed as valuable tools to include in every team roll out. <p>Successes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There were many successes, including the high amount training opportunities, and the incredible support offered through CCM, noted throughout the AARs. - A list of supply needs and pre-order lists is being compiled by the ICs.
<p>Type 3 IMT National Availability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The MNICS Type 3 IMT ICs recognize the value in pursuing national availability of the teams to promote training and development opportunities. But until the teams can be fully rostered and support all needs in Minnesota it will be difficult to support national mobilization. It is the goal of the ICs to work toward national mobilization. It will be a transition process starting with identifying team members who are open to out-of-state mobilizations, then building up to supporting GACC needs first, and finally moving toward national availability.
<p>Type 3 IMT Spring Meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The MNICS Type 3 IMT Working Team is working through the preliminary planning stage for the spring IMT meeting, taking into consideration current conditions and whether to host in-person or virtual in early March 2022.
<p>Type 2 IA Crew availability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Considerations to roster MNICS Type 2 IA Crews for the 2022 season are being made. The Task Force recognizes the value in training and making quality crews available next season and supports moving forward with rostering the MNICS Type 2 IA Crews. They will look to the Operations Working Team for direction on proceeding to implement the crews for the 2022 season. - Alternate considerations for a 10-person module were also discussed, but it was recognized that this type of module brings along additional challenges to roster and manage the crew. The Task Force feels the idea should be further explored over the next year by the Operations Working Team before making any final decisions.



Notes

DISCUSSION ITEM

NOTES

Agency Updates

BIA – The budget analyst position has been filled, though another position recently opened. BIA is working on revising fire management plans, considering both spatial and storybook (embeds all the data into one plan) plans are being considered. BIA has adopted the engine operator qualification requirement for the engine boss task book. The agency is looking into how best to meet critical fire training needs in the agency. They are working through their vaccination requirement process and recognize considerations will need to be made next year for the variability in vaccination requirements among Tribes. BIA is waiting on national direction for AD hiring and vaccination requirements.

DNR – The Intelligence Officer position has been filled. DNR is working with the MNCC coordinator to fill the vacant dispatcher positions. A request has been made to fill a radio tech position. An AAR with the entire DNR fire team was conducted and resulted in a long list of action items to work through. The requirement for proof of vaccination or daily testing is still required for DNR staff. The Kodiak acquisition is underway, which will allow for two air attack platforms through DNR.

NPS – Working through the usual year-end projects. The Voyageurs Prescribed Fire and Fuels specialist position was filled by Greg Carlson, who started in December. Eventually, he will take over Kurt's role on the Task Force. A lot of appreciation expressed for the support of the MNICS dispatch. Seasonal folks will be available to fill the Type 2 IA crews provided fire danger is not at a critical-level need.

FS – Local pile burning is ongoing, with more than 30,000 piles burned. Mark Twain and Shawnee National Forests are starting to see burning occurrence pick up. COVID vaccination requirements were delayed to January 1. AD's that work for the Forest Service are required to be vaccinated and must provide proof. All verification is routed through an established national process. National fire hire discussions are focusing on incentive and pay increases. The Chippewa and Superior National Forests' budgets are now being managed at the regional level. Agency administrator after-action review will be held December 15. Agency administrator refresher will be held in mid-January for both forests. AD hiring specialist has been identified, and all AD's questions are being routed to the AD hiring official.

FWS – No official direction on how to proceed with COVID verifications for temporary and AD hires. The hiring processes is underway, though the agency is experiencing a low application rate for the lower-level GS fire positions. Apprenticeship positions will be hosted at MN Valley NWR. The agency has no current budget in place. Some fire occurrence is starting to pick up in the southern tier, with the most recent report of a 40-acre fire at Morris that progressed into a treatment area burned the year before. The agency is starting the process to complete a large-scale fire management plan revision.

MNCC Coordinator – The hiring process is in progress, which includes the lead level GS-4/5/6/7. The goal is to fill the DNR vacancies in aviation. A temporary offer has been sent out on a short-term detail on the lead operations position. Diane has officially retired as of December 1. Two seasonal Forest Service dispatcher positions are also in the queue.

Next Task Force Meeting will be January 6, 2021 hosted on WebEx



Notes

Joint Board of Directors and Task Force Meeting Notes

Board of Directors: Tom Remus (Chair), BIA, Rod Skalsky, NPS, Russ Langford, FWS, Joe Neuberger, DPS, Shannon Rische, FS, William Glesener (acting for DNR)

Task Force: William Glesener (Chair), Kurt Fogelberg, Cory Berg, Seth Grimm, Chase Marshall,

Non-Task Force Attendees: Mike Mackey (MNCC), Leanne Langeberg (Notes), Brian Wise, Kevin Carlisle, Greg Carlson

DISCUSSION ITEM	NOTES
<p>MNCC AAR and MNCC Organization Chart</p>	<p>MNCC After Action Review and Teambuilding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MNCC center manager is seeking recommendations for after-action review (AAR) facilitation with the MNCC dispatchers (permanent and lead positions) and team building opportunities to conduct after the new year. - Recommendation made to keep facilitator local and consider a Task Force Member to facilitate the AAR, and to also include the supervisors of the staff. - Recommendation made to firm up the specific question being sought to answer from the AAR whether that is personality or operation conflict resolution. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tom Remus suggested three potential facilitators, Cory Buhl from Bureau of Land Management in Montana, Amy Lancaster, a tier 3 center manager in Miles City, Montana, and Rene Crippa. - Overall, the MNICS agency had no great concerns with the performance of MNCC this year, rather were quite impressed with the product delivered this year, especially among the ongoing pandemic concerns and the challenges it presented. - One opportunity to consider moving forward with spring 2022 is to bring back the spring kick off meeting between the coordination center staff and the duty officers. - It was recognized that the continuity of operations for MNCC relies on standard operating guides that can be easily shared to detailers, and continued efforts to bring qualified dispatchers on the floor. <p>MNCC Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MNCC center manager requested to meet with the Board of Directors to review the past goals that brought MNCC to its current design, the short term and long-term goals moving forward that the Board of Directors envision for MNCC. - Review of the MNCC organization chart and focus on the current vacancies in the lead positions presents an opportunity to swap the hiring agency, which will result in more interagency representation and cross functionality for both aviation and operations. Currently the leads for Aviation fall under DNR and the lead for Operations fall under Forest Service as the hiring agencies. - MNCC coordinator proposed converting the two Aviation leads from 10-month positions to fulltime permanent positions. DNR supports the updates to the organization chart. - BOD supports the improved interagency coordination. They request that the Task Force submit a proposal with the envisioned result to the Board of Directors, and they will discuss promptly to make a final decision.



Notes

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Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviewed the discussion held during the Task Force Meeting. - In the past, various people have been tasked with the coordination of the agreements. Over time it has been recognized that the MNCC coordinator should be familiar with the agreements, but not be responsible for the coordination. - The Board of Directors supportive of filling the two Forest Service positions and the DNR position as coordinators of the agreements, but they will need to conduct further discussion about how the final product will look.
Large Aircraft prepositioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Having a qualified aircraft dispatcher on the floor when aircraft are active is not always feasible. New rules implemented by the Forest Service will create challenges. - Tier 2 and 3 coordination centers will be highly impacted by the Forest Service requirement. The Task Force will propose their questions about how to adjust to meet the new requirement to the Board of Directors. The Board will pursue the final decision outcome to each of the questions proposed.
IMT Use of Type 2 and Type 3 Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviewed the discussion held during the Task Force meeting. - BOD is quite impressed by the work the Type 3 Teams carried out this season, and the extensive use of the teams beyond their spring and fall rotations. - The BOD did discuss decisions made to open the Type 2 Eastern Area teams to national mobilization while Minnesota was in high fire activity and danger. - The BOD recognizes the intensity of the year may have an impact on applicants. - National mobilization of the Type 3 Teams remains under consideration, but the ICs and the Task Force recognize that Minnesota needs must be met first before considerations for national mobilizations. The overall trend is that a named team would not be ready for the 2022 season. - BOD expressed concern about organizing a Minnesota all-federal Type 3 team for national mobilization over a MNICS interagency team. - The MNICS Type 3 IMT 2022 spring meeting will focus on hosting an in-person session this year, adjusting to virtual if conditions change. - Task Force advised the BOD of their support organizing Type 2 IA Crews for the 2022 season.