



# Notes

## May 5, 2022, MNICS Task Force Meeting

**Attendance:**

**Task Force:** William Glesener, Greg Carlson, Kurt Fogelberg, Chase Marshall, Cory Berg, Jacob Beauregard, Seth Grimm

**Non-Task Force Attendees:** Mike Mackey - MNCC, Leanne Langeberg – Notes, Brian Wise, Kevin Carlisle

DISCUSSION ITEM	NOTES
<p><b>Building and Budget Update</b></p>	<p><b>Building Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Superior National Forest engineers toured the Minnesota Interagency Fire Center (MIFC) facility on April 21, 2022. Jim Strezishar, forest engineer, informed Brian Wise that the MIFC roof repair will likely be funded by the Forest Service next year. Despite the potential replacement funding, it was decided to proceed with the current roof repair project expected to be completed by June 30.</li> <li>- The annual MIFC safety inspection was completed on April 29, and the report is in progress. The outdoor electrical outlets do not meet OSHA standards and will require repair. Work is in progress to obtain quotes.</li> <li>- The fire alarm panel upgrade is currently out for bids through May 10. Contractors are reporting difficulties in procuring the panel materials, which may delay the project to FY 2023.</li> <li>- The front entryway keypad is not working and will need to be serviced.</li> </ul> <p><b>Budget Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No new expenses were reported last month.</li> <li>- MIFC co-op funding for the roof repair project has been allocated and is available.</li> <li>- Bids for the fire alarm panel upgrade project have been solicited.</li> <li>- The Type 3 IMT scanners have been purchased for \$300.</li> <li>- Current supply chain impacts are holding up the purchase of the copiers through approved vendor contracts, and permission to purchase off of contract has been requested.</li> </ul>
<p><b>MNCC Operations – Memorandum of Understandings</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MNCC Center Manager, Mike Mackey, requested historical background on the Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) between MNCC and the Two Harbors and the Grand Portage Bois Fort Tribes for dispatch coordination out of MNCC.</li> <li>- Task Force advised it was a new way of doing business when MNCC organized, and the Tribes transferred their dispatching coordination to MNCC.</li> <li>- Task Force agrees that the MOUs should remain in place until specific language can be incorporated into the next update of the Master Agreement and Operating Plan because they establish a foundational agreement.</li> <li>- Mike Mackey will reach out the Brendan Neylon for additional MOUs and dispatch center guidance that may exists in other geographic areas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>MNICS Fire Planning Call Agenda</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MNCC Center Manager, Mike Mackey, shared adjustments he has made to the current MNICS Fire Planning call outline.</li> <li>- Task Force approves the changes and agrees that it is beneficial to add a logistics update when planning levels result in high mobilization requests and during high periods of out-state mobilizations.</li> </ul>



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<p><b>MNICS Working Team Assignments sheet</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Task Force shared background context on the Working Team Assignment tracking spreadsheet. The previous MNCC coordinator developed the spreadsheet to coordinate and follow up on MNICS Working Team assignments.</li> <li>- Mike Mackey distributed the tracking spreadsheet to all the working team chairs to review.</li> <li>- All assignments will be documented through the assignment worksheet and added to the spreadsheet tracker. The Task Force can initiate assignments to Working Teams, or a Working Team can request Task Force approval of their own initiated assignments.</li> <li>- Completed assignment worksheets will be archived in the Working Team’s FireNet channel.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aviation Duty Officer</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The MNICS aviation partners have supported the air desk and lead aircraft dispatcher in decision making as Primary Decision Makers during high levels of wildfire activity involving aircraft response. The responsibility has traditionally been divided between MIFC aviation managers. It was recognized as a beneficial approach last year.</li> <li>- The air operations working team has developed an Aviation Duty Officer guide that identifies baseline qualifications, knowledge, skills, and abilities to support the Primary Decision Maker role. Cory Berg did not feel a Working Team assignment was necessary as the guide had already been created.</li> <li>- The Task Force recommends establishing an aviation duty officer calendar based on planning levels and renaming Primary Decision Maker to Aviation Duty Officer.</li> <li>- The Task Force recommended the Air Operations Working Team consider establishing a delegation of authority with each agency. Cory Berg will share the recommendation; however, he did note the Primary Decision Makers have been facilitating under the delegation already in place for the aviation dispatchers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>MNICS Working Team Assignments</b></p>	<p>The following tasks were identified during the Working Team reports that will be drafted into Working Team Assignments and added to the tracking spreadsheet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Logistics and Finance Working teams will be tasked to develop a list system to help local resources establish an incident response directory that includes vendor lists for expected needs during an incident response. Jacob Beauregard will draft and send the assignment to both working team chairs and cc Mike Mackey.</li> <li>- Information Management and Prevention Working Teams will be tasked with setting up a joint meeting to introduce the Information Management working team members to the Northeast Wildfire Risk Assessment tool and discuss communication outreach needs to promote the tool with the public. Leanne Langeberg and Greg Carlson will draft and send the assignment to their working team chairs and cc Mike Mackey.</li> <li>- Dispatch and Information Technology Working Teams will be tasked with developing a plan to distribute GIS layers to consoles that will support the WildCAD-e tool when it is released. William Glesener and Mike Mackey will draft and send the assignment to their working team chairs.</li> </ul>



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<b>MNICS Type 3 Team SOG</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Task Force approved the changed to the MNICS Type 3 Standard Operating Guide.</li> </ul>
<b>Fire Academy Updates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- William Glesener shared an update on the 2022 Wildfire Academy and the coordination role of the Type 3 Incident Management Team led by Mike Aultman.</li> <li>- Close to 500 registrations for courses have been received – that number does not reflect the actual number of people attending, as many have registered for multiple courses. Some of the courses have not met the threshold and may result in cancelation.</li> <li>- The Task Force discussed the coordination and funding challenges that MNICS faces with hosting the annual academy event.</li> <li>- The Task Force will include a half-day discussion at their July Task Force meeting to focus on the Academy coordination’s current structure and identify the clear objective to work toward for 2023 and future academies.</li> <li>- The Task Force will also consider inviting representatives from other academies to present on their academy model, including what works well and the challenges they face.</li> </ul>
<b>Agency Updates</b>	<p><b>BIA</b> – The agency reports reflect a slower fire season so far this spring. Most of the prescribed burn units at Red Lake are now underwater. The contracted aircraft will go off-contract at the end of May. The solicitor sent back the three-way MOUs and Cory Berg plans to review the MOUs and then send copies to the DNR, including Craig Ferguson. An offer has been made for the Fire Operations Specialist position.</p> <p><b>DNR</b> – The Radio Tech 2 position has been filled, and the new hire will start May 16. A position description has been written for the upgrade to MIFC front desk receptionist position that will now involve supporting the northeast region’s extended attack dispatching. The Division of Forestry is planning to move forward with increasing statewide prescribed burning management, which will also include Timber Stand Improvement prescribed burns. All Division of Forestry personnel who conduct prescribed burning will be required to hold NWCG qualifications. The aviation bases are all up and running. The prevention grant funding from the USDA Forest Service State and Private has been allocated. It is anticipated that GLFFC will likely offer a Section Leaders academy sometime in 2023 or 2024.</p> <p><b>FS</b> – The forest Service fire hiring effort is ongoing, and the two local National Forests are currently down 14 temporary positions. Both National Forests have also identified 88 hiring actions (all areas) that will be part of the National hiring effort. Several vacancies are expected to open through the end of the year, including the retirement of the Forest Supervisor and the Fire Management Officer. Increased activity in region 3 has resulted in requests for other Forest Service Regions to support the need. Prescribed burning is expected through the week with favorable weather. The prescribed burn target is 17,000 acres. Both National Forests plan to move forward with the fire protection agreement and adjust the operating plan with the identified initial attack zones. The Regional Office is expected to sign the agreement this week and send it to the Washington Office for</p>



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	signature. Due to some pushback on the aviation response plan, it will likely need to be addressed in a separate agreement.
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<b>Agency Updates Cont.</b>	<p><b>NPS</b> – The agency is updating fire management plans for Voyageurs and several other parks in the zone. A few requests have been received to burn cattails. The fire refresher training and pack tests will be completed over the next couple of weeks.</p> <p><b>FWS</b> – The National Fire Academy held at the National Conservation Training Center has concluded. Three GS-06/07 fire positions have been filled, and the agency has allocated funds to fill five GS-05 seasonal positions. The agency expects to see an increase in preparedness and fuels funding during the fiscal year 2023. Prescribed burning is underway throughout all of the Minnesota refuges and districts. Due to significant flooding, the large-scale Agassiz prescribed burn will likely be postponed for the season.</p> <p><b>HSEM</b> – Congratulations to Roy Holmes on his official retirement. Kellen McClusky has been selected as the next Regional Program Manager. His reporting location will be a hybrid mix with the MIFC location. HSEM continues to respond to flooding concerns in the state and supporting the Minnesota Department of Health's avian influenza response.</p> <p><b>MNCC Coordinator</b> – The assistant center manager for operations vacancy was left unfilled during the last Forest Service fire hire round and will move into the next round that closes in mid-May. Mid-august appears to be the soonest fill date. Both lead positions in operations and aviation will likely remain vacant until the next fiscal year. Mike is working with DNR to draft a position description for the aviation lead position. The AD hub hiring process is challenging to navigate when establishing hiring authority. Forest Service will not hire any ADs unless there is a fire incident, making it challenging to fill administrative roles. Mike is working on setting up a meeting with the HUB to learn more about the criteria needed to fill roles with ADs. MNCC will continue utilizing detailers as opportunities permit. Unable to fill dispatcher positions is a well-known concern throughout the region.</p> <p><b>Reminder!</b> Please send agenda items to Kurt Fogelberg in advance of the next MNICS Task Force Meeting.</p>

*Next Task Force Meeting will be June 2, 2022, hosted in-person at MIFC.*