



# Notes

## March 2, 2023, MNICS Task Force Meeting

**Task Force:** Greg Carlson, Paul Lundgren, Cory Berg, Mike Hill, Jacob Beauregard, Ben Roy

**Non-Task Force Attendees:** Ryan Kingsley - MNCC, Leanne Langeberg - Notes, Brian Wise, Kevin Carlisle

**Guests:** Trent Wickman - Forest Service, Scott Gerber – Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association

DISCUSSION ITEM	NOTES
<p><b>Building and Budget Update</b></p>	<p><b>Building</b></p> <p><i>Security system update</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Task Force was briefed on two cost estimates for the MIFC security system, which currently runs the entryway and internal card reader system.</li> <li>- Proposal one is a short-term fix involving the purchase of a basic software system upgrade to support running the current card reader system and moving the system off a single computer and onto the network. It will be a workable solution while firmware updates support the upgraded system. However, it will not allow installing a security camera or front desk bell system. The estimate is \$2,830.</li> <li>- Proposal two is to completely overhaul the current security system that runs the card readers and move it to a cloud-based system. This proposal would replace the power supply, card readers, and black boxes. This option prepares the building for future installation of security cameras and other building access features for the front desk, dispatch, and Cache. The estimate is \$28,000.</li> </ul> <p><i>Elevator system update</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MIFC facility managers are obtaining three bids to identify the root problem with the elevator system and what will be involved in repairing the system. MEI and Arrow Lift completed their site visits.</li> <li>- Both companies reported a challenge with finding a replacement motor. If the motor is irreplaceable, then a new elevator system is needed.</li> <li>- The USDA Forest Service engineer visited MIFC on March 1, 2023. He was reminded that the elevator issue places the building in ADA non-compliance. He is fully aware of the problem and acknowledged approval for funding through USDA Forest Service facility funds for this type was unlikely.</li> </ul> <p><i>Proposal to the Board of Directors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Task Force will draft a proposal to the Board of Directors before the April Task Force meeting outlining cost per agency to overhaul the security system technology and install a new elevator system.</li> </ul> <p><i>Other Facility Items</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The generator had developed a small fuel leak. A service technician inspected the leak and determined the fuel pump and seal needed to be replaced. The estimate to replace the fuel pump, seal, and two filters is \$1816.53. Task Force approved MNICS coop funds to complete the repairs.</li> <li>- USDA Forest Service funds available to replace the MIFC battery backed-up lights.</li> <li>- USDA Forest Service budget includes \$270,000 to replace the MIFC roof next year.</li> </ul> <p><b>Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Task Force reviewed the current budget and available coop funds, no new expenses.</li> <li>- Task Force reviewed the funds set aside for the L-380 and will assign a task to the Training Working Team to establish the dates, location, and secure contractors for the training.</li> </ul>



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<p><b>EPA Proposed Rule Change for PM NAAQS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trent Wickman, USDA Forest Service Region 9 Air Resource Specialist, presented on the proposed EPA Greenbook changes and the potential impacts the changes may pose to prescribed fire projects completed in Minnesota.</li> <li>- Because of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) monitoring in place throughout Minnesota, the quality data collected, and the Burn Permit system coordination with air quality alerts, Trent does not see a reason to be overly concerned with the proposed changes.</li> <li>- He highlighted the areas of greatest concern for the Eastern Region fall within the highly urbanized areas of Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania, which already have mitigation plans in place. The other states with areas of high concern include Arizona, California, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington, and these areas also have mitigation plans in place</li> </ul>
<p><b>MNCC On-Call Duty Officer pay policy and Delegation of Authority</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The MNCC center manager is seeking interagency support to establish a local policy that compensate any MNCC duty officer for a minimum two-hour call-back pay for any hours worked when in on-call status.</li> <li>- Historically each functional area has had someone on call as the MNCC Duty Officer, with each agency paying differently for 2-hour call back.</li> <li>- Guidance for the on-call pay available to the MNCC Center Manager was through DNR’s AFSCME and MAPE contracts and the Forest Service policy.</li> <li>- The DNR MAPE and AFSCME contracts state that employees in on call state will be paid two hours minimum. The Forest Service will only compensate a two hour call back if the employee physically reports to work.</li> <li>- The master agreement has clear guidance that a local policy can be written.</li> <li>- MNCC Duty Officer recognizes a need for interagency incentive to take on the Duty Officer assignment and asked the Task Force to send a letter of support to the BOD.</li> <li>- MNCC is a 24-hour year-round contact for the State Duty Officer.</li> <li>- Ryan Kingsley will draft a proposal and send to the Task Force for review and approval before they forward to the BOD.</li> </ul> <p><i>Delegation of Authority</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The MNCC center manager is awaiting several MNICS agency signatures for the Delegation of Authority for MNCC Center Manager and will reroute the delegation back to those agencies.</li> </ul>
<p><b>DIFCOM</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cory Berg emailed a slide presentation to the Task Force with information about the available funding from the fuels and infrastructure project that could help improve Minnesota's fire communication infrastructure.</li> <li>- Cory has connected with Kim Suarez, National Interagency Fire Center, the point of contact for the available funding opportunity, and discussed some local concerns. Kim is expected to retire at the end of the year.</li> <li>- Despite a few leads over the past few years to complete a review of the current communication network system, no solid results have moved the effort forward.</li> <li>- BIA has received a million dollars of infrastructure funds that will go toward assessments and repairs. Some of this funding may help to sort through the infrastructure set up in Minnesota and at least help with determining ownership.</li> <li>- Tom Remus has met with MNCC about the funding opportunity</li> </ul>



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<b>MSFCA Intrastate Mutual Aid program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scott Gerber, Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association representative met with the Task Force and presented on statewide mutual aid, and the Fire Chiefs assistance and support teams (FAST).</li> </ul>
<b>Eastern Area Working Team Meeting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cory Berg is the new Eastern Area Operations Working Team chair. He will attend the meeting next week.</li> <li>- The Operations Working Team has been tasked with developing plans for recruitment and retention of the Eastern Area Incident Management Teams, which in recent years have struggled to fully fill both rosters, especially with division supervisors and task force leaders, and exercise the teams.</li> <li>- Recognizing that Minnesota joined the Eastern Area IMTs with the understanding two teams would be fully rostered, Cory recognizes the hardship of locking people into two-week availability commitments to roster with a team and risking no assignments because of shortfalls. Cory asked the Task Force to gather input from all Minnesota agencies on our expectations of the Eastern Area IMTs moving forward. He will represent this input in the discussions.</li> </ul>
<b>Agency Updates</b>	<p><b>FS</b> – The agency has received a budget. Two Superior National Forest district rangers are planning to either leave the Forest Service or take on a six-month off-forest detail, which will significantly reduce the availability of qualified agency administrators in the Superior National Forest. The plan for wildfire season this year is to bring in additional help for prescribed burns and wildfire response. The Fire Management Officer position remains unfilled, and final paperwork is in progress for the MNCC center manager offer. The Regional Forester is reviewing before the Forest Service signs.</p> <p><b>BIA</b> – The agency is working through medical standards and acuity with the new Comprehensive Health Service contractor. White Earth is planning to construct a new Tribe owned fire center in Naytahwaush. BIA and White Earth met with the building contractor last week. Supply chain constraints limiting available loaner engines this year. The Department of Interior has 80 engines; the BIA is expected to receive five. BIA has received a final budget. A new solicitation went out for two aircraft platforms for a 150-day contract that will include an IR sensor with minimum capabilities and can fly at a much higher altitude. One of the contracts is slated to begin in Bemidji for 50 days. BIA is working with the DNR fire aviation program to coordinate this new tool to avoid moving any of our local contractors out. Cory Berg will attend a national aviation meeting next week and learn more about the developing opportunity.</p> <p><b>FWS</b> – The agency is in a similar place as the Bureau of Indian Affairs’ vendor contracting process and waiting on more information about the national budget. Seth Grimm is nearing the completion of his 60-day detail, and he will be taking on an additional 60-day detail to fill behind Russ Langford’s retirement. Mike Hill will remain as the acting. The National Fire Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service attended the recent regional fire team meeting in LaCrosse. The discussion focused on recruitment and retention. A mini charter from the recruitment and retention conversation will pass up the agency channels to keep the conversation going. The national fire leaders plan to meet with OPM to move the conversation on salary tables forward. A DOI member has expressed interest in joining the MNICS Logistics Working Team, and Mike has lined that person up with Jonathan Benson and Adam Fisher.</p>



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	<p><b>HSEM</b> – The National Qualifications position started in February and is involved in the effort to establish a national qualifications review board that will use a FEMA-based system like IQS and IQCS. HSEM finds that the updated incident action builder through WebEOC works better for information sharing, and FEMA requests cannot be sent directly to FEMA through WebEOC. The EMAC Florida coordination group shared their response review last fall and gave Minnesota a good shout-out for the support. Spring flood outlook calls for wet spring in the southern half of Minnesota. The Minnesota National Guard was activated last week with tracked vehicles on standby during the snowstorm that brought hazardous blizzard conditions. The selection of a new director is in progress. The Governor’s conference was postponed to April 24 and 25. The All-Hazards IMT will conduct a flood response exercise on March 9, 2023.</p> <p><b>DNR</b> – The announcement for the training supervisor and assistant cache manager positions closed on March 2, and interviews will follow. Many attended the aviation workshop that was held this week. Paul Lundgren plans to attend the Eastern Area Coordinating Group meeting. William Glesener and Travis Verdegan are attending the S-591 course. Great Lakes Forest Fire Compact sponsored a Complex Incident Management Course (CIMC) in mid-February that included a Minnesota team of seven with two members from the Forest Service. The annual Governor’s conference was postponed. Paul plans to present a MNICS 101 presentation breakout session. Many through HSEM have a strong intent to fill medical unit leader positions.</p> <p><b>NPS</b> – The agency is working on updating the fire management plans for Isle Roy and Voyageurs National Parks. In addition, Greg is working on transitioning burn plans into a new format. The seasonal hiring is complete, and the GS-08 hire has started.</p> <p><b>MNCC</b> – The two full-time permanent fills in operations have started and completed their onboarding. The operations position that DNR will fill will be announced in the fall. Tasha Woodwick attended the national coordinating group meeting. Several MNCC staff will attend the CDAT Interagency Aviation Training the last week in March. MNCC center manager plans to bring in a detailer to cover MNCC and will remain available on-call, and logistics will handle work remotely. MNCC Center manager is reviewing the fire planning call list and will send a new calendar invite before we enter Preparedness Level 2. The coordination of the Chippewa and DNR protection lands is progressing, and coordination with the areas offices is an important factor in completing the task. The arrival of WildCAD-e will also help with the coordination efforts. MNCC notified the NEK cache of an email circulating with information on counterfeit fire shelters.</p>
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*Next Task Force Meeting will be April 6, 2023, in-person at MIFC.*