

**FIREScope JOINT OPERATIONS TEAM MEETING
BUCKS LAKE, CA
JULY 13-14, 1995**

ATTENDEES:

RICHARD JUST, CDF, NORTH OPS
NEIL HONEYCUTT, OES, FIRE/RESCUE
MIKE COLGAN, ORANGE CO FIRE
JOHN LINDER, OES, SOUTH OPS
RALPH ALWORTH, CDF, SOUTH OPS
J.MICHAEL MADDEN, BUTTE OES
ED WRISTON, CDF/TCFD
BILL WEAVER, CDF, SACRAMENTO
MIKE DOUGHERTY, USFS, SOUTH OPS
BRIAN M. KELLY, MILLBRAE FIRE
RANDY SHELTON, CSFM, TRAINING DIV

WILL BROCK, OES, NORTH OPS
JIM EASTMAN, SACRAMENTO CO FIRE
JOHN BUCHANAN, WOODLAND FIRE
STEVE VIRRUM, S.B. CO FIRE
ORPHIE PIERSON, QUINCY FIRE DEPT.
CARY ECKARD, KERN CO FIRE
JACK WIEST, CDF, SACRAMENTO
ANDY ANDERSON, QUINCY FIRE DEPT
ALICE FORBES, USFS, NORTH OPS
JIM CAVELLINI, SAN FRANCISCO FIRE
JACK HICKEY, SAN FRANCISCO FIRE (RET)

NOTE: Items requiring action are in CAPS throughout the text of the minutes.

The meeting was opened with a welcome from host Andy Anderson, Chief, Quincy Fire Dept and North Ops Team Chair. Self introductions were made by the group.

Mike Dougherty, Assistant Director, USFS, South Ops Team Chair gave an update on Mike Scherr. He is doing better and as expected is pushing the window on his recovery. The therapists are hard pressed to keep up with him! He can have visitors and would love to hear from all. His address is:

Mike Scherr
PO Box 4542
Crestline, CA 92325 (909) 338-3471 or 7130

Report from the FIREScope Board Meeting:

Chief Don Manning, recently retired both as Chief and as Chair of the Board, was presented plaques for his service to the Board and California Fire Service.

Gary Costamagna, Sacramento City Fire was elected Chair and Larry Holms, Orange County was elected Vice Chair.

The elections brought an issue forward in that the Decision Process is not clear on elections and the relationship of the OES Fire Advisory Board and the FIREScope Board of Directors. There was concern over whether the two were ever formally merged. It is not stated anywhere that the process to be followed would elect one position from the South and one from the North...ie if Chair is North than Vice Chair would be South. There was also discussion regarding the fact that OES Director has authority to appoint the Chair of the Advisory Board and how this role fits. There was also discussion of the roles (political vs non political) of the two entities. Mike Dougherty and Mike Colgan explained the history as they knew it. There is no

dissatisfaction with the current process - just concern about the future. It was agreed that this issue needs to be examined and agreement reached on it. There was much discussion about the entire process and pros and cons of what exists now.

TASK FORCE IS TO LOOK AT THE DECISION PROCESS, CHARTER ETAL AND PREPARE A WHITE PAPER FOR THE OPERATIONS TEAMS TO EVALUATE WHAT IS WRITTEN AND WHERE GAPS MIGHT EXIST IN THE ENTIRE FIRESCOPE PROCESS,

There was discussion of the content of Chief Manning's closing comments to the BOD/FIRESCOPE. All who were present at the Board meeting felt that Don brought up critical reminders - the fact that the fire services get things things done with little fanfare; the Mutual Aid system is the best anywhere, and that it is critical that the fire services continues to be united.

NEIL HONEYCUTT WILL TALK TO DON AND GET HIS APPROVAL TO SEND OUT DON'S COMMENTS TO THE FIRE SERVICES IN CALIFORNIA.

OES Re-organization:

Neil Honeycutt, Chief, Fire/Rescue Branch, OES described the proposed reorganization of the Fire/Rescue Branch. The driving forces behind this effort is the DPA Audit performed by the Dept of Personnel (which started before Neil came on board as Chief) and the Governor's Mid Management Reduction Plan. The four Deputy Chief's positions (FIRESCOPE, US&R, Operations and Admin) could not be supported according to the audit. Additionally, it was determined that FIRESCOPE products need to be more available on a statewide basis. In Neil's visits around he does not feel that the program is fully integrated in North Ops as it is in South.

At this point, there was a discussion of the background and what has existed in the past and the rationale for it. The proposal is to move the main support for the program to Sacramento and have mirror organizations in North and South. The individual in the South would be a Support Service Manager rather than a Deputy Chief. There was much concern expressed regarding this proposal including:

- status of the individual in South Ops working with the chiefs of various fire departments; and
- moving the program to Sacramento would result in it becoming USARSCOPE rather than FIRESCOPE as it exists today due to the importance the OES Director, Dr. Andrews places upon US&R.

Neil said he was aware of the concerns and alert to the issues. This reorg would result in fully staffed field rep positions and better support to the Mutual Aid program. Neil reaffirmed that the commitment to the program has not changed and that OES will continue to support operations at the higher operational levels of a Mode 3 or 4.

There was concern expressed re: role of the individuals and who would be Task Force rep and who would serve on the Ops team South and North? Additionally, priorities were discussed and Neil stated the five priorities for the Fire/Rescue Branch are: (not sure they are listed in actual priority)

1. Fire engine program
2. Maintain US&R program
3. Maintenance of the Mutual Aid system
4. Staffing - getting positions filled!
5. FIRESCOPE

Neil reminded all that US&R is part of the Fire Service programs!

Additionally, Neil has \$6K to get the Sacramento PRIME computer back on line and operational.

There was additional discussion on this whole subject and additional notes are available...contact Alice Forbes if you want more detailed information.

Concerns were expressed regarding support and possible degradation of services. There is a need to show the day to day personnel needs and what is needed to meet the various MAC modes levels. This needs to be a factual presentation with rationale of why it should be this way. This task was not assigned in the notes.

Five Party Agreement:

The agreement expires at the end of 95 and the renegotiation of the agreement is currently on-going.

Issues: (provided for information to the group)

- payment for the Assistant Strike Team Leader - should it be ordered or allowed to be sent?
- Engine costs per hour
- Formal rate structure - attempting to reconstruct the "mystical" factors which were used in previous calculations and basically re-evaluating the formula
- 2 hr vs 12 hour "free" period. There was concern expressed as to why this issue was being discussed. Is it really Mutual Aid or actually an Assistance by Hire document?

Jack Wiest explained that many CDF agreements are up for review and this is one of the many and this is basically a CDF issue. Mission of CDF is to deal with all risk and they feel they are doing what the public expects of them. However, a Type I structure engine on a Type I fire is a concern for CDF - as they feel that the forest agencies are not responsible for the structure protection. Whose jurisdiction are the resources protecting? There is a concern about how CDF reinforces with mutual aid resources. It needs to be spelled out in the agreement exactly what resources are free and what are paid for. There need to be standards established for personnel and equipment. CDF will continue to honor the agreement as written for now until the renegotiation process is completed.

It was suggested that it might be more difficult in today's climate to get all the partner agencies to agree to sign and that perhaps an amendment would be more appropriate.

There was much discussion about the payment issue and the fact that the philosophy behind Mutual Aid needs to be examined - particularly on large incidents.

FIREScope BOD Issues:

Handout 1 - Task group report on Urban Intermix

This document is no longer a draft as the BOD approved it at their last meeting. The Ops Team turned it over to the Task Force under the leadership of Chair Ralph Alworth, to develop an implementation plan for the tasks shown on page 6. There is a need to examine the financial aspects of the paper.

The following discussion occurred on the seven task items:

1. Agencies can work on this through Rx'd Fire and VMP programs. Need to put emphasis on accomplishment - resource enhancement.
2. As stated
3. All state and federal engines are pretty much foam equipped now. It was recommended that the Task Force develop recommendations for local govt on foam systems - advantages and disadvantages. Additionally, there are three papers out on foam from the Foam Working group of the Fire Equipment Working Team (FEWT) of NWCG which can be made available to local govt.
4. This will be dealt with by state and federal agencies primarily.
5. BOD wants a focus on this one! FIREScope can focus on some sort of Consortium organization to fund the continuing efforts of FIREScope. Agency pots are drying up and FIREScope is barely being maintained at a maintenance level.
6. As written
7. Mechanism for state or federal declared disasters - funding level is there but for local govt there is no mechanism to get funding for "local" disasters. There was lots of discussion but the underlying concern is agency with jurisdiction doing all it can to help itself.

TARGET DATE FOR COMPLETED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FROM THE TASK FORCE IS SEPTEMBER 15TH. THIS DRAFT WILL BE MAILED TO THE OPS TEAM MEMBERSHIP FOR COMMENT AND RETURNED SO THAT IT CAN BE FINALIZED FOR THE OCT 11TH FIREScope BOD MTNG.

Public vs Civil Aircraft Policy - FAA Regulations:

Handout #2: CDF letter/form for tracking procedures

Mike Dougherty handed this out for information for local governments mainly. CalAVCO is working on a more neutral version and everyone can come into compliance, (the form will meet the Pressler Bill requirements). One of the primary criteria is that if aircraft are paid for from unlike treasuries than certification process kicks in and the form is required.

Federal Wildland Policy Review:

Handout #3: report in its entirety

Mike Dougherty handed this report out with a recommendation that all read it and if you feel it affects you, you should comment prior to July 21, 1995 deadline. There are many issues in the report which will not only affect federal operations, but also relations with cooperators in the urban intermix.

Consortium Meeting:

For information this will occur the end of the month in Houston, Texas. Andy Anderson, Mike Dougherty, Mike Colgan and Alice Forbes will be attending.

Task Force Report:

Handout #4: report of the Task Force and its subcommittees

Handout #5: Communication sub group report.

Ralph Alworth gave the report of the work of the Task Force.

The communications report addressed the need to do a frequency review for compatibility (mutual aid).

All recommendations in the report were supported with the exception of the elimination of the ICS 217 form. The Ops Team and the Task Force recommended that this be kept in the system as it may be used by other agencies and groups than are involved in these groups.

RALPH WILL TAKE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FORWARD TO THE NWCG-ICS WORKING TEAM FOR POSSIBLE CHANGES TO THE NATIONAL SYSTEM. CHANGES COULD THEN BE INCORPORATED INTO ANY REPRINT OF THE FORMS. THE RECOMMENDATION FROM THE OPS TEAM WAS ADOPTED.

HAZMAT: (see handout #4)

The 4 hour module in the classroom environment is completed.

Federal Law requires Assistant Safety Officer and the development of a site safety plan. A form has been developed which is currently being reviewed by Cal OSHA.

MAC:

There will be a MAC exercise in South Ops OCC in the new MAC center on August 30th. It will be used to revisit and validate the processes and forms currently in use. One hour to revisit MAC and two hour actual MAC evolution, then a one to two hour critique.

You must notify Ralph Alworth or Mike Dougherty if you would like to attend/observe the exercise.

NIIMS OSD:

The red Fireline Handbook is being revised (haven't we heard this before?). There will be standardized engine typing and revisit the typing of helicopters.

OSD: basic ICS document; most changes were procedural; terminology remains consistent; and they will drop "segments".

Availability needs a clearer definition. It was requested that NWCG review this issue.,

NWCG Curriculum:

Handoff sessions for ICS. 17 personnel were trained from California at the "train the trainer". The Training Team has established that there will be 9 sessions throughout the state through March of 1996 to get folks trained up to train their personnel.

There was much discussion of the funding and cost as well as who should be attending these courses.

ALICE FORBES WILL WORK TO SET UP A REIMBURSABLE CODE TO PURCHASE THE MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES FOR THE COURSES (\$41).

Haney Proposal (Handout #6)

Ops Team asked Terry Haney to review the existing courses (44) for redundancies and clean up of the courses. Terry cautioned that major rewrites are not included in his cost estimate. MIKE DOUGHERTY COMMITTED THAT THE FS WOULD COMMIT \$25K TO THE PROJECT AND NEIL FELT THAT THEY CAN FUND THE OTHER \$5K AND DO THE CONTRACT WITH HANEY.

ADP:

This is a re-evaluation of the FIREScope systems (PRIME) to determine validity of the equipment for 1995 and beyond.

OSPR:

It was noted that the Oil Spill Response Team has adopted ICS. The US Navy is getting ICS training. On Federal jurisdiction spills, Coast Guard is the on-scene coordinator; state on scene coordinator is CA Dept of Fish and Game and the responsible party is the owner.

High Rise:

Still struggling with the high rise ICS. There could be impacts on current high rise training.

Biggest area of concern is Logistics - there are conflicts when in the High Rise environment.

BY 9/1, THE TASK FORCE WILL PROVIDE A WHITE PAPER ON THE ISSUES WHICH CANNOT BE RESOLVED TO THE OPS TEAM CHAIRS FOR DISTRIBUTION AND DISCUSSION.

NWS Issues:

Once again, NWS is going to eliminate Fire Weather as we know it. They have developed a modified proposal which will put 3 forecasters for Fire Weather in Sacto and 3 in Hanford. This is a reduction of more than half of the forecasters currently available. NWS claims that there will be no degradation of services. Folks are encouraged to take action on this. (As requested the letter which Sid Nobles, retired FS employee sent has been added to the end of these minutes.)

Oklahoma City:

Neil reported on California US&R response to the Oklahoma disaster. This was a test of the dispatch system for these teams. For the most part it went really well though there were a few glitches in the system. Teams are now made up of 62 persons.

There was much discussion of this incident, FEMA operations in general as well as the dispatch process. There was also concern surrounding the "Logistics Support Teams" for the US&R Teams. Neil explained the role and function of these advance teams.

1993 After Action Report - Southern California Fires: (Handout #7)

There was a review of this document which has been approved and accepted by the FIREScope BOD.

IT WAS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOD AND SUPPORTED BY THE OPERATIONS TEAM THAT THE TASK FORCE PREPARE A STATUS REPORT ON THE TEN ACTION ITEMS (SOME ARE COMPLETED) AND THEN DEVELOP AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THOSE ITEMS WHICH HAVE HAD LITTLE OR NO ACTION TAKEN AND PREPARE A STATUS REPORT FOR THE BOD BEFORE EVERY MTNG.

The review of the action items revealed that:

1. On going effort and will continue
2. The Task Force will look into it and develop a plan.
3. Communication group of the Task Force is doing this now.
4. Plans have been made to incorporate into the State Fire Marshal's Office.
5. OES probably needs to track. Cal Mob Guide currently has a listing of ICS Advisors.
6. Tied to automation
7. OCC Ops
8. Mob Centers: needs to be looked at as a way for local govt to pay for their fair share. (note: Mike Dougherty will send the MAC Mob Center Chklist to North Ops).
9. Status isn't clear
10. Communication gap - already looking at this one. 800 mhz issue as well as narrow banding.

Response to OES reorganization:

Mike Dougherty distributed the Joint North/South Ops Team response to the OES letter.

AT THIS POINT, IT WAS AGREED THAT THE SPECIALIST GROUP MEMBERSHIP LISTS OF THE TASK FORCE WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE NORTH AND SOUTH OPS TEAM MEMBERS FOR REDISTRIBUTION TO THEIR CONSTITUENTS.

This list will give the names of all who are serving the Task Force and may alleviate some of the concerns of FIREScope being a "South Ops" entity.

Kern County Membership:

It appears that the BOD got this request entangled with the whole discussion about how groups would be added to the FIREScope process. It was estimated that only about 8-10 more Fire Depts would meet the criteria which was handed out. The Joint Ops Team reaffirmed that the criteria with minor correction is still valid.

THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL WILL PROVIDE A REPORT TO THE BOARD OF ABOUT HOW MANY MORE FIRE DEPTS MIGHT BE QUALIFIED TO MEET THE ESTABLISHED CRITERIA.

THE JOINT OPS TEAM REAFFIRMS ITS DECISION OF LAST YEAR TO RECOMMEND TO THE BOD THAT KERN COUNTY BE ACCEPTED INTO FULL PARTNER STATUS IN FIREScope.

SEMS: (handout #8)

There are four items which remain to be completed. Only the MACS processes are left hanging. Training done.

Generic ICS - added 2 modules on mutual aid and EOC/Field interface. LE handles staging under different area - other functional units may also handle this differently. It was recommended that we continue with pure ICS training rather than adoption of the generic pkg.

This should all be completed by December.

NOTE

**The next JOINT OPS TEAM Mtng will be
in the MORRO BAY Vicinity
January 25,26, 1996**

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!!

Attachment to minutes - Joint Ops Team Mtng:
Sidney L. Nobles, Retired
2083 Elmira
Redding, CA 96001
(916) 246-1090

June 26, 1995

Congressman Wally Herger
House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Congressman Herger:

I am writing to express my concern and disbelief over the closing of the Fire Weather Office of the National Weather Service (NWS) at the Northern California Service Center in Redding, CA.

The people of this community have been consistently misled (lied to?) by the politicians! Starting in 1981, proposals were made to close several local offices including Mt Shasta and Red Bluff. Finally, this became a reality in 1986. The COMMITMENT which was made at that time was that the Redding Office of NWS would service the local communities and would NOT be closed. Now for the last several years, we have lived with the threat that now is becoming reality that the Redding NWS Office will be closing.

This is intolerable! How can you all say that you represent the interests of the American people and the taxpaying middle class when closure of the Fire Weather Office will result in increased expenditures of the shrinking taxpayer monies? Are you aware of the following:

- * THAT the USDA Forest Service provides significantly to the operation of the NWS Office here in Redding and that closing that office will NOT result in any significant savings?

- * THAT currently, Fire Weather Forecasters are well trained and CERTIFIED to provide appropriate, ACCURATE information on fire weather

- * THAT private contractors are UNABLE to provide APPROPRIATE AND TIMELY INFORMATION and that this can directly affect firefighter safety and that potentially we could lose significantly more firefighters as they protect the publics that you serve?

* THAT private contractors will cost significantly MORE than what is currently paid and/or provided by the NWS? Currently, the Fire Weather Services are costing about \$100,000 including the salary, office space, and all that goes with it. Forcing the USDA Forest Service to now have to contract for these services will more than DOUBLE the cost!!! The current estimate for these services amounts to more than \$285,000!!! Is this reasonable? Additionally, these private sector companies will probably hire the Fire Weather folks from the NWS and cost us MANY TIMES WHAT IS CURRENTLY PAID!!

Add to the above that, after contacting several private companies, NONE are READY, WILLING AND ABLE to assume the responsibilities of providing the level of information and services that are currently being provided by the National Weather Service!! What are the Federal Agencies who have had a long standing cooperative relationship with the NWS to do? What are all of our Interagency state and local cooperators to do?

As a retired Federal employee with over 30 years of experience with the Forest Service and most of that in the fire arena to say I am appalled is to put it mildly! I have seen the value of fire weather observations to our brave men and women on the fire line! This does not even address the other services such as Agricultural forecasting and public service forecasting provided to, as an example, the airlines and express delivery services at the Redding Airport.

I encourage you to get involved and FULLY represent YOUR CONSTITUENTS and meet THEIR needs. It is time to quit playing the party games and do what you were sent to do - represent the citizens of California!!!

I am available to lend both my knowledge and experience and answer any questions which you might have concerning my position on this CRITICAL matter.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Sidney L. Nobles
Sidney L. Nobles