

**FIRESCOPE JOINT OPERATIONS TEAM MEETING MINUTES
USFS REGIONAL TRAINING CENTER
McCLELLAN, CA.
OCTOBER 13, 2005**

IMPORTANT DATES:

- JANUARY 11, 2006-BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, SAN MARCOS
- JANUARY 24-25, 2006-TASK FORCE MEETING, SHELL BEACH
 - o Shore Cliff Lodge, Reservations confirmed for 12 rooms on night of 23rd, 30 rooms reserved for nights of 24th and 25th, includes banquet room for 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th.
- JANUARY 26-27, 2006-JOINT OPERATIONS TEAM MEETING, SHELL BEACH
 - o See Task Force meeting notes above

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING REVIEW:

- Discussed Ambulance Strike Team Issues
 - o OES representative maintaining presence at on-going meetings in an attempt to assure development of a program that incorporates ICS principles
 - o State EMSA appears willing to take a more active role
 - o Communications (radio frequency assignment) and reimbursement are the primary issues not yet resolved
- OES Type 3 Engine Procurement
 - o Discussed results of Type 3 Engine Procurement Survey (web-based survey launched on 9/16/05), which indicated that a majority (93%) supported the purchase while a lesser majority (68%) would be willing to host a type 3 engine in their department. 95% supported the purchase and placement of an OES Water Tender in each Operational Area.
 - o Results generated discussion on growing problem of departments reconsidering participation in MMA due to economic realities.
 - o Motion passed by BOD to move forward with proposed purchase of (15) Type 3 and (4) Type 1 Engines with the current, dollar allocation, but to reevaluate the program prior to committing future dollars to the acquisition of additional Type 3 Engines.
 - o Survey results and supporting documentation available on OES website
- Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC) Summary Report
 - o Discussed elements of the BRC Stakeholders Adhoc Committee Summary Report that has ties to FIRESCOPE. Chief Zagaris suggested that the Ops Team make recommendations addressing these items and move them up to the BOD for consideration.
 - o Matrix at beginning of report identified recommendations, agencies involved, completion dates and priority assignments as summarized below:

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- FIRESCOPE should develop a statewide plan to increase local agency capacity to provide additional resources for combating WUI fires (priority-High).
- Commission recommends that FIRESCOPE research and pursue efforts so mutual aid deployed engines have the capability to utilize newer technologies, such as foams and gels (priority-Medium).
- Commission recommends FIRESCOPE facilitate federal, state and local fire service agencies working together to reach consensus on the definition of structure protection versus perimeter control, and address the release of mutual aid resources back to their jurisdictions of origin when immediate needs dictate such return (priority-Medium).
 - Group felt that as a result of the BOD decision to move forward with their proposal of seven recommendations that includes dropping the attempt to define structure protection vs. perimeter control, and to address the consolidation of CFAA and Assistance by Hire agreements, possibly incorporated into a 2007 rewrite of the CFAA agreement, along with a comprehensive training component, that this recommendation is being adequately addressed. (discussion later in these minutes)
- Commission recommends that OES and FIRESCOPE incorporate the Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) into the Statewide Master Mutual Aid Agreement (priority- Low).
- Commission recommends that the state implement a research and development working group within FIRESCOPE to explore emerging technologies for firefighting purposes (e.g. military technology, GPS, UAV's, OASIS). (priority- Medium)
 - Group felt that this effort was already underway by existing technology organizations such as Missoula Fire Technology Center, Livermore Labs, USFS/NASA partnership, etc
- Commission recommends that local governments improve public outreach and emergency evacuation education (priority- High).

USAR/SWIFT WATER TASK FORCE DEPLOYMENT ISSUES:

- Those close to the issue acknowledged there were problems associated with the rapid deployment of USAR/Swift Water TF's in response to the Katrina/Rita Hurricanes. There was an understanding that some of the TF's were staged by design, to allow for a rotation of teams. However, there was a general feeling that support for the TF's needs improvement through the deployment of qualified Incident Support Teams (IST) early on in the operation. IST's should be comprised of a combination of Incident Management Team qualified personnel and Subject Matter Experts (SME) with the technical expertise to speak the language.
- It was agreed that the eight sponsoring Fire Chiefs should be the "tip of the spear" that address improvements to future USAR/Swift Water Task Force deployments and how to integrate with Incident Support Teams.

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HURRICANE KATRINA, SLIDE SHOW AND INFORMATIVE DISCUSSION BY TOM HATCHER

TOUR OF USFS AVIATION SAFETY MANAGEMENT SCHOOL

- The Emergency Response Aviation Safety Management Certificate Program offers a seven-course curriculum focusing on leadership, teamwork, ethics, current and emerging aviation safety management principles and technologies
- A collaborative effort held at the USFS Wildland Fire Training and Conference Center at McClellan Park in Sacramento between university, governmental, and private industry experts from NASA, USFS, American Helicopter Service and Aerial Firefighting Association, University of California, Davis College of Engineering, UC Davis Office of Research, and UC Davis Extension
- Some of the group tried their hand at the helicopter and air tanker flight simulators that usually resulted in making the virtual fire problem worse
- A tremendous undertaking that shows unlimited potential in the fire aviation safety arena

CICCS UPDATE / PRAYTOR

- Deadline is still December 31, 2005
- Chief Brian Kelly brought to light the universal problem with qualifying personnel through the existing CICCS standards due to the lack of actual fireline assignment opportunities. The problem is widespread, especially within the northern region, and is lending itself to apathy and a reduction in participation in the qualifications system.
- It was suggested that virtual simulations might be a partial answer to actual fireline assignment requirements. However, this would require an adjustment of sign-off requirements currently existing in the PTB's (Position Task Books).
- This item will be added to the January meeting agenda for further discussion.

TASK FORCE REPORT / WEST:

- Revision of the Field Operations Guide (FOG) is scheduled for 2007
- TF still working on the "Rapid Demobilization" issue. Details not available from Chief LaPlant due to prior commitment.
 - o Apparently, similar issues, although to a smaller degree, occurred during the Topanga Incident when the Harvard Fire broke.
- The Task Force will maintain the "Plan of Work" for all three FIRESCOPE groups (BOD, Ops Team, Task Force) as the single keeper of documentation.
- Work continues on the "All Risk" Safety Officer course curriculum.

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- Aviation Specialists Group is meeting monthly to work on aviation related BRC recommendations tasked to FIRESCOPE. Next meeting is scheduled for October 19th
- Highrise working group has been activated to update operational and training standards

CAL CHIEFS REPORT / HICKEY:

- Chief Hickey reported that FIRESCOPE has been recognized and has been included in the rewrite of the Cal Chief's Bylaws.

STRUCTURE PROTECTION DEFINITION SUBGROUP MEETING (09/08/05)

- An in-depth discussion occurred regarding the position paper published by the Structure Protection Definition Subgroup.
- Subgroup attendees were: Chiefs Roper, Gage, Quintanar, Wright and Green who met on September 8, 2005 and subsequently drafted a proposal shared with the Ops Team.
 - o NOTE: The BOD passed a motion at their October 12th meeting at OES HQ to move forward with their 7 "Proposed Actions for Resolve" outlined in their paper.
- Following is a short description of their recommendations:
 - o Propose FIRESCOPE not adopt the prior draft "structure protection vs. perimeter control" definition
 - o Redefine the intent and use of the State Master Mutual Aid agreement
 - Group agreed to recommend to the BOD to substitute the term "Clarify" for "Redefine" because the pure intent of MMA is still applicable.
 - o Redefine the use of the California Fire Assistance Agreement (CFAA)
 - o Redefine the use of Assistance-by-Hire agreements
 - o Work toward merging the CFAA and Assistance-by-Hire agreements into one master agreement beginning in 07/08
 - o Create a multi-agency training cadre to train local, state and federal cooperators in these new tenets prior to the 2006 fire season
 - The Ops Teams saw a conflict in accomplishing this within the '06 timeline, given the probability that the CFAA rewrite incorporating Assistance-by-Hire agreements would not occur before 07/08
 - o Enable members of the CFAA working group to develop a new agreement for the 2006 fire season.
 - Again, this time frame does not coincide with the above- mentioned time frame of combining CFAA with AH.

REGULAR V.S. LARGE FIRE SHELTERS-BRIEF DISCUSSION

- It appears that some departments are finding that 80%+ of their safety personnel are opting for the large "new generation" fire shelters in spite of the "size-of-individual" recommendations.

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- This raises the economic issue of what to do with all the surplus Regular size shelters
- Informative only...no action taken

REQUEST FOR NEW ITEMS FOR THE JANUARY MEETING:

- Update on any CFAA news (Chief Drake)
- Update on any resource typing news (Chief Dyer)
- Update on any SEMS/NIMS news (Chief O'Bannon)
- Update on any "All Risk" CICCIS Committee news (Chief Kelly)

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (IMS) COMMITTEE REPORT (CHIEF DRAKE)

- Committee currently working on update of the National Wildland Firefighting Guideline Manual to conform with NIMS
- Copy of current edition was pass around for review

ROUNDTABLE:

- VNC/RALSTON-Fire activity below normal since '03 siege with exception of Topanga Incident
- USFS, N. REGION/HATCHER-Sent personnel to the Gulf States to assist with disaster relief, many still committed
 - o Budget deficit may double with possibility of up to 30% personnel reductions
- LAC /DYER-Added a new Battalion (La Habra) with total now at 21
 - o Experiencing helicopter maintenance issues due to lack of mechanics...situation beginning to improve
 - o Purchased 4 new Bell 412 helicopters. Looking at long term possibility of implementing a Cobra program to serve as an Air Tactical platform
- MEO/KELLY-Very little activity of any kind to report
- SBC/SCHMITT-Slow fire season in county, but allowed large commitment of resources to assist with Topanga, Harvard and Riverside
 - o Sent 2nd Helicopter with module to standby at Hemet Helitack base during So Cal fire activity for several days of IA
 - o Deployed 15 personnel to Katrina disaster relief, mostly attached to Type 1 and 2 IMT's. Some still committed
 - o Implemented a 24-person fuels/fire crew this season. Completed lots of high-profile fuels projects and dozens of IA with one out of county assignment. Going to Board to seek year-round funding. Good publicity and letters of support should help sell the program.
 - o Potential of losing up to 4 Chief Officers by end of year due to retirements

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- DVS/HICKEY-Little fire activity to report. No Strike Teams sent out this year
- SFR/LAMBRECHTS-Dealing with adapting 3" hydrant outlets to accommodate mutual aid agencies
 - o Sent personnel to Katrina relief effort
- SAN DIEGO AREA/NEWMAN-San Diego City is getting on board with a fire prevention program
 - o Sheriffs Dept. purchased two Type 2 helicopters and developed a partnership with CDF, with some funding provided by the reservation, to place state flight crews on ships
- OES/O'BANNON-Special Ops Deputy Chief selection coming soon with Chief Praytor taking up the slack in meantime
 - o All personnel are back from Katrina/Rita
 - o Lost Chief Gage to USFS Washington Office
- ORC/PIERCE-Continue to experience huge turnover of Chief Officers
- USFS, S. REGION/DOMANSKI
 - o Still in fire season in both regions
 - o 13 Air Tankers remain in Southern Cal until contracts run out
 - o Budget not looking well
 - o Helitankers and Crews will stay on through October
 - o Virtual fire simulator CD in 3D being rolled out in spring '06
 - o concentrating on IA
 - Partnership between USFS, NASA and NFA
 - Next generation is "Scenario Editor" version based on USGS Quads on CD medium creating real places to simulate fires
 - Can be used for prescribed fire briefings with crews, media and political officials
 - Chief Domanski will bring demo copy to January meeting
- BLM/BANNISTER-Experienced a Type 2 fire east of Susanville (15-20K acres)
 - o Rumors of 3-10% budget cuts
 - o Starting to downsize fire season staffing levels
- DOI/MAZARATTI-Sequan Tribe entered into agreement with BIA to fund an interagency Hot Shot Crew, it had possible CICCS implications, but it appears that the issues have been addressed.
- CDF/WALTERS-CDF has reorganized into 4 Regions, still with a North and South Operations serving two regions each.
 - o Northern Region also beginning to downsize staffing levels.
 - o Fixed wing will be off contract on Saturday 10/15/05, but will be held over.
 - o 3% at 50 labor agreement is expected to produce large turnover.
 - o Budget looks stable for remainder of year and allowed sufficient funding for an Engine and Helicopter (looking at Eurocopter) replacement program.

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- o Marin County is implementing a fire/fuels crew program similar to Santa Barbara County, has been met with outstanding success.
- NOR CAL DISTRICTS / LITTLE-Dealing with LAFCO "Service Reviews" of districts.
 - o Tahoe Basin is ripe and ready to burn.

CLOSING COMMENTS:

- Chief Ralston articulated the need to replace the FIRESCOPE representative to the NWCG due to the pending retirement of current representative Ralph Alworth
 - o Group meets 4 times a year.
 - o Representative can be from local government.
 - o Chief Walters will contact Ralph for details on scope of position and report back at the January meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 1500 HRS.