



<https://www.nwcg.gov/partners/iwdg>

Date: 30 April – 2 May 2024

Location: Kill Devil Hills, NC

IWDG Members: Jesse Bender, Chair | Chuck Russell, CGAC | Dave Celino, IPSC | Jim Prevette, NASF | Zeph Cunningham, ICAC | Colleen Gadd, AHIMTA | Melissa Wegner, GATR | Sean Peterson, NICC | Shane Greer, ICSC | Aaron Thompson, BLM, Vice-Chair | Steve Griffin, NIMSIC | Hank Rowland, FEMA | Carol McElroy, FEMA | Joe Sean Kennedy, USFS | Carl Schwoppe, SWCG | Patrick Pearson, RMCG | Nicki Johnston, Admin

Not Present: Russ Lane, NASF | Cole Belongie, DMC | Rich Harvey, IAFC

AGENDA TOPIC

Welcome and Introductions

Expectations and goals:

- Think creatively and openly about defining next efforts and meeting mission.
- Re-evaluate incident workforce development and what it means for the field.
- Focus on becoming less reactive and building capacity.
- Break down obstacles for bringing in non-traditional resources and to better utilize all-hazard/FEMA resources in wildland fire incident management.

IWDG History and Charter Review

- Evolution of work to implement Complex Incident Management (CIM) has resulted in expanding and engaging additional group representatives and liaisons.
- CIM is just one piece of IWDG's vision for work and change to create a successful and sustainable incident workforce.
- Some of IWDG's recommendations have not been fully accepted but the groundwork has been laid for future leadership decisions.
- Chartering bodies have been encouraged to review the Charter, to refine membership, update goals, expand vision/mission statement, etc.
- IWDG interested in moving beyond recommendations and becoming doers to consistently see solutions through from vision to implementation.
- Review Commission Report and consider how our efforts align with those recommendations.
- Maintaining thorough documentation for understanding the timeline later is extremely important.

Review Current Actions

Data Collection

- CGAC Data Call: 2024 IMT Composition
 - IMT composition data requested from CGAC and should be returned May 20, 2024.
 - The need for ICAP has been reiterated to NMAC.
 - Based on the roster data and CIMT usage, develop a recommendation for how many personnel each agency should have participating in CIMT rosters.
 - Better publicize the composition data to GAs for their utilization.
 - Outline the importance of collecting the employment status of each IMT participant.

- Suggest reaching out to qualified personnel not participating on an IMT to find out why and if there are ways to remedy those participation barriers.
- Data Analysis: Identify data needs to support new recommendations and continued work.

Open Tasking Updates

- Increasing Incident Support Capabilities Tasking, NMAC L2023-02
 - Response to Element #3, identifying additional agencies, organizations, and partners, is with NMAC for discussion and decision. Some recommendations will need to be forwarded to NWCG and FMB for action.
 - Response and attachment available on IWDG webpage.
 - Draft response to Elements #1, virtual support standards, and #2, modular support, is nearing finalization and will be presented to NMAC as a draft prior to signature issuance.
 - NMAC will need to approve recommendations and assign them out for work completion.
 - IWDG considering picking one or two of the recommendations to take to completion.
- Priority Trainee Program Standardization Tasking to CGAC, NMAC L2023-10
 - Feedback was received from the GATRs and ICAC.
 - Each Coordinating Group gives their GATR expectations for the priority trainee list, creating challenges to standardization. For example, some GAs include ADs while others do not.
 - CGAC will provide a response to NMAC based on input that most GAs believe the current program is working well. However, the lack of metrics is identified as an area for improvement.
 - Recommend tracking the number of trainees sent out, average number of assignments for qualification, and the number who eventually support CIMT rosters as evaluation metrics.
 - Recommend IROC include a priority trainee dropdown option, which is being worked on by the contract team.

Complex Incident Management Implementation

- Phase 1 Review
 - Continued improvements and adaptation are goal now that CIM is implemented.
 - Training courses and availability of ICAP are the only incomplete pieces of Phase 1.
 - The biggest roadblock for folks not wanting to be rostered is the commitment to a team compared to the flexibility of going out as a single resource when they're available.
 - Continuing tracking data for how many and which positions are ordered for along with downsizing or ordering of additional positions outside of team subordinate orders.
 - Optimally, each team will take only what they need so the remaining personnel are available for all other teams and incidents to access.
- IMT Standards
 - Draft has been reviewed by multiple stakeholders but minimal feedback has been received.
 - Revisit in May then recommend sending to NMAC for approval and next steps.
 - AA Subgroup will also review in May.
 - Standardization is a slow adoption rate but will ultimately result in increased efficiencies and clear expectations of products and functions.
- Feedback
 - Constructive feedback has been minimal; continue asking representative groups for feedback in any form and at any time. There's no need to wait until the AAR to submit feedback.
 - Recommend a discussion with CGAC on visitations to CIMTs for discussion, from Coordinating Group members, NMAC liaisons, or other leadership.
 - The intent would be to evaluate the process, not the IMT.
 - Recommend a consistent set of questions to use for feedback and discussion during visits.
 - » Update the questions suggested last year and provide for IWDG review on May call.
 - Provide additional education to AAs on the roles and authorities of coordinating groups and NMAC.

Phase 2/Program of Work Discussion

- Action Plan was split into two phases to address concerns about accomplishing some recommendations in the proposed timeline. It was never intended to go to a Phase 3 or further.
 - Recommend putting the focus on sustainability and improvement of modified system elements through continuous review and no longer referring to Phase 2 to assist moving beyond CIM.
- Identify a program of work and communicate the continued evaluation and improvement of all facets of incident management, including CIM.

Strategic Objectives

- IWDG desire to be more active doers, not just recommenders, to move from vision to action.
- Continued and improved engagement with vested partners.
- Meeting the needs of the agencies, partners, agency administrators, and responders.
- Break down divisive silos.
- Develop response capabilities for day to day.
- Focus on taking care of people.
- Create efficiencies in all aspects.

Incident Complexity Evaluation

- After 25 years under the current system, it's a good time to reevaluate and simplify.
- The evaluation must update complexity characteristics, align complexities with reality, and reframe the language. This must be a NIMS change, not just a wildland fire-specific assessment.
- Generally, three complexities levels exist: initial attack, extended attack, and complex incidents.
- Evaluation process should:
 - Consider moving away from number typing and categorically determine incident complexity.
 - Review FEMA's complexity guide that outlines characteristics of each level.
 - Analyze current complexities for efficiencies and recommend changes.
 - Create complexity levels to be expandable and retractable more easily than numerics.
 - Consider whether combining complexities causes disparity in knowledge.
 - Limit the factors considered for complexity, tie it to skills and managing people and processes.
- Once appropriate number of complexities is determined, evaluate levels of IC needed for them.
 - Convoluted day job position requirements should be reconsidered.
- Support draft tasking to review alignment of complexity levels.
 - Provide draft feedback and edits to Griffin. Kennedy, Schwopo, Rowland, and Greer will assist.

IT Support to IMTs

- Request a briefing on WFIT's previously proposed interagency-based IT support program.
- Agency IT leads supported the recommendation with updates.
- Funding and position duties are incorporated in the initial proposal but would need to be updated.
- Integrate FEMA to increase consistencies as they're testing a technology subcommittee.
- Identify positions in need of IT support, equipment, and internet.
- Support the concept of standardized incident IT support.

Funding Support for IMTs

- Interagency property management is easier when items are available in the cache system.
- Standardization of functional property for team support is necessary as some IMTs can purchase trailers while others can only afford name tags.
- Create a minimum standard of what all teams should mobilize with and provide support for acquisition of those items. Recommend building a list of supplies that IMTs can purchase items from utilizing a suppression account like the FS budget toolbox for crews.
- Support consistent funding support for all IMTs.

Recruitment and Retention

- Recruitment happens at lower, more personal levels, not nationally.
- Recommend creating a synthesized interagency dashboard with a suite of information on functions, including videos outlining how to participate and where to find information on opportunities, basic qualifications, system, etc.
- New employee orientation should include fire management and support opportunities.
- Personnel availability is always a consideration. Rationale for CIM addresses some of the supervisory concerns, and evaluation of the outcomes will continue.
- Build shadow and internship opportunities for employees on assignments to directly expose them to incident management and all functions.
 - A new intern/shadow designation or position in IROC would support mobilization and tracking.
- Rowland will share information on FEMA's shadow position and required prerequisite courses.

Incident Management Support Team Proposal

- Concept is that if a local unit is struggling with an emerging or extended incident, the Incident Support Team can fill gaps where needed and alleviate the need for ordering a full CIMT.
 - The teams could also augment and mentor qualified Type 3 IMTs or add capacity to CIMTs on particularly complex incidents.
- Teams would configure to primarily support logistics, finance, planning, and information, but could include safety and operations personnel if appropriate.
- The effect would be similar to how FS often uses NIMO to support local units.
- Suggest identifying personnel to participate and commit to only the support team, not to CIMTs as well, to alleviate conflicting response needs.
- Avoid overcomplicating the set up and ordering processes. These teams should be nimble and easily mixed and matched to respond as requested, not with a fixed configuration or roster.
- Support adding recommendation in the Increasing Incident Support Capabilities tasking response.

Roster Configuration

- Evaluate and listen to how teams are doing through the 2024 fire season.
- Many of the relevant questions are included in the CIMT visit prompts: how teams right-size during mobilization, how the conversation with the AA went, whether the CIMT was the right size upon arrival at incident, and how the CIMT expanded/collapsed size during the incident.
- Surveys were not well-responded to in past years, and we're unlikely to be successful distributing further interagency surveys based on policy requirements.
- Physically completing site visits would be the most efficient way of receiving the information.
- Ask that CGAC and coordinating group representatives gather the information.
- Revisit configuration with the future potential of an ocean concept at fall AAR.

CIMT Coordinator

- The position briefing paper is still with NMAC who was going to discuss further with FMB.
 - Need to remind NMAC and ensure the recommendation doesn't fade off.
- NICC has filled a national CIMT Coordinator position.
- GB has agreed to hiring a CIMT Coordinator in BLM and will be flying the position soon.
- Other GAs are waiting to see how everything goes and what the impact is on their current staff.
- Dispatch PDs can't be updated at this time due to OPM conducting a review so an existing PD has to be utilized.

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

- FEMA will work to include CIM in NIMS but will take time to socialize and change.
 - Short-term guidance is geared toward vested interest management.
- Work is ongoing to stand up the Incident Management Working Group to address some of this.

- Immediate next steps would be bringing this idea to the Administrator with a letter of support and circulating the message.
 - Letters of support should include language explaining CIM and the future of the system including its flexibility.
- Concerns are expressed with maintaining two sets of qualifications in two systems for mobilization and grant funding for wildland fire and all-hazard responses.
 - FEMA communications internally to regional leadership to ensure grant requests are supported.

ICCI Pathway

- On March call, IWDG supported ICSC's proposal to increase pathways to ICCI qualification.
 - Option 1 keeps current pathway and adds a pathway that does not include ICT3 while option 2 eliminates the requirement for ICT3.
 - RPL use has been discussed instead but a system change is more legitimate.
- In 2023 with 46 IMTs, there were 112 qualified ICs and 23 trainees but there are continued issues filling ICs positions on CIMTs.
- For many, ICT3 is a barrier to becoming an ICCI because there are so many ICT3 trainees competing for experience and assignments.
- Competent and qualified Complex C&G should be able to complete an ICCI position task book, have their leadership skills evaluated, and be signed off as an ICCI.
- The request for change is with IPSC with no known timeline for voting on the accepting it.
- Pathways should be broadened for various positions to include experiences and mentorship.
 - Considering alternative options to assignments could also increase speed of competency.
- **Bender will draft a letter of support for ICSC's options for ICCI pathways for the May call.**

Critical Shortage Positions (IC, Finance, AOBD, RADO)

- Middle management is heavily needed and usually short on positions (HEQB, TFLD, etc.).
- SEC1, TFLD, DIVS, RADO, ACDP, and IADP typically have the highest UTF numbers.
- Many positions such as DIVS and TFLD are overutilized in areas other positions are appropriate.
- ICs are not consistently UTF'd, but we know they are shortage overall, most often reflected through dissolution of a team in a GA.
- Identify barriers and recommended solutions to each position specifically.
 - For example, Ops Chiefs and Safety Officers don't want to be ICs due to the loss of hazard pay.
- Top UTFs in order of most frequent:
 - 2023: TFLD, HEQB, SEC1, SEC2, RADO, FELB, SOFR, IADP, DIVS, and SMKJ.
 - 2022: HEQB, TFLD, SEC2, SEC1, RADO, HMGB, DIVS, PREV, SOFR, and SMKJ.
 - 2021: TFLD, HEQB, DIVS, RADO, SEC2, SOFR, SEC1, BCMG, FELB, and FOBS.
 - 2020: HEQB, TFLD, SEC2, DIVS, SOFR, SEC1, RADO, BCMG, FOBS, and FELB.
- **Evaluate these positions and make recommendations to overcome barriers and increase capacity.**

Type 3 IMTs

- Development, status, and organization of Type 3 IMTs is not consistent nationally.
- They could be mobilized more frequently if they were available and sufficient in number.
- Type 3 IMTs may also become more marketable if CIMTs aren't willing to right-size.
- Establish standards for Type 3 IMTs crossing GA boundaries, including roster numbers, C&G positions, sideboards, and expectations to protect the Type 3 response level and prevent it from becoming more than it's meant to be.
 - Internal mobilizations would not be required to adhere to these standards unless GA chooses to.
 - Utilize standing modules and proposed incident support teams to augment and mentor.
 - Never intent for Type 3 IMTs to expand in capacity and number to take on Type 2 incidents.
- Analyze data to support the recommendation as well as previous guidance on this subject.
 - NMAC Memo 2017-01 outlines a Type 3 IMT Roster Composition for review.

- Recommend each GA host at least one Type 3 IMT and establish their own rotation as they see fit.
- A proposed Type 3 IC representative is part of NMAC's ICAC Charter update.

Incentives

- This year, some GAs created plaques and certificates as a starting point for participant recognition.
- ICs requested coordinating group send supervisors of all IMT members a certification of thanks and recognition for allowing the participation.
- Much of the incentivization previously proposed by IWDG would require legislative or agency-specific actions. While not accepted at the time, keep our recommendations in mind for revisiting when time is right.

Archive Type 2 and Type 1 Positions

- If/when Type 2 and Type 1 qualifications are archived, anyone who hasn't transitioned to Complex qualifications would need a transition plan, such as automatically becoming CIM-T or reverting to their Type 3 qualifications.
- As long as people can be ordered as Type 1 or Type 2, they will be which maintains currency in those qualifications. Additionally, Complex quals maintain currency for Type 2 and 1 positions.
- This maintains a busy system, with three levels of qualifications. However, some are against removing Type 1 and Type 2 qualifications due to wanting to hold onto those qualifications.
- Revisit in spring 2025.

Barriers for Collateral Duty Participation

- Provide list of known barriers to AA Subcommittee and leverage their input.
 - Categories include human dynamics, mental health, agency targets/priorities, environmental, qualifications, and employment status.
- Include ways to incentivize AAs for allowing participation on IMTs.
- Support drafting a template letter or certificate from NMAC for CGAC review to be distributed by coordinating groups to supervisors and/or agency state/regional leadership of CIMT participants.
- Survey IMT members on what they think an appropriate "reward" might be for participating on teams and going to incidents outside of a cash award.
- Changes already made to alleviate barriers include transitioning to one type of IMT, 7 days of unavailability after assignment, and updating the national rotation to better disperse assignments.
- Prevalent issue is diminished workforce and few employees wanting to mobilize to incidents.
 - As example, NPS has to amend PDs to allow non-fire employees to mobilize to incidents, which is time-consuming and a barrier to participation but one the agency supports.
- Support a recommendation to incentivize participation by taking care of our people with hotels, meals/per diem, conference rooms, open internet, laundry unit, etc.
 - Use data from the WOOPS, RM and NR to show the efficiencies and benefits to rest and mental health for IMTs sleeping in a hotel as opposed to sleeping in a tent/camp.
 - Provide specific guidelines for consideration such as distance to ICP, availability of large facilities, not disrupting evacuees, etc., with the recommendation.
- Recommend discussing red card committee/qualification review board standards and evaluating imposition of additional shifting or arbitrary expectations for qualifying personnel.
- Consider options for pay increase for personnel, including ADs, with a trainee on an assignment.

Identify Sustainable Number of CIMTs

- Regardless of IMT type, personnel should only roster as a primary member for one team.
 - Duplications result in false sense of capacity.
- Provide coordinating groups with the data on CIMT usage and numbers of available responders to inform their decision of how many IMTs to staff.
- Consider a decreased target number of CIMTs by GA with a national view for a sustainability.

Agency % Participation on IMTs by GA

- Need to update data on agency use of CIMTs, by GACC and nationally, to inform the recommended percentage distribution of personnel by each agency.
- Data does not include all state teams, only state participants on interagency teams.
 - Determine how to account for this representation appropriately in the recommendation.

AD Program

- Continue to hear ADs struggle to find sponsorship as local units discontinue program support which partially led to recommendation in Increasing Incident Support Capability tasking to develop a support a national AD center along with classifying ADs based on employment status.
- IMT Association is a potential partner to take on the process and get people into the system. Could bolster the information in the tasking response and provide NMAC more robust proposal if they support pursuit of the existing recommendation.
- Create a bottom cutoff that allows the system to prioritize critical shortage positions.
 - Ensure the asks factor in the high usage of ADs to supplement the employee work force.
- ADs going out in the highest UTF'd positions should always have a trainee order placed.

National Interagency Agreements

- Work on Increasing Incident Support Capabilities Tasking identified numerous agencies who would like to play a role or increase their existing participation in wildland fire response.
- Potential for IWDG to lead more of the direct work on opportunities through leadership in each agency to increase resource capacity.
- Request NMAC officially task IWDG with this as part of the recommendations.

IMT Course Development Stance and Voice

- Concerns that S-320 is being developed at too basic a level and creating a gap between it and where the advanced course/S-520 should pick up.
- Better utilize annual IMT meetings for training and even an IMT refresher training (RT) module.
- Courses could be streamlined and focused on the appropriate level if prerequisites were robust enough to ensure a solid foundational background.
- Ideally, once the basic and advanced courses are both developed, the steering committee re-evaluates the discussed need for an intermediate course.
 - Consider supplementing the intermediate gap with on-the-job training and soft skills development, including required mentorship, before moving on to S-520.
- Draft a letter expressing lack of support for three IMT courses and recommend non-course alternatives to fill the perceived gap such as performance-based assignments, additional position task book elements, simulations, training at meetings, and an annual IMT RT module.

Update Charter and Membership

- Once proposed recommendations/program of work are presented to chartering bodies, review and discuss expectations which should drive necessary updates to the Charter and membership.

Prioritize and Structure

- Very Short: Occurring now
 - IMT Course Stance – submit written letter (1)
 - Review and approve at May 21 call
 - ICCI Pathways – letter of support for ICSC (1)
 - Review and approve at May 21 call
- Short-Term: 1 – 2 years
 - Funding to IMTs (2)
 - Greer will reach out to FS regarding suppression code use by IMTs.
 - Discuss at May meeting and create an equipment list to present at July Joint Meeting.
 - Cunningham/ICAC and Greer

- Agency % Participation of IMTs by GA (3)
 - Data collected by July.
 - Recommend number November 2024.
 - Schwope, Peterson, Prevette
- Barriers to Collateral Participation by Agency (4)
 - List of barriers for AA Subgroup review to discuss solutions
 - Recommendation for hotels, per diem, etc., November 2024.
 - » Gather cost analysis from IMTs who have utilized hotels.
 - » Peterson capture cost data to discuss July 2024.
 - Recommendation for qualification standards January 2025.
 - Cunningham, Thompson, Stewart, Bender
- Type 3 IMT Standards (5)
 - Final recommendation November 2024.
 - Pilot 2025, implement by 2026.
 - Schwope, Greer, Prevette
- Update Charter and Membership (6)
- Mid-Term: 2-3 years
 - National Interagency Agreements (7)
 - Request NMAC officially task IWDG to research.
 - Russell, Thompson, Cunningham, Celino, Bender
 - Incident Complexity Evaluation (8)
 - Completion response fall/December 2024.
 - Griffin, Rowland, McElroy, Schwope, Kenedy, Greer
 - Critical shortage positions (9)
 - Establish task team October 2024.
 - Peterson, Kennedy
 - Recruitment and Retention (10)
 - Rowland/FEMA discuss shadowing potential soon.
 - Dashboard ready February 2025.
 - Rowland, Gadd, Pearson, Bender
 - Soft Skills Development for IMT Members/Mentorship) (11)
 - Fall 2024.
 - Rowland, Wegner, Gadd, Thompson
 - Incident Management Support Team (12)
 - Griffin will refine briefing paper for fall 2024.
 - Pilot 2025.
 - Griffin, Celino, Prevette
 - # CIMTs (13)
 - CGAC January 2025.
 - Russell, Greer
- Long-term: 3-5 years
 - Standard IT Support Program
 - AD Program Improvements

Next In-person Meeting

- Schedule for November 2023 or January 2024 meeting in central location (e.g., SLC or Denver).
- Bender will send out poll.

New Action Items:

- Draft a Program of Work for review and approval by FMB, NMAC, and NWCG in July.
- Review all notes and drafts to ensure the correct points are being disseminated as intended.