

Federal Fire Working Group Meeting
Hosted By: DOI's Office of Wildland Fire
Incident Operations Center, Main Interior Building
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC
November 16, 2011, 9:00-12:00 (Noon)

ATTENDEES

Donald Warner
Josh Elvove
Dale Dague
Thomas Gibson
Ross Mowery
Nelson Bryner
Vince Massier
Rohit (Rik) Khanna
Walter Futrell
Peter Collins
John Erichsen
Chen Su

ORGANIZATIONS

Air Force (via telephone)
GSA (via telephone)
USDA-FS
NIH
EPA
NIST
DOI/Office of Wildland Fire
CPSC
DNFSB/DOE
Bureau of Prisons
ARMY
Air Force

USFA ATTENDEES

Glenn Gaines
Alex Furr
Sandra Facinoli
Rebecca A. Ryan
Dennis Gentzel

Deputy Administrator, USFA
Director, National Fire Programs Division, USFA
Chief, P&I Branch/NFP (via telephone)
Fire Program Specialist, P&I/NFP
Fire Program Specialist, P&I/NFP

PRESENTATIONS:

Vince Mazzier, DOI
Jenna Sloan, DOI/Office of Wildland Fire
Nelson Bryner, NIST
Dennis Gentzel, USFA
Donald Warner, Air Force
Dale Dague, USDA-FS

Glenn Gaines, Deputy Administrator, USFA, welcomed all to the meeting and expressed his appreciation to DOI for hosting the gathering. The following presentations were provided to the members.

**Vince Mazzier, Emergency Management Coordinator
DOI/Office of Wildland Fire**

Our host, Mr. Mazzier, provided an overview of the Office of Wildland Fire Coordination which will soon be called the Office of Wildland Fire (OWF). The OWF has been reorganized to implement recommendations of the Interior Fire Executive Council and the four Interior Bureau Fire Directors. He described the Mission of the office as an effort in coordination of the wildland fire programs between DOI agencies, as well as with other federal and non-federal partners; to establish policies and budgets for the DOI fire program; and to provide oversight and strategic leadership resulting in safe, cohesive, and comprehensive wildland fire programs for the Nation.

The OWF has **three** functional Divisions: Budget and Performance Management; Policy Division; and the Enterprise Systems and Decision Support Division. The Budget and Performance Management Division manages and oversees the DOI Wildland Fire Management financial account and budget operations. It also coordinates with other Departmental offices and bureaus within DOI, the USDA Forest Service and other agencies. The Policy Division develops cross-cutting wildland fire management program policies, strategies, plans and processes for the DOI, as well as collaborates with the bureaus within the Department, other Federal agencies and non-federal partners and stakeholders. Lastly, the Enterprise Systems and Decision Support Division coordinates with Federal and non-Federal partners on interdepartmental/intra-governmental information technology systems that support interagency wildland fire business management, fire operations and program management activities and other decision support tools.

**Jenna Sloan, Strategic Planner
DOI/Office of Wildland Fire**

Ms. Sloan described the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy as being a national, collaborative approach to addressing wildland fire across all lands and jurisdictions. It is being addressed as a 3-phased approach: Phase I which has been completed was a National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy and Report to Congress. Phase II is the development of Regional Assessments (goals, objectives, actions) and a National Report. This phase should be completed in 2011. And Phase III is a national trade-off analysis and execution which will be developed during 2012 and should include development of national and regional implementation plans.

Ms. Sloan explained that this effort was important for several reasons: wildland fire management is complex and involves a wide range of stakeholders; risks to communities and firefighters are increasing; there are decreasing financial and human resources to manage wildland fires; and effectively addressing these issues requires a united, comprehensive effort. She emphasized that the Cohesive Strategy Principles engage stakeholders, managers, and scientists; places an

emphasis on partnerships and collaboration; and is based on the best available science, knowledge and experience.

**Nelson Bryner, Deputy Chief/Chemical Engineer
Fire Research Division/NIST**

Mr. Bryner gave an in-depth overview of NIST's research initiatives dealing with the growing national problem of wildland-urban interface (WUI) fires. He highlighted the fact that 70,000 communities are at risk of WUI fires and that 46 million structures are at risk. Although there are typically over 100,000 wildland fires, only 2-3% of these fires spread into WUI communities and cause the loss of about 5,000 structures in a typical year. The estimated total cost of WUI fires in 2009 was approximately \$14 billion and in the last 100 years, 6 out of the top 10 most damaging fire events were WUI fires.

Nelson indicated that WUI response includes: wildland firefighters; structural firefighters; career, volunteer; and private firefighting companies. WUI firefighter data from 2005-2009 shows 94 fatalities (20% of total firefighter fatalities); 36 fatalities involved air operations which were 40% of the total wildland fatalities.

Mr. Bryner described an approach to improve the fire resistance of WUI communities that included: 1) Prevention: fire resistant materials and vegetation and stakeholder education and compliance; 2) Engineered Fire Resistant Design: prevent ignition and limit fire spread and active and passive fire protection technologies; 3) Response: fire service tactics and equipment and evacuation; and 4) Recovery: post-fire analysis and building and fire codes and standards. He briefly described several of the components of the NIST WUI Fire Program including the Witch and Guejito Fires Case Study and the Firebrand Generator.

**Dennis Gentzel, Fire Program Specialist
U.S. Fire Administration**

Mr. Gentzel's presentation, "Reimbursement for Costs of Firefighting on Federal Property" explained the process that fire departments must follow for making a claim, what things can be reimbursed, and documentation or other information that is relevant determining the amount authorized for payment. It was explained that reimbursement is paid to fire departments by the U.S. Department of Treasury after the claim is approved for payment by the U. S. Fire Administration, but the Department of Treasury will deduct this amount from the future budget of the Agency or Department that is involved. It was noted that the request for reimbursement must be made in writing to the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) within 90 days of the incident.

**Donald Warner, Fire Chief
Tyndall Air Force Base, FL**

Chief Warner provided an informative presentation on the use of ultra high pressure (UHP) (1200-1500 PSI) technology that is 3.5 times more efficient at extinguishing fires than standard agent delivery pressures. The Air Force plans to use this technology on future fire vehicles beginning in FY12. UHP has the potential to solve the longstanding problem of running out of

agent in about 3 minutes at major aircraft fires. UHP is also effective on concealed fires, such as aircraft engines. Slides 6 in the attached PP demonstrates the effectiveness of UHP (water only) on engine fires (foam is used on the ground fire in the slide). Because UHP uses about 1/3 of the agent required with standard pressures, it has applications for structural and wildland fires as well.

Aircraft rescue and fire fighting (ARFF) vehicle turrets will be 300 GPM, providing 3,000 gallon ARFF vehicles 10 minutes of continuous turret use. Hose lines will be 20 GPM each... 3,000 gallon ARFF vehicles will last 150 minutes with one hose line or 75 minutes with two lines operating.

Dale Dague, Fire & Aviation Management U.S. Forest Service

Mr. Dague provided an update on the 2011 wildland fire season. He indicated that Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Arizona and Louisiana experienced significant drought during 2011 and that some of those areas had record warm/hot weather. Large fires are considered over 300 acres in size and Arizona and New Mexico had the largest fires in the history of their states. The seasonal wildland fire potential outlook from December 2011 to February 2012 indicates that above normal conditions will persist for the majority of Texas and into parts of Oklahoma and New Mexico.

Round Robin

During the Round Robin session, Josh Elvove, GSA, provided a handout on their Fire Incident Summary Report. It is noted that from 10/1/2010 to 9/30/2011, 21 incidents occurred but no injuries or fatalities were reported. The total dollar loss for GSA, nonfederal and other federal (government owned and leased) buildings was \$1,890,000.

Glenn Gaines provided a handout on Winter Fire Safety Tips and also reminded the group that during the holidays many federal agency offices are vacant so folks should be extra diligent in checking electrical outlets, electrical cords, etc. and to follow appropriate procedures regarding natural/live cut trees. [Note: per Josh Elvove, the GSA Fire Safety Guidelines for Holiday Decorations and Displays is attached for your reference and use.]

Rik Khanna, CPSC, related that they are working with China's consumer product entity on various issues such as lighters, toys, lead content in products, and electrical products in general. CPSC is trying to engage/promote a culture of safety at the manufacturing level and design hazards out of the product. CPSC is also working with NFPA/UL on nuisance smoke alarms, particularly in the kitchen area and is working with USFA for the development of an advanced smoke alarm. They are also actively enforcing mattress regulations, conducting research on fire safe cigarettes, and investigating gel pots.

Chen Su, representing the Air Force, related that he had information on a P34 vehicle if anyone wished to have additional information.

Peter Collins, Bureau of Prisons, said they were standardizing their SCBA's (approx. 4,000) and they were about 60% completed with this effort; using Scott Air Pack 75.

**The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for the May/June timeframe. At this time, it appears the meeting would be in the teleconference format.