



Dispatch Study History

Summary of Reviews, Studies and Assessments

November 2014

2005 - Quadrennial Fire and Fuel Review (QFFR) - U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (FS) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) recommended:

- Current Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC) boundaries should be reviewed to explore potential efficiencies from realignment regardless of political or agency boundaries.
- Improve efficiency within the current fire dispatch, mobilization, and resource ordering system (ROSS).
- Improve geospatial capabilities, electronic status, location, tracking, and ordering processes to support incident mobilization and resource coordination (use of radio, satellite [GPS], cell technology to track core resources).

2005 - The Federal Wildland Fire Dispatch Area Preplanning Study, as accepted by both Departments, defined detailed changes to:

- Joint DOI / USDA Computer Aided Dispatch
- Geographic Area and Dispatch Center Consolidations
- National Governance Model
- Uniform Funding
- Interoperability Data Exchange
- Staffing Models
- Standardization of Operations

2008 - Management Efficiency Assessment of the Interagency Wildland Fire Dispatch and Related Services

- **Signed by both Department Under-Secretaries** and approved the immediate action by functional area. Included 42 changes to be implemented within 24 – 36 months:
 - 2 General
 - 2 Governance
 - 4 Radios and Other Technology
 - 7 Business Practices – ADs, Buying Teams / Other
 - 11 Organizational – Structure, Staffing and Workload
 - 16 Information Technology – ROSS, CAD and Other

2008 - Management Efficiency Assessment of the Interagency Wildland Fire Dispatch and Related Services

- FEC assigned 6 of the 42 departmentally approved changes as action items for NWCG. These items were generally relating to the Information Technology recommendations to upgrade ROSS and create iRWIn. The remaining action items were not completed.

2009 - The Interagency Interoperability Oversight Group (IIOG) review of Dispatch found:

- No single program or office "owns" nor has the entire "picture" of dispatch operations within DOI Bureaus and USDA Agencies.
- Dispatch is a cross-cutting function spanning multiple programs internally and externally, including states, local governments and tribal governments.
- Increasing demands on the dispatch system have resulted in inconsistency in staffing, technology, business processes and program delivery, and have created risks to employee and public safety.
- Numerous independent (contract) and in-house analyses have been conducted on the dispatch organization(s) along program business lines; **however, few recommendations have been implemented.**

2009 - The IIOG review of Dispatch directed:

- A national, strategic plan that outlines the vision, goals, objectives, and strategies for dispatch.
- A recommendation for a permanent governance structure to meet the mission requirements of local, state and national stakeholders in order to provide leadership, accountability, and operational efficiency for dispatch.
- An "optimization" study that will map, analyze, and provide methodologies directed towards integrating and consolidating pilot dispatch centers to be planned and implemented in coordination with partners, with outcome monitoring for lessons learned.
- Short term actions, consistent with the strategic vision for dispatch, to be implemented as soon as possible.

2011 - The IIOG sponsored the Interagency Dispatch Improvement Project (IDIP) Steering Committee who chartered the Interagency Dispatch Pilot Project (IDOPP) to look at how to optimize dispatch operations in two geographic areas; specifically:

- Develop implementable organizational configurations for optimizing integrated interagency, multi-functional dispatching in the two selected areas.
- Create a toolbox of methodologies, business needs, user requirements, management issues, and questions to be answered for use by others to develop organizational configurations for optimizing integrated interagency, multi-functional dispatching.

2011 - The IDOPP established a Bridge Team to bring together the work of the two GACC Pilot Project sub-teams to:

- Provide overall project management ensuring consistent assumptions and to produce comparable deliverables.
- Consolidate the findings into a single report that will serve as a blueprint for implementation of dispatch improvement throughout the agencies.
- Examine requirements for:
 - Technology
 - Facilities
 - Equipment
 - Location
 - Coverage
 - Workload
 - Staffing
 - Standards
 - Governance
 - Business Practices
 - Create Toolbox

2012 - The Southwest Interagency Dispatch Optimization Pilot Project Interagency Interoperability Oversight Group (IIOG) review of Dispatch directed:

- The Alternatives for the Southwest generated from the Sub-Team have the opportunity to address all twelve of the Tier 3 fire centers as well as the four Tier 4 centers
- Alternative 2A was selected to include consolidation of centers to increase efficiencies and interoperability. The alternatives will be implemented through a three-phased approach to be completed over several years.

2012 - The U.S. Department of the Interior conducted the Interior Fire Program Assessment Implementation Plan.

- **Directed** DOI to continue to develop and strengthen governance for wildland fire programs.
 - The objective of this effort is to provide an efficient, effective governance structure for DOI wildland fire programs that is consistent with an improved interagency governance structure.
 - DOI must work with USFS and other participating agencies on interagency governance activities.
- DOI should use results of the IDOPP study to work with its partners (e.g., USFS, NASF, states, Tribes) to make dispatch improvements, including consolidating some Tier 3 (and potentially all Tier 4) dispatch centers and other dispatch improvements.
- There are opportunities for some dispatch centers to be consolidated into centers serving larger land bases, utilizing modern communications and technology.
- **Direction** Includes funding and support direction:
 - Provide the resource requirements, in terms of people and cost, for *this year-long interagency effort*.
 - A significant amount of funding may be necessary to combine or realign dispatch centers based on results of this planning. Likely costs may be related to the following activities:
 - Revising dispatch structures
 - Permanent Change of Station moves
 - Realigning staffing

2014 - The Quadrennial Fire Review Sub-Task 2.2 – Report Card reflects the 2005 and 2009 (QFFRs) Dispatch Recommendations and grades them as **“incomplete”** for:

- Dispatch Improvements
- Geographic Area Dispatch Consolidations

2014 – July 2014, the Interagency Dispatch Implementation Project (IDIP) Charter is signed by the DOI and the FS to:

- Provide the authority and set the framework for to execute (**no more studies**) recommended changes from the previous 10 years of findings including:
 1. Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Standardization
 - Complete an OMB A-11 E-300 CAD Business Case to support procurement of an interagency (DOI/FS/States) standardized Commercial Off the Shelf (COTS) Software
 2. Interagency Dispatch Operational Guidance
 - Standardization of all operations, conventions and positions in dispatch offices thru an Interagency Dispatch Operations Guide (IDOG)
 3. Governance
 - Development of standardized governance and funding model for a national dispatch program.

A complete copy of the signed IDIP Project Plan/Charter is available at <http://www.forestsandrangelands.gov/WFIT>

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