

2003 Calendar

April

- Installation of ROSS Version 1.2.5 to Practice Server 4/7
- Release of ROSS Version 1.2.5 to Production 4/14
- ROSS Partners Conference Call 4/17
- ROSS Version 1.2.5 available on Training Server 4/28

May

- ROSS Partners Conference Call 5/15
- Core Team/SME Meeting Eugene, OR 5/20-22

ROSS Version 1.2.5 Deployed

A major milestone was accomplished this month with the release of ROSS Version 1.2.5. This is the first version that will be utilized by the dispatch community for dispatching nationwide.

A number of improvements and new additions have been added to the ROSS application. Highlights include:

- ◆ The initial deployment of the Roster Module.
- ◆ The aviation hazard screen now permits searching through a list of hazards within a specified distance.
- ◆ The cancel request function will be operational.
- ◆ Developmental positions will be permitted on Rosters.
- ◆ The food service request form will allow a different ordering sequence for the meals. (For example: breakfast does not have to be the first meal ordered).
- ◆ The incident screen will have several changes including incident numbering by host or dispatch center; and frequencies will change when the host unit is changed.
- ◆ Latitude/longitude data for airports has been corrected, eliminating decimal points within the degree value.
- ◆ Township/range/section conversion will be operational for all areas of the country that have official (USGS) survey information.
- ◆ A number of improvements or cleanup items on the new requests, pending requests, request status and travel screens.
- ◆ The ability to dispatch resources on a preposition order to another incident as if they're your resource.
- ◆ The resource status screen will show the last date/time a resource was statused.
- ◆ Four new standard reports dealing with incident data are available.

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Question of the Month

How is testing done on new ROSS versions?

Testing is done by both the software developer (Lockheed Martin) and by ROSS Subject Matter Experts (SMEs). A comprehensive test plan that includes test cases and “real world” scenarios are developed prior to beginning the test process. The test cases are built from the requirements documents developed for each type of functionality with each case having a known outcome. Initial testing is performed on the module being developed. The next phase is integration testing, which consists of the module being developed as well as all previous modules. This is important because it insures that features and changes implemented in new design versions do not adversely impact existing features.

Once the tests are undertaken, all discrepancies are documented and reported. Most of the problems found through this process are fixed as the issues are documented. After each fix, a new “build” is provided to the SMEs, and the process begins again. Occasionally there is an issue identified that cannot be readily resolved. These issues are identified and documented in the release notes that are issued with each official version release. It is important for users to view the documentation provided with each version release, as it provides



SMEs Rod Chaffee, Sue Roussopoulos, Mary Toews and Project Manager Jon Skeels, testing ROSS Version 1.2.5 prior to release.

valuable information regarding changes and functionality incorporated in the new version, as well as issues that may exist.

While testing for all releases is an arduous process, complex releases such as Version 1.2.5 require ROSS SMEs to spend several weeks testing and re-testing builds. These dedicated folks do a great job to ensure the official release operates as it should, and that known issues are documented for users.

Who's on First?

Congratulations to Medford Oregon Interagency Communication Center who placed the first resource request using ROSS!

The Eastern Area GACC was the first to send a request to NICC and the Western Great Basin filled the request.

ROSS Version 1.2.5 Deployed

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A complete listing of the features of Version 1.2.5 can be found on the ROSS webpage. A document link (referred to as ROSS Release Notes) is on the homepage and on the “Release Notices” page.

An unfortunate hardware component failure that caused a system outage happened at the same time the ROSS application update was occurring. ROSS Team Members, Lockheed Martin and NITC employees scrambled to implement the Disaster Recovery Plan and get the equipment back on line. Even with the misfortune of the hardware problems, the update to Version 1.2.5 was a real success. The day after the update, a record number of people were logged on to the application with no slow-down or system impact. “This has been a week of ups and downs,” said Jon Skeels, Project Manger, “but overall, I couldn’t be more proud of the folks who have worked so hard to make the deployment of this version a success”.

Helpdesk Corner by David Kee



The first quarter of 2003 is already behind us and fire season is here. The ROSS Helpdesk has had a very busy and productive first three months of the year. The helpdesk has set call volume records each of the first three months. The call volume increase has been steady at about 10% each month.

- January - 275
- February - 306
- March - 339

So far, April has had several record days, particularly the first few days after the deployment of the new version.

The helpdesk staff is ready and waiting to answer your questions and provide you with the support you need to be successful. Expanded hours of operation have been implemented for the fire season. Effective **April 1, 2003** the ROSS/DMS Helpdesk expanded hours are:

7 Days a Week
0700 – 2300 Eastern Time
Emergency Support
2301 – 0659 Eastern Time

** Please note that after-hours support (2301 – 0659) should be used for ROSS and DMS emergencies only.

Another positive is that the helpdesk staff recently received advanced ROSS training. All helpdesk representatives participated in an intensive and in-depth, 4-day training class to maximize their knowledge level on all aspects of the ROSS application as well as the new features of Version 1.2.5.

The helpdesk continues to populate the Knowlix® knowledge base, which now has over

140 total entries and is updated on a regular basis. To view the knowledge base go to the ROSS homepage (<http://ross.nwcg.gov>), click on the User Support Tab, then click on the “UTAROSS Helpdesk” logo, from here select the link to the Knowlix® knowledge base.

That’s all for this time. As always we are available to help you in any way with both ROSS and DMS. Please call us at 866-224-7677, email at helpdesk@dms.nwcg.gov, or use the HEAT Self Service tab from the helpdesk web page. Thanks again for a great year. We look forward to another extremely successful year in 2003.

*H*elpdesk Tips

Q. How do I set up web status for a vendor organization?

A. One of the keys to create web status for a vendor is the creation of the vendor organization personal representative. A person record must be created under the vendor organization. Once this is done, that person will display on the web and phone status screen under the “Vendor” tab. It is important to remember that the dispatch office that created the vendor organization must create the personal representative for that vendor.

Q. Why do some contract resources show up more than once on web status?

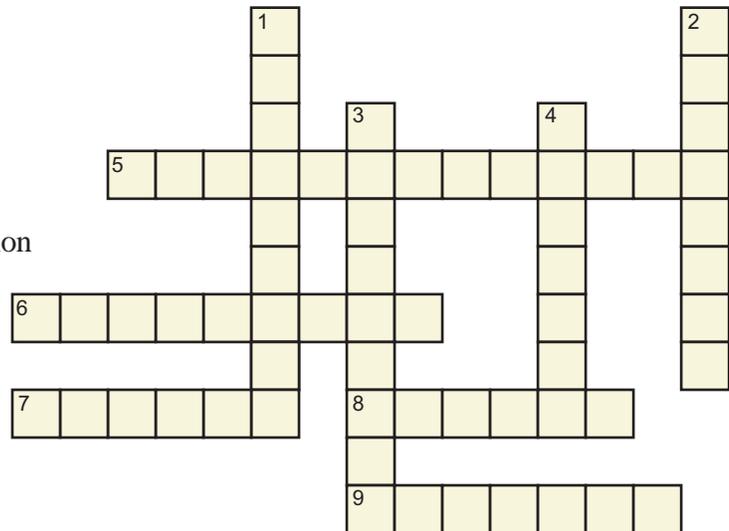
A. If a contract resource is on more than one contract in the same office, it will be displayed on web status for each contract. The status only needs to be changed on one of the entries on web status. If the resource is unavailable on one contract, it’s unavailable on all contracts where it appears.

Answers to ROSS Speak from page 4

9	Service
8	Travel
7	Cancel
6	Associate
5	Place External
4	Quick Fill
3	Follow On
2	Web Status
1	Promote
Down	
Across	

ROSS Speak

A Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

5 Placing a request with a dispatch organization that does not use ROSS (2 words)

6 Linking an initial report to an existing incident in ROSS

7 To close a request because the requested resource is no longer needed

8 The specific screen or function used to schedule the movement of a resource to or from an incident

9 An incident support activity that can be provided by an external provider such as ice delivery or trash pickup

DOWN

1 A short cut that allows a dispatcher to rapidly commit a resource without going through the complete new request process (2 words)

2 An incident that results from another incident (2 words)

3 The process that allows individuals or vendors to update their own availability status on the internet (2 words)

4 A ROSS function which designates an initial report as an actual new incident that will require resources

Answers can be found on page 3

ROSS Dispatch Training Going Strong!

73 training sessions have been held in ROSS Dispatch as of the first of April, with approximately 26 more scheduled throughout the spring. Of the 757 students that have attended dispatch training the agency composition has been:

US Forest Service - 55%

BLM - 19%

States - 12%

Park Service - 5.5%

BIA - 5%

Fish & Wildlife - 2.5%

ADs - 1%

The Nature Conservancy - 1 person

Overall, students have been very satisfied with the classes. Comments from attendees range from “excellent course!” to “it’s hard to teach an old dog new tricks”. Students have also, for the most part, enjoyed the exercises and scenarios’ commenting that hands-on learning is the best way to see exactly how things work. The exercises also provide an opportunity for student discovery and discussions.

Training session being held the week of April 28 will be the first to use Version 1.2.5. The training reference guides have been updated for the new version explaining what has changed in each of the modules. They are posted on the web on the Implementation/Training page at:

<http://ross.nwcg.gov/training.htm>.