

**ROSS Partner Conference Call Notes  
October 16, 2003**

**Participants:**

**NICC:** Kim Christensen, Linda Roos, Dave Hendren  
**Rocky Mountain:** Rob Juhola, Larry Elder  
**Alaska:** Rick Dupuis, Bob Dickerson  
**Eastern Area:** Kathy Miles  
**Great Basin:** Kathy Wiegard, Lani Williams  
**Southern Area:** Wendy Tolman, Wayne Shew  
**Southwest:** Cheryl Dickson  
**Northwest:** Gina Papke, Sheila Barry  
**Northern Rockies:** Rosanna Finley, Ray Nelson, Wendy Dougherty  
**California:** Julie Vogan  
**ROSS Team:** Jon Skeels, Rod Chaffee, Beth Grey Cloud, Mary Ann Szymoniak, Sue Roussopoulos

**Note: Any information received after the call is shown in bold type below.**

**Business Community Update – Kim Christensen**

- How long will the deployment of version 1.2.6 take? Scheduling could potentially have an impact on Southern Area and California.

**Response (Jon Skeels):** Deployment is scheduled to begin 0300 MDT on Monday October 20 and last for seven hours.

**Response (Julie Vogan):** Will discuss with SOPS and report any concerns.

**Response (Jon):** This deployment will involve a full system backup which could be started earlier than 0300. **Based on coordinator input, deployment of 1.2.6 was postponed until the evening hours of October 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Project Update – Jon Skeels:**

- **Version 1.2.6** is ready to be deployed. The release notes have been drafted and should be published on Oct. 17. A video of new functionality is available on the [ROSS Home Page](#). One major change implemented in this version enables dispatchers to manage request blocks on the Organization, Incident and/or New Request screens. Blocks may be designated as either User Issued (i.e., hand-entered request numbers) or System Generated (ROSS assigns the next sequential number). Another change allows any dispatch office in the ordering chain to retrieve a placed request as long as the request has not been filled.
- Release of **version 2.0** is planned for late January or early February. This version will not look much different than the current version but it involves the most significant changes to date in the behind-the-scenes hardware and software. The

current server hardware will be completely replaced. The new hardware is ten times more powerful (not ten times faster) and automates functions such as drive partitioning and assignment of processors. The CORBA logic server will be replaced with Enterprise JavaBeans (EJB) and IBM WebSphere will replace the current Apache server. We will be changing over to a server farm setup with 12 servers. Again, there will be no significant enhancements to the application itself in version 2.0. Given the significant architecture changes, that would be too risky.

- The preparations for **data cleansing** are underway. Lockheed Martin has been running queries against the data and we have found four common data issues that need to be addressed:
  - 1) **Bad data** – for example, invalid characters such as “z” and “Please Delete”
  - 2) **Dead data** – for example, there are over 2,000 Person records that are no longer linked to an Organization. Some of these records are Resource Items and some have assignment history. Users will have to make decisions on the disposition of these records.
  - 3) **Duplicate data** – introduced either through Import or through “Fill with New Resource”
  - 4) **Unwanted Resource Items** – these are Resource Items you have no intention of using again but we need to retain the assignment history. We will provide a means for users to identify these resources which will then be moved to the Data Warehouse and purged from Production.

We will ask each GACC to designate a lead contact for data cleansing. Spreadsheets, addressing issues 1 through 3, will be provided to each GACC. The spreadsheets will need to be reviewed by the users and decisions made so that identified data can be purged by the end of the calendar year. A snapshot of the “cleansed” Production data is scheduled for January 4, 2004. This is the data set that will be moved to the Data Warehouse and used for year end reporting.

- We worked with NICC and six GACCs to identify 25 sample reports to address 2003 year end reporting needs. This approach was taken because the full functionality of the Data Warehouse (e.g., ad hoc reporting) will not be implemented in time for this year end cycle. Several report writing tools that could be used to generate reports from the Data Warehouse were evaluated. Our focus will be on Microsoft Access based primarily on its prevalence and report wizard function. The more powerful Brio Insight tool will be provided to NICC and the GACCs at a minimum.
- Deployment of version 2.1 is targeted for June of 2004. We need to allow adequate time for development and testing and also try to minimize the potential for fire season impacts. Based on user input we have identified three key problem areas:

- 1) Users need the ability to cleanup their own data.
  - 2) Performance, including the ability to maintain focus on one incident or resource while moving from screen to screen and reduced dependence on filters
  - 3) Fix bugs that are causing data errors (i.e., locked resources)
- Following are issues being considered for inclusion in version 2.1. The list is not prioritized and in all likelihood not all items will be addressed.
    - Transfer Persons between organizations (related to Provider button on Resource Item screen)
    - Revisit “Fill with New Resource” as it relates to ADs, EERAs, and CWN resources. The incident business community must take action to standardize practices before this issue can be fully addressed.
    - Edit mistakes – Allow users to change the catalog item being requested or the assigned request number.
    - Named Request – Need to provide this functionality in order to mitigate use of the Special Needs field
    - Ordering Chain – Requests and Notifications must be available to all offices in the chain.
    - Services – Ability to view all Service requests for a given incident at the same time.
    - Supplies – Implement functionality to create and fill Supply requests.
    - Preposition – Resources that are prepositioned on another unit must not show available at their Home Unit.
    - Reassigning Groups (e.g. Teams) – Address Travel issues
    - Home Unit ability to release Resources assigned to non-local Incidents – Problem caused when resources are not promptly released (in ROSS). User community will need to define new business rules for this functionality
    - Set Availability by Qualification – To correct distorted availability figures (e.g., when available SMKJ also shows available as DIVS).
    - Maintain focus on a specific Resource or Incident while moving from screen to screen
    - Maintain focus within grids – e.g., Resource Status screen must not refocus to the top of the grid when a Resource is statused.
    - Finding Resources – Need a straightforward way to answer “Where’s Suzie?”
    - Substitution – Fill a Resource Item Request with a Service (e.g. fill “Van” with “Rental Van) and, where appropriate, substitute one Resource Item for another (e.g., fill “Type 3, 4, 5 or 6” Engine Request with “Type 6” Engine).
    - Travel – Enlarge the Travel Mode field for Travel / No Itinerary and perhaps format similar to dot mob
    - Merge Incidents
    - Transfer Incident from one dispatch office to another
    - Catalog – Separate the Catalog from the application itself. Currently, a change to the Catalog affects existing Requests.
    - Import – See later IQCS discussion item.
    - Substantial increase in security. To meet OMB requirements must pass a security Certification and Accreditation process. Passwords will have to be changed

periodically, be 8 or more characters and include mixed case, numbers and special characters.

– Web status – enhancements and bug fixes

- IQCS (the new federal qualifications application) is in the early implementation stage. ROSS and the IQCS project have jointly notified the NWCG that no means to export Persons / Qualifications to ROSS is included in IQCS. This functionality was planned for but not funded or approved. We are looking at some short term solutions to address this problem.

**Question (Kim Christensen):** You mentioned a need for business rules for who should have access to demob resource. How and when will we deal with this need?

**Response (Jon Skeels):** We will submit a letter to NICC (after next week's Core Team meeting) outlining the issue and requesting a response from the dispatch community. This will also include outstanding issues with the Resource Order form.

**Question (Kathy Wiegard):** – What is the status of new functionality for aerial deployment of resources?

**Response (Jon Skeels):** This was identified as a low priority during the GACC and NICC conference calls. It will not be included in version 2.1. We will work on it next summer.

**Response (Kathy):** We identified some issues with ROSS Tip #23 which addresses this issue.

**Response (Jon):** Send them to me. We will review and update the Tip.

**Question (Wendy Tolman):** Is Import down?

**Response (Jon):** Yes, we have disabled Import until we have completed data cleansing. If there are specific needs for Import we can turn it on temporarily.

**Question (Ray Nelson):** You mentioned work on group reassignments. Will you also be working on Rosters?

**Response (Jon):** We will be looking at rosters in general. Not sure that your concerns will be addressed. We will publish the summarized comments from the GACC conference calls.

**Question (Gina Papke):** When?

**Response (Jon):** Next week. **Summarized comments were mailed to GACCs.**

### **Training and Implementation Update – Beth Grey Cloud**

Version 1.2.6 will be hosted on Training and Practice in the next week or two. Training materials have been updated and will be put up on the web site in a few days to allow instructors time to get familiar with the new functionality. Now that fire activity has wound down Training sessions are starting up. ADMIN training sessions will be using the Practice platform.

**Question (Gina Papke):** Do you need instructors for upcoming sessions?

**Response (Beth):** Yes for California sessions beginning Oct. 27<sup>th</sup> and Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>.  
**Sessions have been postponed due to fire activity.**

**Business Team Update – Rod Chaffee**

- Subject Matter Experts have spent the last month testing Version 1.2.6.
- Winter work schedule will include regression testing on version 2.0 and requirements development for version 2.1
- New functionality for Version 1.2.6 includes:
  - **Request Number blocks** can be created, edited and deleted on the Organization, Incident and New Request screens. Request number blocks provide for User Issued and System Issued Request numbers. **A [streaming video](#) explaining this functionality can be downloaded from the ROSS website.**
  - Ability to **Cancel a Reassignment** anytime prior to the ETA to the new assignment.
  - Ability to **Reassign** a Resource that is **mob en route**.
  - Added a **Reminder** button which will flash when ETD passes **and** the Resource's Travel Itinerary has not been marked complete.
  - New "**Last Action**" column on upper grid of Pending Request screen indicates whether Requests are "New", "Retrieved" or "UTFd".
  - New "**Available To**" column on each tab of the lower grid on Pending Request screen. Indicates area of availability of Available Resources (e.g., Local, GACC, National)
  - Ability to create **manifests for CWN resources** (e.g., helicopters).

**ROSS Partners – Sue Roussopoulos:**

- Staffed Helpdesk hours will be scaled back to 0800-2000 EST Monday through Friday effective November 1. Calls received outside these hours will be forwarded to the on-call duty officer. Please don't hesitate to call after hours if you have an urgent need.
- **Other Business/Questions:**

**Action Item:**

- ROSS Team will submit a letter to NICC (after the ROSS Core Team meeting) outlining information needed from the dispatch community. Items requiring a response include:
  - Business rules for allowing an office other than the host dispatch to release incident resources.
  - Outstanding issues with the Resource Order form.

**Next Conference Call:**

- November 20, 2003 at 1400E/1300C/1200M/1100P/1000AK