

**ROSS Partner Conference Call Notes
September 16, 2004**

Participants:

Alaska:	Maria Wade, Bob Dickerson, Rick Dupuis
California:	Julie Vogan, Tom Evans
Eastern Area:	Scott Swendson, Kathy Miles
Great Basin:	Lani Williams, Dave Hart, Kathy Wiegard
Northern Rockies:	Rosanna Finley
Southwest:	Frank Bedonie
ROSS Team:	Jon Skeels, Rod Chaffee, Beth GreyCloud and Sue Roussopoulos

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

ROSS Project Update – Jon Skeels

Version 2.2: This version is currently undergoing iterative development and testing. Our plan is to deploy this version after the National Coordinators Meeting (2nd full week of December). We will post a list of the changes coming in 2.2 on the web site in the next couple weeks. The primary focus of this version is data management.

Data Management Training: We will be conducting nine or ten Advanced Data Management sessions early next year. Dates and locations have not yet been determined. Attendees must have prior ROSS training and experience. The sessions will be intensive. There will be pre-work and may be some software requirements (e.g., Microsoft Visio). Our expectation is that, after training, these folks will be charged with addressing data management issues within their GACC. We will ask that time be allocated for these individuals.

Version 2.3: We are in the planning phase for this version and will let folks know what will be included at the December Coordinator's Meeting.

Aerially Deployed Resources module postponed: The development of ROSS, as originally planned, will conclude in December of 2005. Proposals for further development are reviewed by the ROSS Change Board and put forward as investment segments for which funding is requested. The approved / funded investment segment for FY 2005 includes improvements to the Contract module and development of a Tactical Aircraft module (e.g., airtankers and lead planes).

In reviewing the requirements for Aerially Deployed Resources (e.g., smokejumpers and helitack) for version 2.2 we discovered that consistent business rules do not exist. Therefore, we have postponed development of this module and will roll it in with tactical aircraft. We plan to involve a good cross section of dispatchers, smokejumper and tanker base personnel, business managers, etc. to assist in developing the requirements for this module. There is a national meeting next week in Salt Lake City to discuss dispatch of aviation assets. We hope that this will begin to lead toward consensus on dispatch methods and business requirements. Thanks to Dave Hart for writing up the issues that led to funding for this module.

ROSS and I-Suite: The I-Suite application (ver. 4.1.0) has been enhanced so that data from ROSS can be read into it. ROSS data required at incident check-in is exported to the I-Suite folder within the ROSS Data Delivery System. The file is then imported into I-Suite with a status of ‘filled but not checked in’. The goal of this new functionality is to save data entry time, reduce input errors, improve data integrity and give incoming IMTs an up-to-date idea of what resources to expect.

Network: We have seen network improvement in some areas and degradation in others. The load on the ROSS servers continues to be low while load on the network is very high. However, ROSS traffic constitutes less than one percent of existing network load. Nancy DeLong has been working on this issue with the NITC Network Control Center. This includes running network scans and trace routes. Within the USDA network we see times ranging from 100-200 milliseconds to 4500-6000 milliseconds – or quite fast to very slow. We have found that some Local Area Networks (LANs) within individual buildings are very poorly tuned. While we do not control the network, we can and will continue to work with network administrators to identify issues. We will also continue to fine tune ROSS to achieve the best speed possible. On the positive side, the Forest Service is planning a 2.5 million dollar investment in network improvement and USDA will be implementing a managed cloud network.

Implementation Team Update – Beth GreyCloud

The ROSS Training platform has been updated to version 2.1. The Dispatch training materials posted on the web site have been updated to reflect 2.1 functionality. Administration materials are being reviewed and updates will be posted soon. We are beginning to schedule basic and refresher training. Watch the website for training schedule updates.

Question (Kathy Miles): Will the advance data management sessions be posted on the web?

Answer (Beth): Yes and we will also be working with the GACCs to help them identify the most appropriate attendees.

Question (Scott Swendson): The data delivery system allows access to data from all dispatch centers. Is this a security issue?

Answer (Jon Skeels): The Privacy Act and FOIA do not apply in this case. We are meeting the requirements of the NWCG and by providing this information we are addressing areas where we have been criticized in the past. For the time being there is no need to restrict data accessibility within the Data Delivery System. If FEMA proceeds with ROSS implementation there may eventually be a requirement to restrict some law enforcement related data on a need-to-know basis.

Follow Up (Scott): We have had users peruse the pending requests and then call the GACC to suggest that we prompt NICC to send us orders.

Answer (Jon): This issue existed prior to ROSS. We need to remind the users of the business rules and that there may be many valid reasons why NICC has not sent the requests to the GACC.

Business Team Update – Rod Chaffee

Jon covered it pretty well. The Change Board has not been very active since May. We are planning a conference call or meeting for later this fall. We have been receiving four to six suggestions per month throughout the summer. Most of the suggestions relate to issues that are being addressed in version 2.2 or 2.3. But please encourage users to continue submitting ideas to ross_suggestion@dms.nwcg.gov.

Question (Frank Bedonie): Missed the status of Admin training materials.

Answer (Beth GreyCloud): Will contact Frank after this call.

ROSS Partners – Sue Roussopoulos

Thank you for your participation. The next conference call will be October 21st at 1400E/1300C/1200M/1100P/1000AK.