

ROSS Partner Conference Call  
Key Points  
February 14, 2002

Participants:

Jon Skeels, Neal Hitchcock, Nancy DeLong, Rod Chaffee, Andy Gray, Dennis Derr (ROSS Team), Lu Vega, David Kee, Priscilla Eddy (User Technology Associates), Stacy Lensing, Bonnie Barcus, Steve Arasim, Sandy Allen, Gina (?), Blanche France, Phil Cardin, Karen Feary, Lindsey Lien, Bob Dickerson, Marlene Eno, Dave Hendren, Wayne Shew, Sue Roussopoulos, Pat Boucher, Larry Barr, Deneen Cone, Teri Marshall, Ray Nelson, Rosanna Finley, Brian Bischof, Flint Cheney, Deb Bozarth, Laura McIntyre-Kelly, Beth Mason, Walt Embree and Rick Squires.

Neal Hitchcock:

- The National Coordinators will meet the end of February to discuss ROSS Training and the Geographic Area training sequence.
- The lack of the DOI net and Internet access for several of the agencies is a significant barrier, and makes communication like this conference call even more important.

Jon Skeels:

- Infrastructure Update:
  - The ROSS application will be available on Practice and Training servers (once Beta testing is completed). As successive versions are tested, they will continue to update these servers. Production ROSS will continue to be available for Admin and Dispatch.
  - We are installing a network line between the BLM National Routers (Denver/Portland) and NITC. With any luck, this should be completed by late February/Mid-March. The remaining work is in the hands of MCI.
  - We estimate that 38% of the dispatch centers nationwide have been affected by the DOI network shut-off.
- Application Update:
  - Each piece of ROSS Dispatch is tested at Lockheed-Martin, and then units (comprised of numerous pieces) are tested.
  - Next is Alpha testing, which is done by the ROSS Team SMEs working at Lockheed-Martin.
  - Beta testing occurs in the field after Alpha testing. NICC, RMACC and two Rocky Mountain Area dispatch centers are currently Beta testing ROSS Dispatch. This will go on for about a month.
- Application Releases and Dispatch Release Schedule:
  - Jon outlined what will be included in each ROSS version as it's released.
  - The current version of ROSS Admin is available for use, and is being used, right now. It's called a "Beta" version because the Forest Service and BLM official releases have not yet occurred. The FS official release is expected April 1. We've been working with BLM on this for almost a year.
  - Highlights of future releases include:
    - Version 1.1.3B (BETA) will include several reports. Rex Alford, ROSS Team SME is coordinating the ROSS Reports work.
    - Version 1.1.4B (BETA) will permit importing of REDCARD (FS) data.
    - Version 1.2.1 will include lots of modules – parts of Dispatch. With this version, ROSS Dispatch can be used for resource status.

- Version 1.2.2. will include:
  - Organization screen changes
  - Services
  - Supplemental forms
  - Data views
  - World-wide web resource status
- Version 1.2.3 will include:
  - Dispatching ability – including “external place/fill.” This is necessary so that dispatch offices using ROSS can place orders with units not using ROSS.
  - We’re looking at June/July for this.
- Version 1.2.4 will include:
  - The supply module.
  - Incident complex and merge, and
  - Phone resource status.

This will complete ROSS’s initial scope. The team will continue to work on more features and change management items.

- Qualifications Import:
  - (Forest Service) Red Card:
    - These records can now be imported one record at a time. This was a feature that users asked for.
    - This import will need to be set up but local IRM support people initially, and then it can be done by the user as needed.
    - Testing of Red Card Import continues. It will be released very soon.
    - Users may or may not elect to use it this first year (e.g. The Northern Rockies Area has entered about 3,000 individuals manually, so they probably won’t use import unit next year).
  - (State) IQS record:
    - An interface has been built for this system. This function will be tested soon and hopefully released in the near future.
  - (DOI) IQCS-SACS:
    - The national SACS program people will export all records into an Access data base and make it available to ROSS.
    - The ROSS Team will then separate the records into Geographic Areas and Dispatch Centers, and send the records to this office (by DMS most likely) so that they can be entered into ROSS.
    - This will be somewhat labor-intensive for the ROSS Team, but this process was worked out with the ROSS Team and the SACS group.
    - Importing these records from the data base into ROSS will be via a screen in ROSS, which will be developed.

Lu Vega (UTA):

- Lu offered an overview of the ROSS Contract Helpdesk and the various ways to get ROSS and DMS help:
  - Telephone **1-866-224-ROSS** (7677)
  - On-line (via the “User Support” link from the new ROSS Website: <http://ross.nwccg.gov/>)
  - E-mail (Auto ticket)
  - Heat self-service
  - Knowlix knowledge database
  - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ’s)

Neal Hitchcock:

- Please note that new ROSS website: <http://ross.nwccg.gov/> !

Jon Skeels:

- ROSS Dispatch Beta testing
  - Jon offered an overview of the process
  - Deb Bozarth (RMACC):
    - RMACC is Beta testing ROSS Dispatch with NICC and the Fort Collins and Pueblo centers.
    - We're placing orders neighbor-to-neighbor and up to NICC.
    - It's going well, and I'm glad to be part of it.
  - Risk Squires (NICC):
    - I like it.
    - The testing is well structured.

Nancy DeLong:

- Implementation Plan and timeline:
  - Nancy reviewed the implementation information that is being requested from the National Coordinators:
    - Primary Contact person for ROSS Dispatch (name, E-mail address and phone number)
    - Approx. number of students needing training
    - Names of 3 to 5 trainers (name, E-mail address and phone number):
      - ESDS-qualified
      - Supervisory approval
      - Able to attend 32-hour training
      - Able to teach ROSS Partners at a training session
      - Willing to practice at home prior to (and Following) instructing in their Geographic Area to build and maintain currency
      - Willing and able to be a lead instructor at 3 to 4 sessions (hopefully in their Geographic Area).
  - Projected timeline:
    - If all goes well with the testing, the SMEs and Lockheed-Martin folks will be trained as instructors in March/April
    - ROSS Trainers will then be trained by these folks in April/May.
    - The ROSS Partners will be trained by the ROSS Trainers in May/June. The Partners are expected to be ROSS Coaches, and many Partners will also be Trainers (part of the above group).
  - During implementation, a copy of the ROSS application will be available on a:
    - Training server (reserved for training)
    - Practice server (a copy of the production server which is recycled each week)
    - Production server (the real deal)
  - The decision for Geographic Areas to "go to production" will be determined with input from the ROSS SME "readiness reviews" and the Coordinators.

Neal Hitchcock:

- Training on ROSS Dispatch should be faster/smoothier than ROSS Administration because the resource ordering process is more familiar to dispatchers.

- I saw a ROSS Dispatch overview (PowerPoint presentation?) and it was a great tool for orienting someone, like a temporary dispatcher, to using ROSS Dispatch.

Nancy DeLong:

- Distance (on-line) training will be available, but not until the application is more stable. It costs a lot to do the coding for web-based training.

Questions and Answers:

- Will a two-month commitment be required of instructors? Yes, we'd still want that, but the two months would not necessarily be consecutive.
- How will trainers be able to teach if they learn the application and then don't do training in their Geographic Area until a month or two later? It will be their responsibility to maintain their currency by going online and using the application at their home unit.
- The January/February ROSS Newsletter will be posted on the ROSS website shortly. (This has since been done)
- A ROSS Partner working session this year will basically be the ROSS Training delivered to the Partners – hopefully in May/June. If we can get a facility that will accommodate multiple sessions, we could hold that at one place and time. Otherwise, we might have to hold two separate sessions.
- Since these Partner conference calls are valuable, we'll look into setting one up every 5 to 6 weeks through the implementation phase.
- If there are any ROSS Partner updates in your area/office (additions, deletions, new numbers or addresses), please get those to me and I'll have Flint post an updated roster on the web. I'd also like to add a fax number for each Partner.
- For the past several months I've been working with a group of Cache Personnel to charter an ICBS-ROSS project, which will look at linking ROSS and the cache application so that information can be exchanged without redundant processes.

Thanks for your participation and continued work!