EQUIPMENT TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

To: Incident Commanders   **Date:** February 25, 2011
              Dispatchers
              National Interagency Support Cache Managers
              Logistics Section Chiefs

From: Tory Henderson, Chair

Subject: ROSS-ICBS Interface

In December 2010 the "phase 2 interface" between the Resource Ordering and Status System (ROSS) and the Interagency Cache Business System- Reengineered (ICBS) was deployed. This interface significantly reduces redundant data entry in the two applications – primarily by exchanging incident and request information between the two systems regardless of which application is used for data entry.

To achieve this new level of efficiency has required a few key changes and constraints in each application. The ROSS and ICBS-R Teams have provided user training and reference materials to their users to address specific new functionality in the respective applications. The purpose of this memo and enclosure is to inform incident management teams, dispatchers, coordinators and cache personnel of some key changes (and just as important, some key things that *haven't* changed) that everyone should know in order to prepare for the 2011 fire/all hazard field season. As always, good pre-incident communications and planning are essential to ensure effective incident response activities.

Please share this with information with the appropriate personnel.

Any questions can be addressed to Jon Skeels (jskeels@fs.fed.us) or myself (thenderson@fs.fed.us).

/s/ Tory Henderson

    Chair, ETC

Enclosure

CC: Jon Skeels
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ROSS-ICBS Interface

Some key changes:

NFES NIRSC Items are Supplies: Between 2006 and 2010, National Incident Radio Support Cache communications items (which are part of the National Fire Equipment System), were classified as Equipment to allow rostering in ROSS. All other NFES items were classified as supplies. ROSS now has the capability for building rosters of supply items, so all NIRSC items have been reclassified as such in both the ROSS and ICBS applications.

Remarks: All NFES items are once again classified as supplies in both ROSS and ICBS.

Finance Code Required in ROSS: ROSS will not allow a user to place a request with a cache unless a "default finance code" has been entered on the "Incident" screen, or on the "New Request" screen.

Remarks: This is not a new requirement on the part of the National Incident Support Caches. It's just been incorporated in ROSS to ensure that caches have the information they require to issue supplies to customers.

Shipping Information Required in ROSS: When placing a request with a cache, a ROSS user must select only one of the following three options: Shipping Address, Shipping Instructions, or Pick Up at Cache. "Shipping Instructions" is used for deliveries in which a street address doesn't exist (e.g. "deliver to MP50, follow the yellow ribbon to the ICP located at Warm Springs Camp Ground"). If "Pick Up at Cache" is selected, the user must enter a name and contact number.

Remarks: These fields have been incorporated in ROSS to ensure that caches have the information they require to efficiently ship or prepare supplies for pickup.

Incident/Order Must Exist in ROSS for ICBS to Create an Issue: ICBS will not allow a user to enter a request for an incident order unless that incident already exists in ROSS. In the majority of cases, an incident will already have been created in ROSS before an incident places requests directly with a cache. In cases in which a cache receives an order for an incident that's not yet in ROSS, they should contact the appropriate dispatch center to either create the incident in ROSS, or determine that the incident is already in ROSS, but the order number the cache has been given is incorrect. After that's been done, the ICBS user can proceed.

Remarks: With the new interface, ROSS systematically becomes the official system of record for all incidents (including "ABC Miscellaneous" orders, which are sometimes created to order supplies). As part of the ICBS issue process, ICBS will query ROSS to ensure that the incident exists. ICBS "Other Orders" are independent of ROSS and can be entered by the ICBS user.

Incident-to-Cache Supply Request Number Block: The request number block S-100,000 to S-199,999 is reserved for supply requests that are placed directly from an incident (or non-ROSS office) to a cache. An ICBS user can only enter request numbers within this range for Incident to Cache orders. For any supply requests placed from an incident to a dispatch office, any block of numbers can be set up

in ROSS if not reserved for another purpose (e.g. initial attack, buying teams, etc.).

Remarks: This request number block is necessary to ensure that ROSS and ICBS users do not inadvertently enter duplicate request numbers in the two applications. This was deployed in ROSS with version 2.8 in July 2008, and is now deployed in ICBS with the new interface.

Dispatchers have, for many years, assigned blocks of incident-to-cache request numbers to Incident Management Teams. Rather than assign these on an ad hoc basis, they're now set aside for this purpose in ROSS whenever an incident is created. It's still the Incident Management Team's responsibility to manage these numbers.

Some key things that have _not_ changed:
ICBS does not allow a user to enter a request for NIRSC items. Just as before the interface, the request must be placed through dispatch channels to NICC. NICC will place the order with NIRSC via ROSS, and NIRSC will process the request.

Incident-to-Cache (or "direct") Ordering: While cache personnel have the ability to enter direct orders in ICBS, it's still a Geographic Area decision whether or not, and under what circumstances, this is authorized. Coordinators and Cache Managers are urged to keep the changes listed above in mind to ensure that the process will be as smooth as possible.

Incident Replacement Ordering: The National Interagency Mobilization Guide and the NFES Catalogs each describe responsibilities and requirements for these orders (e.g. documentation, time frames, etc.). The specific process by which these are implemented in each Geographic Area should be a collaborative decision between the Area Coordinator and Cache Manager(s). Again, Coordinators and Cache Managers are urged to review the key changes listed above to ensure the process will be as smooth as possible.

NFES Items are ordered by Unit of Issue, not Standard Pack: Whether entered in ROSS or written on a resource order form and faxed to a cache, all NFES items still must be requested in quantities based on the item's Unit of Issue. "Standard Pack" simply refers to how the items are packaged. For example, the Unit of Issue for NFES 0727 "Bands, rubber, hose" is EA (Each); and the Standard Pack is 325/BX. While it's most efficient for cache personnel to issue items in standard pack increments (e.g. 325/BX in the above example), the quantities requested need to correspond to the Unit of Issue (so that it's clear that the incident is requesting 325 hose bands and not 1 hose band).

Because dispatchers are likely to be entering many more supply requests in ROSS this year, they should pay close attention to the Unit of Issue value that appears on the ROSS New Request screen after they enter an NFES Item Number. Dispatchers should also consult the "General Information" section of the NFES Catalog for information on Standard Packs, and contact their cache counterparts with any specific questions.

February 25, 2011