



Communications Strategy Plan

Fire Program Analysis System, Preparedness Module
Draft Version 2.1, November 12, 2003

Situation Analysis

Aggressive Implementation Timeline. The purpose of the Congressionally-mandated Fire Program Analysis System (FPA) is to develop a common interagency fire planning model for use by the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Fish & Wildlife Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs. The first phase, the Preparedness Module, addresses preparedness planning and budgeting. The Interior Appropriations Committee has established October 2004 as the completion date for development and implementation of Phase I, Preparedness Module. This is an aggressive timeline that will require significant cultural change within the five participating agencies.

National Direction for Implementation. Congress and the Office of Management and Budget have provided specific direction to develop the FPA System. Outputs of this system will affect the fire, resource, and aviation program of the five federal agencies. The FPA has high national visibility, and understandably, concern exists within the five participating agencies. Examples of concerns include:

- Staffing and training requirements
- New workload
- System hardware and software integration
- User acceptance of system interface
- System reporting capability
- Transferability of existing data to the new system
- Adequacy of existing land use planning data
- Optimization functionality and reliability
- Interpretation and use of data and reports

Communications Workload. Since initiation of the Congressionally-mandated FPA Program in May 2002, communications activity has been a significant and important workload. The Project, by its very nature, is developmental and evolutionary, which will continue to require ongoing communications actions. Examples of communications efforts the FPA Core Team is engaged in or has already carried out include:

- Weekly, monthly and quarterly status reports
- Monthly Steering Committee Meetings
- Weekly Staff Meetings with Core Team
- Weekly coordination meetings IBM contract consultants
- OMB, Agency Headquarters briefings
- Stakeholder and sponsoring agency meetings and workshops
- Symposiums
- FPA Website development and maintenance
- QuickPlace Website updates
- Agency fire planner meetings
- Poster sessions and workshops

- PowerPoint presentations

Background and Reference Material

- 1994 1995/2001 Federal Fire Policy
- 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy
- Hubbard Report (Report to National Fire Plan Coordinators)
- Congressional Direction
- OMB Direction
- FPA System Preparedness Module Project Charter
- FPA Website (www.fpa.nifc.gov)

Communications Objectives

The primary objective is to carry out communications activities that raise agency staff and external audience awareness of the FPA system in preparation for future implementation of the Preparedness Module. Specific objectives are to:

1. Deliver messages to all audiences that realistically portray expectations and accurately reflect project status.
2. Increase interagency and stakeholder awareness of the FPA system concept and capabilities.
3. Keep executive leadership, line officers and other stakeholders briefed and informed of issues and progress.
4. Deliver to user community accurate, on-time, as-needed clarifying information and direction in preparation for implementation minimize confusion and increase user acceptance.
5. Facilitate interagency and stakeholder input and involvement to assist in the successful development and deployment of the FPA system.
6. Assist the FPA Core Team stay focused on timely completion of project tasks.

An IBM Communications Management Plan is a concurrent communications effort that is in place that focuses project-level activities between the contractor (IBM) and the FPA Core Team (see Appendix I).

Key Messages

1. **Overview**
 - a. The purpose of the Fire Program Analysis (FPA) System is to provide managers with a common interagency process for fire management planning and budgeting to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative fire management strategies through time, to meet land management goals and objectives. FPA will be driven by quantified fire objectives and performance measures for the full scope of fire management activities.

- b. The new FPA application will allow for landscape scale, interagency analysis at the planning unit. This analysis will result in agency budget submissions as well as a national database of alternative budget levels, initial response organizations, objectives and associated outputs. The comparison of outputs to objectives is an indicator of effectiveness.
- c. The project will re-engineer the business process so that all five federal agencies will utilize the same budget request process, models, assumptions and displays. Budget alternatives will be rolled up across all the agencies to a national database to facilitate analysis of the preparedness budget across and between agencies.
- d. The FPA System Preparedness will be the first in a series of modules to be developed. The first module will involve developing an automated system for initial response planning to replace the systems currently in use by the five federal wildland fire management agencies. The Preparedness module will evaluate the cost effectiveness of alternative initial response organizations in meeting multiple fire management objectives.
- e. Additional FPA System modules will address 1) extended attack, large fires and national fire resources, 2) Rx fuels management, and 3) emergency stabilization and restoration, and 4) prevention and education.
- f. The sponsoring agencies are:
 - i. USDA Forest Service
 - ii. DOI Bureau of Land Management
 - iii. DOI National Park Service
 - iv. DOI Fish & Wildlife Service
 - v. DOI Bureau of Indian Affairs

2. Highlights

The new system will:

- a. Support interagency, landscape level preparedness planning and budgeting.
- b. Be driven by land management and fire management objectives.
- c. Analyze the cost effectiveness of fire suppression staffing alternatives.
- d. Be used by all federal land management agencies for fire preparedness planning.
- e. Use the cost effectiveness of meeting multiple fire management objectives as the decision criteria.
- f. Facilitate comparison of organizational effectiveness across planning units through an array of choices for any budget level.
- g. Include regional and national resources and program management needs.

3. Approach

- a. The FPA system will use optimization to determine the level of effectiveness associated with a range of budgets. This new approach to initial attack budget analysis will use cost as an input to the model. This feature is directly in line with direction to develop an analysis system that uses budgets as an input. This approach enhances current methods where analysts input alternative staffing levels to determine associated budgets.

- b. Many of the data elements in FPA will be based on the current preparedness planning systems, which will minimize the impacts on fire planners utilizing that system.

4. **Specific Quantitative Benefits**

- a. Specifically, the FPA system is expected to result in the following quantitative benefits:
 - i. Increase efficiency and effectiveness of the interagency, landscape-level fire preparedness planning budgeting;
 - ii. Increase efficiency and effectiveness of interagency, landscape-level fire suppression costs;
 - iii. Reduce system support and maintenance costs when the five Federal wildland fire management agencies need to maintain only one applications system rather than five separate applications systems and numerous feeder systems;
 - iv. Increase the percent of unwanted and unplanned wildland fires controlled during initial attack;
 - v. Reduce the number, size, and intensity of unwanted and unplanned wildland fires in the wildland-urban interface; and
 - vi. Reduce the average gross cost per acre of unwanted and unplanned wildland fires.

Communications Tactics

Tactics include an array of communications tools and actions to be used to achieve objectives. These tactics will be itemized – along with a description, target audience, responsibility and due date – in Appendix I, Communications Actions Matrix. Communications tools and actions to be used include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. **Target Audience E-Mail List**

Development of comprehensive e-mail list of target audiences for efficient, targeted dissemination of information and feedback. Preparation of this extensive list of target audiences may require additional outside assistance. The list should include all stakeholders, partners and cooperators, including:

- a. Congressional Representatives, Interior Appropriations Committee, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), General Accounting Office (GAO)
- b. FPA Steering Committee, Fire Directors of the five participating Federal agencies
- c. FPA user community, including line officers, fire planners, fire operations, budget officers
- d. State and local officials, including state forestry agencies

- e. Research and academic communities
- f. Internal and external news distribution outlets (agency newsletters and Websites, national fire-related magazines, etc.)

2. **Web-Based E-Newsletter**

Develop a Web-Based E-Newsletter for broad distribution to all and targeted audiences. Articles could be written by a wide variety of individuals, including: FPA Core Team members, IBM consultants, Prototype team members, agency managers and planners and professional contract writers. The E-Newsletter could be distributed on a regular basis. In addition, “Special Editions” could be sent out as needed for fast-breaking or time-sensitive information or news items.

3. **Feature Article Series**

Develop a list of topics and write a series of feature articles for broad distribution to stakeholders, partners, cooperators and fire-related magazines and news sources. One suggestion is to contact *Fire Management Today* and seek to devote an entire issue to fire planning, which would include articles about the FPA System.

4. **Website Updates**

Review and update the FPA Website with current information, including Status Reports, Frequently Asked Questions, Project Information, Contacts, etc. Continue to seek opportunities for new uses of the Website, such as posting of feature articles, the Web-based E-newsletter, training materials, etc. When significant updates or new information are added to the Website, “Push” the Website link to target audiences through e-mail.

5. **Website Visibility**

Publicize and seek opportunities to place the FPA Website link on stakeholder, user community and cooperator Websites, including the homepage of the National Interagency Fire Center’s (NIFC) Website. Place the Website URL address on all FPA Core Team communications materials.

6. **Editorial Review of Principal Documents**

Formalize protocol for appropriate review of reports, status updates, other principal information materials for accuracy, editorial consistency, persuasiveness and readability.

7. **Tracking of Issues, Inquiries and Comments**

Conduct review and ensure common system for ongoing tracking of and responding to issues, employee concerns, public inquiries, comments, suggestions and requests for information from both internal and external audiences.

8. **Standardized Definitions, Language, Acronyms**

Conduct review and ensure ongoing process for capturing and publicizing standard definitions, language and acronyms (e.g., Fire Management Unit), including posting this

information, as appropriate, on QuickPlace and on the FPA Website.

9. Poster and Handout

Develop and print quantities of a generic poster and handout for use at meetings, workshops and symposiums. The information would provide awareness of the overall goals and objectives of the FPA System.

10. Meetings and Workshops

Continuously assist in developing effective meetings and workshops, including meeting strategies and presentation materials. Also work to streamline FPA Core Team participation in meetings and symposiums by seeking opportunities to:

- a. Send fewer Core Team members to a meeting;
- b. Seek other meeting participants to provide the FPA presentation;
- c. Send PowerPoint presentation, poster, handouts and other meeting materials when FPA Core Team members can't be present;
- d. Participate in regional or national-level meetings in place of local meeting where feasible, e.g., Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACCs), National Wildland Fire Council Meetings;
- e. Seek opportunities for use of electronic distance technologies, such as NetMeeting, Satellite Downlinking, Simultaneous WebStreaming, SAMETIME, Conference Calls;
- f. Seek managers and other representatives outside the FPA Core Team to talk about FPA using on-demand PowerPoint presentations, handouts and other meetings materials developed by the Core Team, creating a "ripple effect" in getting the word out about the FPA System.

11. PowerPoint Presentation Template and Updates

Develop standardized PowerPoint design template and generic presentation for general use by the FPA Core Team. Continuously update generic and topic-specific PowerPoint Presentations to reflect changing needs of the evolving FPA System develop.

12. High-Level Management PowerPoint Presentation

Develop a short, two- or three-page PowerPoint presentation that provides a quick high-level overview of the FPA System. This would be broadly e-mailed to managers within the five agencies. Managers and executive leadership could then role this presentation into their other presentations to help create a "ripple effect" in extending message about FPA.

13. Communications Timeline Tiered to Project Schedule

With FPA Core Team input, develop specific communications actions tiered to the Project Schedule. Describe and list these actions in the FPA Communications Action Plan Matrix (see Appendix I). Providing all target audiences clear, well-defined updates of progress and on-time, as needed direction in preparation for Preparedness Module is a critical function in the success of the FPA project.

14. Visibility of Prototype Experiences

Increase the visibility of Prototypes' experiences and lessons learned at meetings and in feature articles, Web-based E-newsletter articles, monthly and quarterly reports, etc. The four Prototypes were established and chosen from existing interagency collaborative groups to assist with development and testing of the FPA processes for the Preparedness Module. The Prototypes are demonstrating ways to develop and use objectives, weights and other elements of the FPA Preparedness Module. Their efforts provide valuable insights experiences and lessons learned with the FPA System.

15. Messages Tiered to Target Audiences

Continue development of different types and levels of messages tiered to target audiences. This starts with defining the organization or audience to be addressed and designing messages needed for that audience. For instance, messages for the FPA Development Team would require one set of messages, whereas messages about implementation would require another set of unique messages for each of the five sponsoring organizations.

16. Coordination with Design and Build Contractor

Continue assisting Design and Build Contract with development of communications tools to support strategies, including publications, reports, briefing papers, talking points, presentation materials, and displays, in concert with the Design and Build contractor to ensure timely, accurate and consistent messages. Ensure that appropriate extended FPA team members are provided a User Name and Password for connection to Lotus QuickPlace.

17. Day-to-Day Business Communications

Internally, place continuing emphasis on clarifying and defining clear lines of communications and decision-making processes. This includes documenting ongoing decisions and concerns and sharing this information with appropriate Core Team members and stakeholders. Focus on releasing clear information and direction externally.

Measurement and Evaluation

Develop methods for measuring and evaluating the success of the Communications Strategy Plan. This could include follow-up employee research and assessment of communications actions to the timely completion of deadlines and tactical steps, change in employee behavior, achievement of organizational results, etc.

Appendix I

Fire Program Analysis

Communications Action Plan Matrix

Action Item	Description	Target Audience	Due Date	Date Completed	Responsibility
Communications Strategy Plan	Write FPA Communications Strategy Plan and present to FPA Steering Committee and FPA Core Team for review and final.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FPA Steering Committee FPA Core Team 	11-27-03	11-14-03	Kris Long
Standard PowerPoint Template and Generic Presentation	Develop standard PowerPoint Template and generic presentation with common design elements for general use by FPA Team members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 	11-27-03	11-14-03	Kris Long/Core Team
Executive PowerPoint Presentation	Develop high-level Management PowerPoint Presentation (3 to 4 slides), with Talking Points, for Managers' use in "rolling up" the Presentation into their other presentations to create a "ripple effect" in getting information out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executives and Managers of five sponsoring agencies 	12-15-03		Kris Long
Website Redesign and Ongoing Updates	Redesign and continuously update the FPA Website. "Push" Website URL to targeted e-mail list(s) when significant updates are posted. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Redesign and initial update Ongoing updates 		12-30-03 (Initial) Ongoing		Kris Long/Core Team
Website Visibility	Publicize and seek opportunities to place FPA Website link on stakeholder Websites, including the homepage of the National Interagency Fire Center's (NIFC) Website.		1-15-04		Kris Long/Core Team
Target Audience E-Mail List	Develop comprehensive e-mail list of target audiences, grouped by category, of all stakeholders.		12-15-03		Kris Long/Core Team

Action Item	Description	Target Audience	Due Date	Date Completed	Responsibility
Web-Based E-Newsletter	Develop a Web-Based E-Newsletter Template for distribution of articles to general and targeted audiences. Publication will include "as needed" and "special editions"		1-15-04 (Template) Ongoing Publication		Kris Long Kris Long/Core Team
Feature Article Series	Define topics and write feature articles for distribution to sponsoring agencies, stakeholders and fire-related magazines and Websites.		1-15-03 (Define Topics)		Kris Long (Lead)
Editorial Review of Principal Documents	As needed, provide editorial review of principal documents and information materials, including reports, status updates, briefing materials, etc.		Ongoing		Kris Long/Core Team
Tracking of Issues, Inquiries and Comments	Review and ensure consistent system for responding to issues, concerns, inquiries from both internal and external audiences	All Audiences	Initial Review Ongoing		Kris Long Core Team
Standardized Definitions, Language, Acronyms	Review and ensure consistent system for continuous capturing and publicizing of standard definitions, language and acronyms, including posting on QuickPlace and on the Web	All Audiences	Initial Review Ongoing		Kris Long Core Team
Prototype Experiences	Increase visibility of Prototype experiences through FPA Web-site, Web-based e-newsletter, meetings, etc.	All Audiences	Ongoing		Kris Long/Prototype Teams
Quarterly Communications Assessment	Assess and evaluate the progress and effectiveness of communications actions in the Communications Strategy Action Plan		2-6-04		Dan Keller
Quarterly Communications Assessment	Assess and evaluate the progress and effectiveness of communications actions in the Communications Strategy Action Plan		5-6-04		Dan Keller

Action Item	Description	Target Audience	Due Date	Date Completed	Responsibility
Quarterly Communications Assessment	Assess and evaluate the progress and effectiveness of communications actions in the Communications Strategy Action Plan		8-6-04		Dan Keller

Appendix II

Fire Program Analysis Core Team Communications Activities Tracking Matrix (Starting November 19, 2003)

Date	Communications Activity	Additional Details	Target Audience*	Contact
11-14-03	Briefing	<i>Location:</i> Seattle, WA <i>Purpose:</i> FPA overview and progress update <i>Additional Information:</i> The group (about 12 people today) was mostly comprised of chief rangers from parks in the region, as well as the regional chief ranger. Overall, the briefing went very well.	User Community • NPS Pacific West Region Ranger Advisory Committee (RAC)	Amanda Kaplan
11-25-03	Steering Committee Meeting	<i>Time:</i> 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. <i>Location:</i> FPA Conf. Rm. <i>Purpose:</i> Progress Update	Fire Management • FPA Steering Committee	John Noneman
12-4-03	Nationwide GACC Meeting Invitation	A letter in invitation was sent to all GEO Area Coordinators for broad distribution with their areas.	All federal wildand firefighting agencies, and State, Tribal and local firefighting agencies	Howard Roose
12-16-03	Steering Committee Meeting	<i>Time:</i> 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. <i>Location:</i> FPA Conf. Rm. <i>Purpose:</i> Progress Update	Fire Management • FPA Steering Committee	John Noneman
1-6-04	Steering committee Meeting	<i>Time:</i> 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. <i>Location:</i> FPA Conf. Rm. <i>Purpose:</i> Progress Update	Fire Management • FPA Steering Committee	John Noneman
1-20-04	Steering committee Meeting	<i>Time:</i> 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. <i>Location:</i> FPA Conf. Rm. <i>Purpose:</i> Progress Update	Fire Management • FPA Steering Committee	John Noneman
2-10-04	Steering committee Meeting	<i>Time:</i> 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. <i>Location:</i> FPA Conf. Rm. <i>Purpose:</i> Progress Update	Fire Management • FPA Steering Committee	John Noneman
2-12-04	Training Course	<i>Time:</i> 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. <i>Presenter:</i> Howard Roose <i>Purpose:</i> Briefing <i>Requested by:</i> Gregory Greenhoe, Deputy Director, Fire, Aviation and Air, Northern Region <i>Phone:</i> 406-329-3296, 406-239-5693 (cell) <i>Additional Information:</i> Gregory wanted someone on project team to provide a general overview of the fire program budgeting and FPA.	User Community • National Fire Management Leadership Course, NARTC	Howard Roose

<p>*Target Audience Categories</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Congressional, Executive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Representatives ii. Interior Appropriations Committee iii. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) iv. General Accounting Office (GAO) b. Fire Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. FPA Steering Committee ii. Fire Directors of the five participating Federal agencies c. FPA User Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Line Officers ii. Fire Planners iii. Fire Operations iv. Budget Officers d. State and Local Officials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Includes State Forestry Agencies e. Research and Academic Communities f. News Media Outlets (Internal and External) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Agency Newsletters and Websites ii. National Fire Magazines
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