Incident Based Automation, IBA, System
Business Process Modeling, Interview
Time Unit Leader
Rocky Mountain Type I Incident Management Team
December 6, 2006

Interview Notes by Craig Tanner, Data Modeling Architect

NOTE: See interviewer questions at bottom based on interview write-up. Answer to be provided for finalization of interview notes.

At an incident, time keeping applies to 5 primary categories:

1. Overhead – Individual people who are not directly involved in fighting the fire, such as middle managers and supervisors—those who typically manage the other categories listed below.
2. Crews – A group of firefighters, typically a crew of 20.
3. Equipment – Typically a contracted firefighting resource. May be such things as engines, water tenders, or contract crews.
4. Supplies – Hard goods.
5. Aircraft – Fixed wing, rotor wing, retardant, and helitack crews.

Question: What things do you do to prepare for an incident?

Answer: In the off-season, we meet as a team to plan our operations and to see if any new requirements or procedures are in place. We also conduct and receive training.

Question: How is the TIME notified about an incident?

Answer: Notified by phone from the dispatch office. The TIME as a member of a type 1 team is typically notified as a regional resource when the local level response teams cannot handle an incident with their local resources.

The dispatch office arranges for travel including mode of travel, times and local transportation to the incident scene.

Question: What is the first thing you do at an incident?

Answer: The TIME typically arrives at the jurisdictional office and attends the in-briefing. During the in briefing, the TIME is told what to expect at the incident, what resources have been order and filled, and the budget. Also told if the jurisdictional agency has any specific limitations on shift-length or on-incident hiring of casual (also called AD) personnel.

The team is also issued a delegation of authority that outlines:

- Objectives
- Constraints on the tactics they can use
- Budget

This is a delegated authority for the incident commander and teams under his or her command to be able to make command decisions on and about the incident. This is the instrument that transfers local authority to the IC.

The finance section (either the Finance Section Chief alone or the entire section) also receives a briefing from the local jurisdictional agency's business management contact at the in-briefing that describes the kinds of contracts that are in place for:

- Land use
- Medical providers
- Grocery stores
- Preferred vendors

This information is often contained in a document (notebook or binder) called a Service and Supply Plan.

Additional information is provided to the finance section about how the jurisdictional agency wants to be notified about accidents, claims from private property owners, and injuries.

Question: What does the team do when they first arrive at the incident camp?

Answer: They have to set up their physical space including tables, chairs, etc., and they get connected to the computer network set up or being set up by the CTSP. Sometimes they are in a trailer or a wall tent, and if lucky, an actual building such as a school.

If the team is transitioning in to an incident and taking over from another team, setup of the physical space is less demanding.

Question: What is the role of the time unit leader after initial setup?

1. Day 1: First team at incident: Every resource who is to record their time must already have been through the check-in process. The initial data entry about an individual is entered by the check-in into ISuite that maintains their status and basic information and is accessible by all the teams on the network.

   When a resource comes to the timekeeper, additional time keeping information is added to the resource record that is necessary. Also, the timekeepers will inform the individual of the parameters that they are under for work constraints.
   For example, FEMA typically limits work shifts to 12 hours while wildland fire incidents typically limit this to 16 hours.

2. If the team is transitioning into an incident (taking over from another team), they will simply pick-up where the other team left off using ISuite. They will usually

still have to wait for the incoming computer technology team to establish the network and computers, but when ISuite is restored on the new configuration, the data from the previous team is used as the starting point.

3. When transitioning into an incident and another type 1 or type 2 team was not there previously (taking over from a type 3 team), there is additional data entry required. This is because there was typically no automation to the timekeeping function with type 3 teams and they must convert the data from hardcopy reports into ISuite. Also, in this kind of situation, there can be many varied paper formats (lack of standards for time reporting for less than type 2 incidents, especially on a non-federal incident).

Question: What is the steady state role after first day?

Answer:

1. The continuation of time entry and tracking for resources.
2. Monitoring:
    a. Monitoring for work/rest guidelines compliance:
        i. Monitoring compliance of work/rest guidelines – typically 1 hour of rest for every 2 hours worked. Max is 16 hours on and 8 hours off. This applies to everybody. (Monitored for fatigue of personnel for safety reasons).
        ii. ISuite will flag this condition using parameters established by TIME.
        iii. If the work/rest guidelines are violated, the timekeeper must notify the person's supervisor in writing (sometimes it's hard to find the supervisor). The supervisor will then document why this violation happened and what they will do to mitigate it.
    b. Monitoring for Hazard Pay or Environmental Differential:
        i. Federal employees can sometimes get hazard pay or environmental differential. They have to document on their time cards what hazard or environment they were exposed to that warrants hazard pay. There are only 4 categories of exposure that warrant hazard pay.
3. Auditing
    a. Spot Monitoring: Comparing paper copies of time cards with the data that has been entered. They do a 100% comparison if they have the resources but do spot monitoring in a less than ideal condition.
4. Commissary Function:
    a. Resources can purchase things at the camp commissary using future pay as recorded on their time cards. This is called a payroll or invoice deduction purchase. This also applies to a category of purchases known as individual emergency commissary purchases (eyeglasses, boots, gloves, etc.)
    b. The Commissary Manager will report to the time keeper this information using the Commissary Deduction Sheet.

5. Close Out:
    a. When individual resources demobilize, they must close out with the timekeeper.
    b. The timekeeper will print out the "Firefighter Time Report" which shows all timekeeper related data that they have recorded, including commissary deductions.
    c. The firefighter will review and will reconcile with the timekeeper if necessary.
    d. The firefighter signs it and the timekeeper signs it. One copy is given to the firefighter to take back to their unit.

Question: What activities are involved in Demobilizing?

Answer:
1. If transitioning to another type 1 or type 2 team, they are shadowed by the timekeeper from the incoming team. At a designated time, they will backup the timekeeping data and ensure that all paper copies of documents are organized and in a known location.
2. If transitioning to a local unit, they must mutually decide on a point where they will stop using automated processes and go to a paper process (when the fire is contained) if the local unit is not going to use ISuite. The local unit (jurisdictional agency) may want the records packaged by the time the timekeeper team leaves.
3. Typically, the finance person from the jurisdictional agency will meet with the timekeeper to review what happened and affirm if the records will be left with the jurisdictional agency.
4. The timekeeper data is given on a CD as a snapshot out of the ISuite database.
5. They will identify the active records (active files) of those people who are still on the fire charging time.
6. They will talk about things that were unique to that fire.
7. The timekeeper does not keep nor travel with any filled out forms or CD's, only empty forms are kept.

<u>Recommendations and Issues</u>:
1) Direct transmittal of Federal Employee's time to their agency's payroll systems. That would eliminate:
    a. the reentering of time by the person's home office;
    b. the printing of summary time reports for the person;
    c. the hand-carrying of their time cards.
2) Efficiency: Home units could issue barcode cards containing standard personal information (name, home unit, jet port, qualifications, etc.) to resources so that the bottleneck at check-in can be reduced. All timekeeping initial functions for a resource must wait until they are checked in. Long lines can sometimes form at the check in.

3) Resource information that is downloaded from the ROSS system is only as accurate as what the resource's home unit dispatcher enters. Sometimes there are discrepancies between spelling of name, home unit, in the ROSS database and the resource's actual information.

Questions:

1. Is there any formal records kept when you meet as a team during the off season, i.e., to plan for operations? If so how and when are those plans referenced and are they only for your team?

Our team has a set of guidelines that is reviewed and refined during the off season. It doesn't contain any information from previous incidents, rather it outlines how the team prefers to operate. They are specific to the Rocky Mountain IMT, though I understand most teams have their own. Command and General Staff are responsible for providing a copy to any incoming personnel filling a team position.

2. Do aircraft pilots get paid by the hour (or is their time bundled and included with the total cost of the aircraft) and go through the standard check-in procedure?

Most aircraft are contract resources, so the pilot's time is transparent to our operation. We don't keep their time in the time unit. They do not come through the check-in, in fact they don't come to the incident base at all, since they are typically located at an airport that can be a considerable distance away.