

DOCTRINE DIALOGUE

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New Unit Formed in Fire and Aviation Management

You may be wondering what has been happening with Doctrine and where are we going with the initiative to establish doctrine as a management tool in the Fire and Aviation Management program? This is the first in a series of short briefing papers intended to address those questions as well as to explore other principle centered management concepts. We will publish regularly throughout the winter to keep you abreast of our progress. This effort will be augmented in the coming year by visits to the regions to provide opportunities for face to face “tailgate” discussions.

First, we would like to introduce ourselves. “We” are Ron Hanks, Larry Sutton, Jim Barnett and Merrie Johnston; the Risk Management and Human Performance team located at NIFC/NAFRE. Working under the leadership of Tom Harbour in W.O. Fire and Aviation Management, our mission is to support the fire management program with emphasis in the areas of doctrine, risk management, human performance, fire and aviation training, accident prevention, and coordination of the NIMO teams. By working closely with fire operations and our cooperating agencies here at NIFC we intend to have a positive effect in growing and enhancing leadership skills, decision making and to “raise the bar” in quality of expected outcomes for a safer environment.

Perhaps even more important is our intent to provide you as a leader, with a highly reliable source of information about doctrine, how it is being accepted and applied, how it affects behavioral change, what is happening in the FS culture, and how we measure the results of our efforts. We have made significant progress through demonstration projects in four regions, the conduct of peer reviews, and completion of several program risk assessments. Future dialogues will discuss these advances.

The message in these papers will be simple, straightforward and honest. As a learning organization we will share the stories coming from the ground up and strive to understand the true nature of bad outcomes without placing blame. We will explain the reasons why having a learning culture is part of having a safety culture, and the steps that need to be taken to achieve that goal.

There is a Spanish proverb that says: “He who does not look ahead stays behind”. Futuring is an important aspect of leadership and we’ll not gain momentum toward tomorrow by dragging past failures along with us. We are prepared to learn, to share, to innovate and to move ahead. Similar principles will be reflected throughout the coming discussions and we hope you value them as much as we do.

Additional information can be found by accessing the website at www.fs.fed.us/fire/doctrine/index.html. Or if you prefer to talk to someone please feel free to call any one of us at 208-387-5607.

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