

NATIONAL INTERAGENCY HOTSHOT CREW STEERING COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes 12-13 December 2007 Reno, NV

National Steering Committee Members Attending:

Rich Dolphin	Chair	Smokey Bear IHC
Randy Anderson	Deputy Chair - BLM Representative	Snake River IHC
Bob Little	Eastern/Southern - GACC Representative	Midewin IHC
Matt Hoggard	Rocky/Basin - GACC Representative	Black Mountain IHC
Mike Beckett	California/Alaska - GACC Representative	Eldorado IHC
Randy Lehman	Northwest/Northern Rockies - GACC Rep	Rouge River IHC
Chris Kirby	NPS Representative	Alpine IHC
Jim Cook	NIFC - USFS Representative (Training)	WO-FS
Kurt La Rue	NIFC - DOI Representative (Operations)	WO-BLM
Terri Marceron	Agency Administrator Representative	USFS-TMU
Bob Gilman	Operations Group Representative	Interagency-Northern Rockies

Committee Advisors/Subject Matter Experts Attending:

Rowdy Muir	IC/AC Advisor (ICT1)	USFS-R4
Jackie Hawley	NIFC - BIA Operations	WO-BIA
Duane Tewa	FUTA/BIA Training	BIA
Aaron Graeser	Scribe/IHC History	Mormon Lake IHC
Jose Lopez	NIICD-NIFC	WO-FS
Jeanne Pincha-Tulley	Type I IC/IFPM	USFS
George Broyles	San Dimas Tech. and Development Center	WO-FS
Larry Sutton	National FS Safety Officer	WO-FS

Note: National IC/AC AAR was convened concurrently with National IHC Steering Committee Meeting

Committee/Issue Updates

- **Crew Typing/Crew Certification - Mike Beckett, Rowdy Muir, All**
 - AC/IC feel that two things need to happen:
 - All IHC crews need to meet standards in IHC Ops Guide
 - There needs to a difference between IHC and Type I
 - Most IC/AC feel if they order Type I they expect IHC and that is not always the case
 - Not all Type I orders are filled with certified IHC
 - Ordering and Operations folks need to know the difference
 - ROSS needs to be updated to reflect new typing recommendation
 - To bring all non-IHC Type I crews up to IHC is not going to happen
 - 13 Certified RHCs are “Hotshot Crews” (meet IHC standards and are dispatched as such)
 - Issue comes down to inmate and non-federal crew certification.
 - What are ramifications down the road Type I v. Type II IA?
 - Dealing with two separate issues IOS typing v. crew performance
 - Differences in GACC and Agency (BLM, BIA,) crew certification process were discussed
 - Briefing paper from IC/AC to NMAC and IOSWT to drop Type III crew typing and go to four crew types-IHC, Type I, Type II IA, and Type II
 - **IHC Steering Committee supports IC/AC recommendation to update crew typing to four crew types-IHC, Type I, Type II IA, and Type II**
- **E-Hell- Helicopter Evacuation – Randy Anderson, Rowdy Muir**
 - Recognized need for e-hell program amongst crews and IMT- safe and effective means of emergency extraction-not the same as short haul
 - Need for training and specialized equipment?

- Aviation operators are scared because of the liability, training and proficiency, lack of SOPs and equipment issues
 - Larry Sutton also working on e-hell program from aviation risk management side. Randy Anderson and Rowdy Muir will attend meeting in February and provide IHC/IMT perspective
 - Input and assistance from IHC community is requested
 - **IHC Steering Committee supports E-Hell program and will provide input from IHC/IMT perspective**
- **NFES- National Fire Equipment System-Matt Hoggard**
 - Matt Hoggard attended meeting in Portland in November
 - NFES requests IHCs fill out and return all surveys from NFES. IHC input is very valuable.
 - Drip torches will be painted red to comply with DOT standards
 - New Nomex/Kevlar mix BDU pants are coming
 - New MRE type packaged meals are being evaluated. About ½ the cost and a little less food
 - NFES appreciated IHC input and representation
- **IMT- Incident Management Team-Rowdy Muir**
 - New Type I IC's
 - Bill Van Bruggen to take Southwest Area Type I IMT
 - Paul Summerfelt to take Rocky Mountain Area Type I IMT
 - Some IMTs want additional IHC input and team evaluations from IHC and will be conducting “exit interviews” with IHC Supts. on incidents
 - Goal of exit interviews is to help IMTs with consistency issues from one IMT to another, not an evaluation of IMT.
 - **Questions will be added to annual IHCs survey at the request of IC/AC on consistency**
- **IFPM-Interagency Fire Program Management- Jeanne Pincha-Tulley**
 - IFPM for IHC-Asst. Supt. listed as secondary administrative position-limits ability of crews to promote in house.
 - 401/IFPM is a mess-differing interpretations of IFPM and educational qualifications
 - USFS has complicated issues by adding 4th tier –FSFPM
 - Deadline of Oct 1st 2009 still a hard target for IFPM compliance
- **Diversity-Bob Little**
 - HCM is pushing diversity
 - Some growing dedicated Type II IA handcrews program for diversity- e.g. Mt. Baker – Snoqualmie Handcrew
 - **IHCs should facilitate diversity in application pools and training cadre**
- **National Operations Group-Rich Dolphin**
 - Rich will attend January meeting in Phoenix at BLM Training Center
 - **Topics: GS 7 Squadleader PD and standardization of certification for IHC**
- **GS-07 Position Description Proposal-Randy Lehman, All**
 - Career-ladder Positions
 - R3/R5 are using open continuous announcement (OCR) for GS-07/08 career ladder Captain/Asst. Supt. Position and only R3/R5 can use OCR as advertised in AVUE
 - ASC will shut down all career-ladder position other than GS-04/05 Senior Firefighter on Jan. 1 to review PD. Recertification to start in March and hopefully release announcement in June.
 - Single series (straight grades) are still available
 - ASC wants open OCR career-ladder for all IHC positions
 - R6 GS-06/07 PD is not being honored and R6 can't fill any Asst. Supt. or Squad Leader positions

- There are crews in USFS and other agencies using different PD's and if we are a national shared resource, why are the PD's not standard?
 - **GS-07 Position Description**
 - R3 AAR briefing paper supporting standard GS-07 PD
 - Crews in R3 are waiting for national success to latch-on to GS-07 PD
 - ASC is aware of all the issues-OCR, GS-07 PD's, career-ladder positions and national standard PD
 - We need to ask for resolution on these issues. There is support for these issues and national directors, regional folks and line officers need to push this
 - **Why this is an issue?**
 - At current rate, there will be IHC and other crews using crew structure, which will be unable to field crews.
 - Affects more than just IHC-ramifications for helitack, engine program etc. –Folks will divert from the IHC to get career-ladder positions
 - Problems will continue exponentially
 - **IHC Steering Committee will develop briefing paper including request for GS-07 upgrade, OCR for all IHC positions, career ladder positions with OCR for all IHC PD's and recommend standard PD.**
- **Radio Program Update-Jose Lopez, National Interagency Incident Communication Division (NIICD)**
 - Please see [“Intra-Crew Communications Plan 2008”](#) power point presentation included and available from NIICD
 - Hotshot Radio Maintenance Program
 - NIICD has been authorized to provide service to all IHC radios needing repair/maintenance.
 - No cost to home unit, NIICD provides all parts and service free of charge
 - No mobile radios-handhelds only
 - 2-2.5 week turn around on radios
 - Repairs are logged and catalogued for ongoing problems
 - Contact: Kim McCutchan, NIICD at 208-387-5858 for information
 - Very good feedback from crews using program-quick, clean and free
 - Radio Training available, on site for crews if needed.
- **IHC Operation Guide/Standards – Rich Dolphin, Kurt La Rue, All**
 - Most updates are to bring Ops Guide up to date, not too many material changes some formatting changes to appendix and forms for ease of use
 - Updated IHC Ops. Guide to be resigned by agency fire directors
 - Name changed to *Standard for Interagency Hotshot Crew Operations*.
 - Training requirement changes:
 - 2008 Temporary Position Announcements will serve as Work Capacity Test notification
 - “Critical Training” changed to “Operational Preparedness Training”
 - Minimum training hours changed from 24 to 40 hrs, inclusive of required Agency specific Fire refreshers and training. Does not include Agency specific administrative requirements.
 - Topics and time allocations for training to be updated and specific format left to Superintendent discretion
 - Specific courses as list in 2001 IHC Ops Guide will be removed, topics i.e. “Firefighter Safety” will be left with time frame and objective recommendation.
 - IHC Certification/Decertification (Appendix C) check listed will be updated
 - IHC Operational Review/Mobilization Checklist (Appendix D) will be updated for ease of use.
 - **IHC Steering Committee will review the draft and provide feedback or changes prior to final signatures. Review to be completed by 30 Jan 2008 and forwarded to Kurt for start of approval process and website update by ~~4 Feb 2008~~ 29 Feb 2008.**

- **IHC Operations Guide Appendix A (Training) Rewrite-Mike Beckett, Jim Cook, Jackie Hawley**
 - **Draft, review and revise training plan for Ops. Guide and forward to IHC Steering Committee members for review and inclusion in IHC Ops Guide**

- **IHC Incident Evaluation Form-Duane Tewa**
 - 2007 Test run, better form for evaluating what IHCs do on the line
 - Voluntary form to be used to evaluate IHCs
 - **IHC Steering Committee will write a letter showing IHC support for use of form and BIA will initiate/gain approval for use of form across agencies and IMT**

- **IHC History Project-Aaron Graeser**
 - Dave Prevencio still collecting Individual Crew Histories
 - Current IHC members are needed and wanted to help
 - IHC History Project Proposal Outline
 - All aspects of IHC History need to be accessible and web-based
 - 3 part comprehensive IHC History
 - Individual Crew Histories
 - General narrative history of IHC from CCC era to now
 - Oral history forum (NPR storyboard model)
 - Specialized experience (history background) help is needed from anyone who is interested
 - Subject Matter Experts are out there and interested in helping the community
 - Chris Kirby has agreed to help with project
 - Aaron Graeser will send out updated spread sheet of individual crews and IHC History Project Proposal
 - **IHC Steering Committee supports proposal and regional representatives will take it back to regions and gather support from respective crews.**

- **San Dimas Technology Development Center-George Broyles**
 - Crew Production Rates Project
 - Rates for all crew types will be evaluated (IHC, Type I, Type II, etc.. agency v. contract)
 - Biggest challenge is hand line production-IHC help is needed to evaluate
 - Crew Production Results
 - VERY TENTATIVE!
 - Grass FM- lower than current charts
 - Brush FM- higher than current charts
 - Timber FM- higher in some, lower in some
 - IHC and agency crew higher production than contract crews
 - Upcoming/Ongoing projects
 - Dozer production rate study
 - Hydration study
 - Equipment burn-over test
 - Nomex shirt field testing
 - Boot study

- **Fire Operations Risk Management Update-Larry Sutton**
 - **Please see Larry Suttons' [Power Point presentation included](#)**
 - Reviewed 2007 Safety Gram data-four leading causes of death/injury are aircraft, vehicle accidents, heart attacks and burnovers
 - Driving fatalities are up over the past 8 years
 - Common denominator in burnovers-unexpected fire behavior or movement
 - Recommendations for continued safety:
 - Reduce driving exposure
 - Seat belt use enforcement
 - Consistent and proper PPE use

- Maintain quality health and fitness programs
 - Emphasis entrapment avoidance
 - Operation Risk Assessment
 - Engage IMT in truly safe operations
 - IHC folks need to get involved in all levels of accident investigations and reviews
 - New surface model in the works
 - Safety zone size and location study to start, factoring in complex terrain and radiant heat
- **IHC Operations Standard-IHC Steering Committee Representation-All**
 - Goal to have better representation of whole IHC community and better communication among the regions
 - Southern/Eastern, Pacific Northwest and Northern Rockies Areas to have separate representation- Bob Little, Midewin IHC, will serve as Southern/Eastern representative.
 - Total of 13 members on the National IHC Steering Committee
 - New committee make up below:

Three IHC Superintendents representing the below Department of Interior agencies.

 - One representing BLM.
 - One representing BIA.
 - One representing NPS.

Six GACC IHC Superintendent Representatives (FS or DOI) selected by the IHC Superintendents in these Geographic Areas:

 - One representing the Northern Rockies Geographic Area.**
 - One representing Pacific Northwest Geographic Areas.
 - One representing the Great Basin and Rocky Mountain Geographic Areas;
 - One representing the California Geographic Area;
 - One representing the Southwest Geographic Area;
 - One representing Eastern and Southern Geographic Areas.**
- **National IHC Workshop/Conference-All**
 - Regional Workshops are not really workshops, more like conference or “get togethers” for updates. Working part is the Superintendents’ AAR
 - Possible model is USMC Russell Conference-Issues from national directors for IHC community to work on.
 - **Regional Representatives will take issue back to respective crews and determine interest and scope**
- **National IHC Website-Rich Dolphin**
 - Crews need to update their contact info and keep it current annually.
 - **Rich will send message out to canvass for someone to coordinate website updates**
- **Future National IHC Steering Committee Meetings-All**
 - Value to co-meeting concurrently with AC/IC meeting or some other national fire community meeting.
 - Fall or early winter meeting is best for moving issues forward
 - Request for regional Supts. AARs to happen prior to National IHC Steering Committee Meeting.

Please refer to PowerPoint presentations for additional information.