



National Interagency Hotshot Crew Steering Committee

2004 National IHC Steering Committee

MEETING NOTES San Diego, CA February 3rd & 4th

ATTENDEES:

Name:	Representing	email address
Dennis W. Baldrige	USFS Regions 5/10 IHC's (Chair)	dbaldrige@fs.fed.us
Shane Greer	USFS Regions 2/4 IHC's	sgreer01@fs.fed.us
Paul Musser	USFS Regions 3/8/9 IHC's (outgoing)	pmusser@fs.fed.us
Rich Dolphin	USFS Regions 3/8/9 IHC's (incoming)	rdolphin@fs.fed.us
Steve Karkanen	USFS Regions 1/6 IHC's (outgoing)	skarkanen@fs.fed.us
Marshall Brown	USFS Regions 1/6 IHC's (incoming)	mbrown@fs.fed.us
Brit Rosso	NPS IHC's	Brit_Rosso@NPS.gov
Shane McDonald	BLM IHC's	Shane_McDonald@nv.blm.gov
Lyle St. Goddard	BIA IHC's	chmntnhs@3rivers.net
Jim Cook	NIFC-USFS	jrcook@fs.fed.us
Kurt LaRue	NIFC-DOI	KLaRue@BLM.gov
Bruce Greco	Agency Administrator (outgoing)	bfgreco@fs.fed.us
Terri Marceron	Agency Administrator (incoming)	tmarceron@fs.fed.us
Greg Greenhoe	Fire Operations	ggreenhoe@fs.fed.us
Alice Forbes	National Operations	aliceforbes@fs.fed.us
Don Sand	Smokejumpers	dsand@fs.fed.us
Fred Schoeffler	Invited guest	fschoeffler@fs.fed.us
Erica Lanier	Note taker	elanier@fs.fed.us
Ashley Truett	Note taker	atruett@fs.fed.us

The next IHCS meeting will be co-located with the Smokejumper Base Manager's meeting in the Pacific Northwest in December, 2004. The specific location and dates to be determined. Don Sands will notify IHC chair to coordinate.

February 3rd, 2004

Introductions were made and the agenda passed out. The chair discussed the need to amend the charter for the steering committee to allow for tenure longer than 4 years at the discretion of the groups sending representatives. The concern is that if we are held to the current charter language all the IHC representatives would be leaving at the same time. The chair also expressed the need to select a new chair as his 2-year tenure is up. The goals are to elect the new chair and co-chair (vice Carl Crawford who left the IHC organization) by the end of the meeting.

Each Rep was asked to give a quick summary using the draft crew survey that was sent out during the fire season. They were also asked to bring forward any new concerns. Would list the concerns and discuss in depth later.

UPDATES AND ISSUES

Northern Rockies/Pacific Northwest

- Funding additional positions on the crews.
- New NWCG Guidelines for work/rest and length of assignment look good.
- 4 Superintendents retiring in next 5 years.

Rocky Mountain/Great Basin

- Russ Long is the new Chair for their IHC's.
- 3 co-chairs added to help out.

BLM

- Funding is an issue.
- Narrow banding of radios is a concern.

Southwest/Southern

- 3 Superintendents retiring.

California/Alaska

- Operations Guide update/revision.
- Re-certification/De-certification.
- Critical Training hours.
- ROSS problems.
- Work rest concerns with last year/new guidelines much better.
- 401 series implementation and effects.
- Hotshot history book update.
- Digital radio testing information.

BIA

- Funding cuts.
- Hiring more folks on crews with 22-23 for crew size.
- Digital radio testing/need more training.
- CDF-safety zones not big enough.

- New crews starting up (Type II until they see if they can maintain crew) with goal of being Type I IHC's.
- Start up of scholarship in honor of Rick Lupe.

Jim Cook

- Staff rides-discussed the nuts and bolts of staff rides. The web site is up and running and the Loop Fire is completed. Many others are in process.
- Paul Gleason Award is on track. Need representative from this committee to be a part of the selection panel.
- Need to look at location of these national meetings. Strategically locate meetings near developed staff rides to get the most out of them.
- Cramer Incident/simulations for ICT3. Explained the process and deadline.

Don Sand

- Funding cuts.
- Looking at extending appointments.
- Nationally 2 new base managers.
- Evaluating new canopies/attempt to have same canopy for all jumpers.
- Position descriptions are updated yearly.
- More jumpers nationally.

Bruce Greco

- Crew carriers-breakdowns, replacement.
- Fire shelters-old style vs. New, procurement and exchange.
- Fatigue-long term from non-stop fire seasons.

Steve Karkanen

- The chair asked Steve to bring the group up to speed on outside proposal for corporate sponsorship for Hotshots. Steve was contacted and passed this on to the Washington Office. It was a group with an idea and not sure how to go about it and they are now in touch with the appropriate folks in the WO. Heads up to any other crew that might be approached.

Alice Forbes

- Updated us on NWCG—Biggest issue was the Work/Rest policy and Length of Assignment Policy. Two agencies were opposed at the start and still have concerns with potential abuses with rest and pay status. Also concerns with the 2 days off after 14. Business Management folks and fire managers will be monitoring the use of these policies closely.
- AD pay plan is approved now except for AD5 level not yet approved.
- Business management handbook is available.
- Hiring of non 18 year olds is still an issue but not illegal. Not legal for FS.
- Fireline handbook—received very few comments—2004 version available April 1.
- Equivalency standards.
- Preparing Standard of Conduct for out of country assignments for crossover from US to New Zealand, Canada and Australia being finalized.
- Huge concern about lack of applicants for the 520/620 courses.

- Concern about moving into 401 series. Has been approved and moving towards implementation. How many superintendents and assistant superintendents/captains qualify and what do they need to qualify? Convert to 401 or take classes to qualify. If can't or don't want to convert can stay in place but can't promote.
- Narrow band testing of radios to continue, however, all kits from NICC will have analog radios only.

OLD BUSINESS OR CONTINUING BUSINESS

IHC Ops Guide

- Proposal to increase minimum critical training from 40 to 80 hours.
 - Committee voted to stick with the 40-hour minimum.
- Appendix B.
 - Committee agreed to update course numbers and titles.
- Appendix C.
 - Committee agreed to updates to clarify process of certification and de-certification.
- Committee Charter.
 - Updated to allow extensions of 4 years for members and 2 years as chair to ensure continuity. Currently an issue as most members started at the same time.

National Food Contract

- Major changes coming up. Will get web site listing for how to access this contract on line to see what has been change. All the input that was collected the last couple of years was passed on from Jan to the new person. Differing opinions on how much of this information was used in changes made to the contract.

Crew Typing

- No changes from last year.

Fireline Leadership

- On track. L-380 being used at the National Apprenticeship Academies this year. Reminders to supervisors that L-180 and L-280 are available for us to use for newer firefighters.

Hazard pay for cutting hazard trees

- Contacted several places to try to build up data in support of this issue. No consolidated data base could be found. With new SHIPS program we might possibly be able to build up the statistics to help with this. Another option may be to ask Department of Labor to classify tree falling as a hazardous duty occupation. Need some input from the hotshot community and their contacts to see if we should still pursue this issue.

PT Training Manual

- Steve Karkanen gave quick update. Proposal has been written up and passed on to Safety and Health Working Team. They liked the proposal and Steve will get us updated information for the newsletter.

GS-7 Squad Leader

- No progress in FS ranks.
- DOI is using them with an approved PD. This is based on Supt., Asst. Supt., and 3 squad leaders.
- R6 is still trying to push this through.
- Will support the Regional groups trying to get this position graded as a GS-7.

Work/Rest and Length of Assignment

- Much work went into this with input from all the Regional Hotshot groups and jumpers. The chair was a representative on the NWCG team tasked with revising this policy. What was used for 2003 was difficult to work with and didn't document compliance or mitigations. We were all asked to work with it through the season and give input for final revisions. Team again met in December to process all the input and prepare final revision. Final version is out and appears to be simpler and more flexible.
- No plan to revise again and we will see how it works this year.

Paul Gleason Award

- Cadre to make selection for this award
- Need to select steering committee member to sit on cadre.
 - Individual will be committed for 2 to 3 days in January of 2005

Committee Representation

- Issue last year was to get representation on or steering committee contact to various committees and working groups to allow Hotshot input into decisions being made.
- Brit Rosso to update this list and provide to Jim Cook to be attached to newsletter.

Crew Frequencies

- Did not resurface as a major issue. Most crews were able to work through this with the incident radio folks.

Digital Radios

- Testing went on during 2003 season with mixed results.
- Testing will continue during 2004 with additional help from radio folks. Same number of crews will be involved in the testing. Problems that were identified are being worked out in the next batch.
- Alice will ask Steve Jenkins to give us updated information.

Crew Surveys

- Last year expressed a need to have a standard form for collecting information to pass on our accomplishments. Sent out a draft form for review during the season and could not get agreement on what to use. Chair made a decision to use draft form and revise at this meeting. Chair will continue collecting these forms through February 15th.

National IHC Workshop

- Discussed a National workshop. Alice said she would take our proposal forward and request for dollars to support the workshop but we would need a strong agenda and have to be able to describe what we planned to accomplish in order to gain support for funding.

- After much discussion steering committee agreed that we did not have enough issues that supported the need for a national workshop. Will revisit at next meeting in December.

ISSUES FOR 2004

- Select new chair (vice Baldrige) and deputy chair (vice Crawford).
 - Shane Greer and Marshall Brown selected.
- Procurement Committee/Fire Replacement Committee—track this down to see who is doing this and for what reason and see if we need to get on it.
 - Kurt La Rue to give Shane McDonald the contact for this.
- Business Practices/Radical Change meeting—give direction to our reps that are attending the upcoming meeting.
 - Superintendents attending are Shane McDonald and Fred Schoeffler.
- Update Ops Guide. Minor changes to fix typos, old course numbers, clarification of cert/de-cert, and committee charter.
 - Kurt La Rue to make the changes, committee to review, gives to Jim Cook to place on web site.
- Revise crew survey. Do this at committee level and use for upcoming season so that all crews providing same information. Does not override anything required at home unit.
- Select Steering Committee member to be on Paul Gleason Award Cadre.
 - Rich Dolphin selected.
- Hotshot history update.
 - Shane Greer to get link established with National Steering Committee.
- Arrange to have IHC Superintendent attend National Apprenticeship Meeting at McClellan.
 - Rick Cowell from Tahoe IHC attended.
- Long line extraction. Had a couple of near misses with injuries in remote areas and difficulty in getting the injured person out. Proposal to have Helitack folks trained in long line extraction.
 - Shane McDonald to give Dennis Baldrige proposal to present to National IC/AC group to enlist their support.
 - Issue letter of support to Helitack folks from the National IHC Steering Committee.
- Update National IHC contact list.
 - Send updates to Dennis Baldrige and he will work with Tammy Denney to get the corrections made.
- Give individual assignments to write up information for the National IHC Newsletter.
 - Write-ups to Jim Cook by April 1st.

- Staff Rides. Encourage each Region to look at potential for developing a staff ride or rides in their geographic areas.
 - Newsletter will list the staff rides that are done or under development.

Meeting Adjourned at 1600 on February 4th, 2004

Dennis W. Baldrige
Outgoing Chair, National IHC Steering Committee