



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

NWCG Briefing Paper

10/31/2022

TO: National Interagency Aviation Committee (NIAC)
FROM: Interagency Fire Unmanned Aircraft Systems Subcommittee (IFUASS)
SUBJECT: **Aerial Ignition Chapter Addition to PMS-515**

Background

PMS-515 Standards for Fire Unmanned Aircraft Systems Operations does not have language or information for the UAS Aerial Ignition (Ai) position. Some information does exist in the *PMS-501 Standards for Aerial Ignition*. Coordinating with the Interagency Aerial Ignition Unit, it was decided that all UAS Ai information would be contained in the PMS-515 with a link included in the PMS-501.

The IFUASS Qualification and Curriculum Board (QCB) developed the new UAS Ai chapter utilizing SME's from all agencies represented in IFUASS. IFUASS voting members have unanimously approved the new chapter with the exception of one sentence pertaining to a qualification requirement for a UAS Ai pilot:

UAS Aerial Ignition Training and Qualification:
Qualified Single Resource Boss (NWCG) (Currency Not Required)

Currently the BLM and NASF do not support this specific proposed language. IFUASS and QCB have had multiple meetings to discuss this topic. Before sending this topic to NIAC it was requested that QCB complete a comprehensive review of the proposed requirement and address the BLM's concerns for not supporting the above requirement. QCB has discussed and addressed all the BLM and NASF's concerns, looked at alternatives, and have provided an indepth itemization that leads to the rationale for the need to have UAS Ai pilots qualified as a Single Resource Boss (SRB). QCB unanimously continues to recommend the proposed requirement of SRB. QCB believes the SRB requirement is a safety issue for our UASPs, firefighting personnel on the fireline, as well as aviators operating in the Fire Traffic Area.

Recommendation

IFUASS members recognize the BLM and NASF's position, however all other members support the SRB requirement for a UASP Ai to operate on wildland fires. After multiple meetings and discussions on this topic, IFUASS has come to an impasse and is sending the recommendation for SRB for UAS Ai, included in the new chapter, without the BLM or NASF's support for discussion and approval by NIAC. IFUASS recommends that each NIAC member discuss this topic with their respective IFUASS and QCB members prior to an overall NIAC discussion. IFUASS requests that NIAC provide IFUASS with direction on the proposed language and overall approval of the new PMS-515 UAS Ai chapter. IFUASS requests a response from NIAC by 11/11/2022 because this new chapter directly affects candidate selection for the upcoming Ai academies,

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NIAC Decision

Approved: **MICHAEL
REID**

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NIAC - Vice Chair