

NWCG Fire Shelter and PPE Subcommittee

Meeting Notes

0900-1100 Mountain, October 28, 2021

Notes from May call are [posted here](#).

Welcome and Introductions

- David Maclay-Schulte (vice Petrilli position)
- Jay Tarley, new Advisory member from NIOSH and Chair of NFPA 1977
- Skylar Brown, detailed NTDP Equip. Specialist behind Godot (Godot is detailed into Portfolio Mgr. position).

Action Item Status:

- **ACTION ITEM, Alternate Helmets:** Godot provided a list of approved helmets and will define feedback criteria. There are 2 commercially available helmets that meet NFPA 1977 specs, and 1 that meets ANSI specs (only BLM can purchase). BIA plans to test provide crew input throughout the season, other agencies can as well. FSPPEs may submit NWCG budget request for helmet trails.
- **ACTION ITEM, PPE Feedback Process:** Bill Yohn and NTDP to link ETC input form on our webpage and include PPE. Bill will discuss with ETC and draft a briefing paper and instructions regarding where to submit ideas from the field, link location, etc. Contact Bill with any specific ideas for input from the field.

NWCG News (Tim Blake): none, T. Blake unavailable.

[2021 Fire Shelter Deployment Stats](#) (David Maclay-Schulte): 1 shelter deployment on Antelope Fire, used as a heat shield. No others reported.

Fire Shelter Updates (David Maclay-Schulte):

- Manufacturing improvements shown via PowerPoint. Changed end seam direction and achieved a small amount of weight saving.
- Possible material tolerance concern identified:
 - Fluorine and phosphorus tested too high in recent materials test, concern about off-gassing inside the shelter. Unsure what is causing this (different materials, sources, or testing flaws).
 - Older materials were tested and within spec, so this is a new problem.
 - Toxicity thermal testing to be done at University of Alberta, Canada. Testing results to be evaluated by toxicologist, certified industrial hygienist, and a chemist. This will provide new recommendations.
 - Current production paused, will not be producing additional fire shelters.
 - Have adequate stockpile of shelters for use. No action recommended at this time.
- Pre-2006 Shelters
 - Review of 2020 shelter deployments revealed more delamination to shelters manufactured prior to 2006 (anecdotal evidence).
 - Change of suppliers after Jan 1, 2006 led to better product.

- Recommendation may be to discontinue use of shelters manufactured prior to Jan 1, 2006.
- Discussed supply chain issues and whether we have capacity to replace all pre-2006 shelters. Don't know how many pre-2006 shelters are still in service- very few are in the caches, but likely have a lot more in use. Could create supply "pinch points" before we're able to resume production on new shelters.
- Fire shelters need to be readily available.

ACTION ITEM: Develop an equipment alert to discontinue use of pre Jan 1, 2006 manufactured shelters. Dave will work with Matt Cnudde to develop an alert and a cache memo. Draft to be prepared within a month and shared back to the committee. Possible release in Jan, 2022.

Boot Stipend Memo & NWCG Boot Standard:

- A couple of Agency Boot Stipend Memos reference the "NWCG Boot Standard" which is a 10-yr. document that was never "published" and isn't posted anywhere.
- Recommendation is to reference the Red Book in future policy memos.
- NTDP will continue their boot research project (paused while Godot is on detail) to look at what people are wearing in the field. Questionnaire to come out to firefighter regarding footwear.

Ongoing Project Updates:

- [Respirator](#): "Wildland Respirator" Need to keep an eye on all news regarding wildland respirators use/requirements.
- Clothing:
 - New fire shirt will be phased into the system. Women's firefighter pants may be available in April 2022. To be available in DLA, not yet a cache item.
 - NIOSH's Toxin study continuing. They have shirts, now looking for pants.

Next Call: January 27th 0900-1100 Mtn.