



Interagency Helicopter Operations Subcommittee

IHOW Meeting Minutes — March 13-14, 2019

Boise, ID

Attendees:

IHOPs Members and Advisors
Dan Boyle (Chair) – State
Matt Shaddle (Co-Chair) – OAS
Bryan Bitting – BLM
Bill Sloan – USFS
John Mason – FWS
Don Campbell – USFS
Dave Underwood – BIA
John Waddell – OAS - By Phone for ALSE

Guests/Presenters	
Eric Scholl	John Buehler
Cameron Dingman	Nicole Oke
Joe Rogan	Annie Benoit
Patrick Kenny	Josh Haney
Gil Dustin	Joel Kerley
Jay Lusher – By Phone	Brad Gibbs
Tim Blake	Eric Shambora
Krysta Shultz	Jimmy Keyes
Jesse Bender	Susie Bates
Sean Cross	Kristin Swoboda

March 13, 2019

Topic: Review of Pending Tasks – Dan Boyle

Discussion

- ✈ IHOPS PowerPoint presentation development for information sharing and meeting updates – the group is unaware of the documents location and it should stay as a Pending Task
- ✈ Scanning of Historic IHOPs documents – discussed as an ongoing effort
- ✈ A-110 Review Prior to Publication – Pending
 - Group agreed a training representative to IHOPs is needed and the topic would be brought up during NWCG/NIAC/Training presentation on 3/14
- ✈ iPad Load Calc App Update – No movement and difficult to find someone to create the update. Group agreed to keep as a pending task
- ✈ LE Short-Haul Handbook/CAMP MOU – Pending
- ✈ IHOG Timing/Release and Ongoing Document Revision Rather than 3 year updates
 - E. Scholl – Proposed modifying the IHOG revision schedule to an annual or even continual process in the future. Feels the process could be developed to shorten the update timelines. Much of the info w/in the document could be removed and/or modified to link to other documents (example ALSE, HEB1/2 change)
 - D. Underwood – concerned about turning the IHOG away from a “one stop shop” into a document that sends users to multiple parent documents. More difficult for in the field users
 - D. Boyle – Expressed concern of the sustainability of a continual update schedule and acknowledged the potential loss of personnel familiar w/ the process could cause problems



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- D. Underwood – Vetting process needs to be taken into consideration to remove the possibility of improper updates
- B. Sloan – Concerned with constant interim changes rather than reissuance of a document on a set schedule
- E. Scholl – will provide an update on current proposals latter in the afternoon as part of the IHOG presentation
- Group – Supports an accelerated update schedule on an initial 2 year interval
- ✈️ AIU Coordinating with the Fuels program – Complete
- ✈️ RM Workbook updates – Defer until E. Shambora presentation
- ✈️ Safety Alert on inadvertent hook release – Pending
- ✈️ Historic IHOG versions into electronic format
 - No historical library of all IHOG Versions
 - Scanning the documents is time consuming and run into 508 compliance issues
 - IHOG Unit requests support from IHOPs during NWCG/Publication presentation if IHOPs would like this to happen
- ✈️ Combined Short-Haul Unit- Complete
- ✈️ Helibase Manager updates in IHOG – Complete
- ✈️ 134 gal Blivet Cache proposal – Pending
 - D. Campbell had info from cache but needed recommendation of how many IHOPs thought the cache system should carry.
 - Group agreed on a target # of 200 to replace 72 gal blivets as they are removed from service
- ✈️ T3 Remote Hook modifications to remove chance of inadvertent release of loads
 - Hook manufactures canvased @ HAI. None currently available, but they could be produced
 - Group had concerns over the cost, need, change management process
 - Topic Tabled until next meeting
- ✈️ Fire Extinguisher recommendations – Complete
- ✈️ Helibase Complexity Analysis – Complete, will stay in the IHOG through at least the next revision cycle
- ✈️ Safety Circle modifications – Need to follow-up
- ✈️ Interagency Rappel Guide – Complete, guide no longer exists but the group remains
- ✈️ Short-Haul group – Complete
- ✈️ Ignis M600 recommendation for approval – Pending
- ✈️ NIAC Retyping of Helicopters – Group agrees to adopt FS definitions, but additional clarification needed prior to recommending to NIAC, including a list of references this will impact. - Ongoing



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Topic: IHOG Unit – Eric Scholl and Patrick Kenny

Discussion

- ✈ Currently working through 508 compliance for 2019 version. Approximately 6 weeks behind due to furlough.
- ✈ IHOPS agreed to a deadline for “publishing” the IHOG of May 15th. Product must be to NWCG for final edits/508 compliance 1 month prior to publication deadline. If the end product can not be available to the field by May 15th the group agrees to push publication to the fall.
- ✈ 2019 version currently contains limited operational related changes
- ✈ D.Boyle – NWCG currently working on Incident Position Descriptions (IPDs) which would impact the IHOG and potentially remove those position responsibilities from the guide. Group agreed NWCG IPDs should not hold up the publishing of the IHOG
- ✈ D. Underwood – concerned NWCG IPDs do not include resource positions. E. Scholl – resource rolls would be maintained in IHOG
- ✈ B. Bitting – Concerns of potential continual updates to the IHOG through the field season and recommended a single issuance each season.

Task

- ✈ E. Scholl – will send all current update proposals to the group for review.

Topic: Fixed Weight Reduction - Bill Sloan

Discussion

- ✈ Interagency Helicopter Screening and Evaluation Subcommittee (IHSES) Task issued by NIAC
- ✈ Previous math model obsolete and newer aircraft are disproportionately “penalized”
- ✈ The fixed weight reduction was intended to cover performance degradation and calculation discrepancies
- ✈ Multiple methods were reviewed by the IHSES and the recommendation of a standard weight reduction of 100 lbs for T3 and 200 lbs for T2 aircraft was proposed
- ✈ NIAC approved a limited scale implementation as a test program for 2019.
- ✈ Test programs have been notified of testing procedures and data capture needed for validation

Topic: ALSE – John Waddell by phone

Discussion

- ✈ ALSE handbook remains the same but secondary restraint will most likely need to be addressed. Probably by the end of the season. NIAC memorandum 18-12 requested additional equipment be approved and the standards within the new guide will need to be modified to meet new ALSE standards



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- Helmet Standards – from HAI discussions, its likely multiple vendors will be testing their equipment w/in the next 6-9 months to become certified
- Grace period for non-certified/previously approved helmets expires in April of 2020
- Likely all vendors will test shortly
- P. Kenny – Showed an example of a tether, decent device, carabineer and harness currently utilized by multiple BLM programs w/in the Great Basin. Entire set-up approximately \$500-\$600, and utilized for STEP and cargo let-down operations

Topic: Bureau/Agency Updates – IHOPs Members

Discussion

- BIA – Dave Underwood
 - For 2019 – 8 EU helicopters (7 A-star B3s and 1 Bell 206 L), 1st aircraft starts in NM
 - Mike Amacarillo retiring in December or January. Deciding on replacement position requirements
- OAS – Matt Shaddle
 - Year-end report in process of final revisions and should be out soon
 - Minnesota ACE coming up in April and Vancouver was well attended.
 - Tech Services busy carding pilots/aircraft and assisting with TEPCs
- FWS – John Mason
 - 1 EU contract for 150 days
 - Contract solicitation out for Pilot and support personnel to staff FWS aircraft
 - AV Tech directory incorrect for FWS and John will update
- USFS – Don Campbell
 - Current CWN contract ends 4/30/19. Solicitation is in DC awaiting approval and the CO has extended the current contract
 - Will have 28 EU Large Fire Support (T1) helicopters on contract this year and the solicitation for the next cycle (2020 – 2023) should go out in June
 - 34 T2s and 64 T3s on EU contract for 2019
 - Short-Haul Boost system for all operations by 2020.
 - Rappel Program will be utilizing new gear and equipment this year
 - Vacancies/Filled Positions
 - Aircraft Coordinator Vacant – Detailer in place and hope to fly/fill while they are in place
 - Short-Haul Specialist position will change to the Assistant Helicopter Specialist - Detailer in place and hope to fly/fill while they are in place
 - Airtanker Program Manager - Detailer in place and hope to fly/fill while they are in place
 - Sheila Valentine's position has been filled by a direct reassignment



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✈️ BLM – Bryan Bitting

- T3 contracts working through the final stages of the TPEC process and will be awarded shortly – 5 contracts
- Lakeview T2 has been awarded to Heli-Express
- NAFA 1 and 2 is now being required for both Primary and Relief pilots on new contracts
- Blackhawk program was successful in FY18
 - Working with Customs and Boarder Protection regarding possible Fast Rope training in 2019.
- 3 programs currently STEP qualified (Salt Lake, Las Vegas and Elko). Possibility of Moab and Ely in the coming year(s).
- Rusty Warbis retiring soon with no replacement as of yet identified

✈️ States – Dan Boyle

- WADNR – Will staff 7 aircraft in 2019 (3 on the West side of the state and 4 on the East)
 - 1 of which in Wenatchee will be staffed by DNR but is owned by the local Sheriff's Department
- 6-8 EU Fire Bosses (1 shared w/ BIA @ Deer Park) on contract
- In 2018 contracted four T1 helicopters through a state CWN contract
- Dan's role w/in WADNR changing to Aviation Property Management. He will see the 2018 Fire Boss accident investigation through to the end and will remain on IHOPs. Aircraft Coordination responsibilities will move to DNR Chief Pilot for 2019.

Topic: Aerial Ignition – Gil Dustin and Jay Lusher by phone

Discussion

J. Lusher – Interagency Aerial Ignition Unit

✈️ Aerial Ignition Equipment Updates:

- Possible Sling Dragon Evaluation in 2019
- Long Line PSD Machine Evaluation request possible
- GPS Red Dragon
- Contract for SEI Spheres cancelled due to quality issues
- Mark V no longer available for purchase – Draft Letters for NIAC and IHOPs issuance not yet issued.
- D. Campbell will have to check w/ Scott Frye regarding future maintenance options for the Mark V

✈️ NWCG Standards for Aerial Ignition updated in 2018 and potential upcoming updates are minimal

✈️ In April the chair will change to Scott Frye



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G. Dustin – UAS Update

- 2018 Ignis 600 testing went well, up to 150 balls and 45 min duration
- Equipment capabilities are present but currently no qualified individuals, training plan, position requirements, Risk Management process, etc. NIAC tasked the Interagency UAS Subcommittee to develop an operating plan. A working group will be meeting for 2 weeks in Grand Junction to develop. Fuels Management Committee, NTDP and Aerial Ignition Unit will continue to participate.
- IHOPs recommends UAS operations approvals not be routed through IHOPs for approval
- Discussion regarding the operational environment UAS and helicopters share and need for communication w/ vendor pilots regarding UAS operations. B. Sloan requested a briefing paper which could be shared with vendors for educational purposes while carding. D. Campbell recommended incorporation into a 6 Minutes for Safety Topic
- Purple segmented UAS Launch and Recovery Zone segmented circle has been developed and is available to GIS for incident mapping purposes

Task

- G. Dustin – production of a briefing paper for UAS information sharing with vendor pilots.

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Topic: NWCG – Tim Blake, Krysta Shultz, Jesse Bender, Sean Cross, Nicole Oke, Annie Benoit and Josh Haney

Discussion

- Tim Blake – Group Coordinator
 - Introduced NWCG personnel listed above
 - Introduced Fire Net as an internal working process/web program available for collaboration
 - Reviewed NWCG website and pointed out the Communication Guidance section as a good way to decide what forms for groups to utilize
- Nicole Oke – NWCG Training Liaison for IHOPs
 - Reviewed Incident Position Descriptions (IPDs) and their location on the NWCG website (Toolbox/Systems Improvements)
 - Currently in the process of developing these IPDs
 - Pulling them from standards and documents such as the IHOG
 - Intended to set position expectations and provide a solid foundation on what is trained
 - Only apply to 310-1 positions



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- NIAC and IHOPs will be tasked to complete Helicopter related IPDs, with an unknown target completion date
- Process for future modifications to IPDs not yet determined, but the IPD website will have an opportunity for people to make suggestions for change and changes in the case of Helicopter positions will be vetted through IHOPs.
- D. Boyle – will position responsibilities need to be removed from documents such as the IHOG? Annie Benoit said yes for positions in which IPDs are developed.
- D. Campbell – Do IPD commenters receive a response once a comment is made? Yes if they provide their contact information and the group to which the recommendation is made responds
- D. Campbell – Are the IPDs created for all positions with taskbooks and those listed within publications (i.e. Dip-site Manager)? Only 310-1 positions.
- IHOPs training representative in Fall/Winter Nicole Oke, in the Spring/Summer it will be Erin Burkhammer.

➡ Jesse Bender – NWCG Publications

- Intent to utilize IPDs as a central location to access all information (link to training requirements for the position, operational documents, etc.)
- Utilization of portals (like the Extraction Source List) for frequently updated documents w/ minor changes
- NWCG moving all documents over to standard naming convention – i.e. NWCG Standards for Helicopter Operations
- Stresses early communication throughout the revision process to ensure timely publication
- Forms to be removed from publications and added to the “Associated Documents” link under the document so publication doesn’t need to be revised due to forms updates
- D. Boyle – Can we continue w/ IHOG updates prior to IPDs being releases? IPDs should be out in time for the revision but forms break out may take until the subsequent.
- B. Bitting – What if IHOPs doesn’t want IPDs out of the IHOG? It’s possible but not the route NWCG wants to move
- D. Boyle – Is this change in publication availability being included in training? Training is moving to being based of IPDs
- Revisions for course training related to IHOPs positions will include IHOPs feedback
- Scanning of legacy IHOG documents would be difficult. Must still be 508 compliant. If that’s what the group wants it would be a large sum of money and recommend contracting the work to GPO
- Original IPD push will be for 310-1 positions only but other positions may come into play at a later time



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- Potential IPD updates will be routed through the parent group for the position prior to modifications
- B. Bitting – Recommend making it clearer that clicking on the “PMS#” link under the NWCG Publications page, takes you to a link for the PDF of the document and supplemental forms
- B. Bitting – Requested IHOPs training representative attend 2020 IHOW meeting. BLM may be able to make funds available if needed

Topic: NIAC – Joel Kerley

Discussion

- NIAC current DOI Executive Aviation Subcommittee Liaison – Rusty Warbis and will be Brad Gibbs when Rusty retires
- Non-fire bureaus have previously been invited to participate in IHOPs and the group should continue to reach out the them on any topics which may impact their operations
- D. Boyle – Request for clarification on Ignis Tasking.
 - Looking to IHOPs for help regarding the proper verbiage within the NWCG Standards for Aerial Ignition to clean-up UAS approval verbiage (removal)
- IHOPs will be tasked to assist w/ the Aircraft Identification Guide as appropriate
- Mark V direction letter will be reviewed and issued once complete
- NIAC periodically requests presentations/updates from subgroups and IHOP is included

Topic: Safety Risk Management – Eric Shambora and Jimmy Keyes

Discussion

- Working to update the 2011 Aviation Risk Management Workbook, initial document was the first iteration of programmatic risk management process
- Looking for SME Assistance from the field to update
- Needs to focus on Programmatic Risk Assessments but be for more specific missions (i.e. ACETA, Short-haul, Aerial Ignition)
- No current timelines for the completion of the updates has been provided, but the group agrees a tasking is needed for proper direction/expectation.
- The Workbook needs to be updated in multiple locations and safety representatives would be needed to work with SME groups to ensure consistency of product
- The Risk Level Descriptions from the IHOG were discussed and viewed to be excessive. Many feel this would be good to tackle in conjunction with the workbook rewrite



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Task

- IHOPs requested NIAC tasking, with more detail regarding what missions to review, timelines, and end-product goals – Shambora to get more details

Topic: ACETA – Susie Bates

Discussion

- ACETA Handbook updates started in 2009
- DOI Executive Aviation Subcommittee (EAS) looking at the product produced by the ACETA working group and intend to approve it as an Operational Procedures Memorandum (OPM) so a better product is in place for DOI ACETA operations
- The OPM allows the policy to be modified more readily if needed
- B. Bitting Requested the document be shared with IHOPS and stated BLM would like to see it as a Handbook that included Wild Horse and Burrow (WHB)w/in DOI
- D. Underwood would like to have a handbook developed as well and recommended the next group to tackle the project be a little further removed from ACETA field operations to hopefully remove some of the operational bias present w/in the previous group
- S. Bates agrees the intent is to move towards a Handbook and include WHB, but stressed the OPM was necessary to get something out more readily
- B. Bitting recommended ACETA group get tasked w/ a programmatic risk assessment of the operation and include an OAS Safety representative in the group
- MOUs outside of ACETA operations regarding CAMP and CalFire were discussed

Task

- S. Bates will make sure IHOPS receives a copy of the proposed ACETA OPM

Bin Items / Misc.

- 2020 IHOW Anaheim, CA – January 28th-29thduring HAI. D. Campbell working on rooms and a meeting facility. Chair rotation occurs after the meeting.
- IGNIS Tasking – Aerial Ignition Guide Modifications – B. Bitting will provide potential verbiage modifications
- Group agrees to leave out 310-1 IPDs from the IHOG unless they are not covered by the NWCG IPDs created
- Group agrees to an initial 2 year revision cycle with a future target of 1 year
- Current Risk Level description to stay in the 2019 IHOG revision
- D. Boyle will work w/ John Waddell regarding assistance w/ Risk Level description in IHOG and Risk Management Workbook



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- New Cache Item form for 134 gallon blivets – D. Boyle will send form to Patrick Kenny for completion
- Group agrees to formal request to NWCG for a training liaison's attendance at the next IHOW and to have a training rep for all monthly meetings
- M. Shaddle will research Fire Net as a means of document sharing/storage for IHOPs
- All IHOPs representatives need to review their respective NWCG subgroup's webpage for updates
- D. Boyle will send out a doodle poll for the April meeting next week.



IHOps/IHOW
March 13–14, 2019
Boise ID

Purpose: The workshop will identify current and emerging challenges, updates, issues and propose potential solutions. The workshop's success will be directly related to the interaction and contribution of the participants.

The objectives include:

- Identifying, updating and briefing Interagency Helicopter Operations Subcommittee Members on topics/issues that are common to all partners.
- Encouraging interaction and networking among the Interagency Helicopter Operations Subcommittee/Units and NIAC.
- Providing a forum that challenges us to think about how to anticipate change to meet future.

Workshop facilitator: Dan Boyle – Chair

Note Taker: TBD

Wednesday Mar 13th Bridge Line: 866–732–2415; Participant Code: 4088315#

Time	Topic	Lead
0830–0900	Welcome to the Workshop & Introductions	Dan
0900–0930	Review Any IHOPs Tasks to Units	Group
0930–1130	Unit Reports & Agency Presentations: FS/BLM/BIA/NPS/FWS/STATE (45 min unless noted otherwise) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IHOG • Aerial Ignition • ACETA 	
1130–1300	Lunch	
1300–1330	Update on IHSES, Fixed Weight reduction	Bill Sloan
1330–1400	Risk Management Discussion	Bryan Bitting
1400–1430	ALSE guide updates	John Wadell
1430–1530	Agency Updates	Group
1530–1630	Review task list	Group

Thursday March. 14th

Time	Topic	Lead
0830-0915	Training Update	Nicole Oke
0915-1000	NWCG Update to IHOpS	Tim Blake
1000-1100	NIAC Update to IHOpS	Joel Kerley
1100-1200	NIAC Task 18-02 – Update Risk Mgt Workbook	Eric Shambora
1200-1300	Lunch	
1300-1330	ACETA & Executive Aviation Subcommittee (EAS)-DOI	Susie Bates
1330-1430	USFS HOS Update	Don Cambell
1430-1500	NIAC Task Responses	Dan Boyle
1500-1530	IHOW meeting spring 2020	Group
1530-1600	Bin Items	Dan Boyle