



## National Interagency Aviation Committee Meeting Notes – June 2020

**NIAC Members:** Joel Kerley, Chair, BIA    Tim Blake, NWCG    John Buehler, NPS    Glen Claypool, BLM    Walker Craig, OAS  
 Brad Gibbs, BLM    Kent Hamilton, USFS    Anthony Lascano, FWS    Neal Laugle, NASF    Paul Linse, USFS  
 Brian McKee, NASF    Keith Raley, OAS

**Guests:** Christina Curtis, BLM    Woody Kessler, OAS

### JUNE 11 MEETING

Topic and Notes	Decision
<p>1. DHC8 Field Evaluations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed the recommendation of the DHC-8 from John Kovalicky, Director for Flight Performance and Functional Evaluations. The DHC-8 aircraft has performed extremely well. SASES supports continuing with the Field Evaluation with a restriction on round parachute jumpers (~30% of the FS Smokejumper Program). Round parachute jumpers will not be allowed to jump out of this aircraft the SASES is notified that the door edge protector has been modified and approved for round parachute use. It is anticipated the live round parachute jumps will occur after the Alaska Fire Season.</li> <li>A Draft Flight Performance and Functional Evaluation report will be available to SASES.</li> </ul>	Approved.
<p>FireBoss Operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To date, two incidents have occurred with the same Fireboss vendor in Alaska (Accident and IWP). Both happened at the end of the day performing a scoop. Both are currently under investigation.</li> <li>NIAC discussed the possibility of an Interagency Fireboss/Scooper Operations Guide in 2019. Topics that were discussed include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Putting in long days in a dynamic environment (lakes/rivers),</li> <li>Changing environmental conditions, and</li> <li>No obstacle clearance criteria for take-off/landing.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Members will come prepared to discuss appropriate membership for the committee at their next meeting.</li> </ul>	<p>NIAC members agree to draft a tasking for the development of a standard for scooper operations.</p> <p>Topic added to June 25 agenda.</p>
<p>USFS Helicopter Coordinator (HLCO) Platform Manager Exemption Letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members discussed the intent of the letter which is to maximize training opportunities to increase the number of qualified individuals. NIAC members discussed the potential unintended consequences and recommend that perhaps the USFS do a policy update vs. standards change.</li> <li>Currently unsure if it has been vetted with the Incident and Position Standards Committee. Need USFS present to provide more depth to the topic.</li> </ul>	Joel Kerley will reach out to USFS Operations to see if they are available to brief NIAC.

Topic and Notes	Decision
<p>Prep for NWCG Executive Board (EB) Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members discussed the concerns the Interagency Airtanker Board (IAB) had on the interim approval of the global supertanker and why the decision came to NIAC. Further discussion regarding the governance and authority of the IAB when making approvals or recommendations.</li> <li>Topics will be discussed at the next NWCG EB Meeting.</li> </ul>	N/A

## JUNE 25 MEETING

Topic and Notes	Decision
<p>Cooperator Process to Operate Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) on Federal Incidents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members briefed on the document created by the Interagency Unmanned Aircraft Systems Subcommittee (UASSC). Outlined that cooperators must meet training and aircraft requirements as well as have a current cooperator letter to operate UAS on federal incidents. Requirements include: UAS Pilot Training, UAS Aircraft, and Cooperator Letter.mmIntent to get collection from cooperators about how they can fly UAS on federal incident.</li> <li>There needs to be a government sponsor to bring forth the aircraft for use. A letter will not automatically be issued to cooperators.</li> <li>Document has been reviewed by the Office of Aviation Services (OAS) and USDA Forest Service (USFS). Final document will live on the UASSC website.</li> </ul>	Approved with edits.
<p>Interagency Aerial Supervision Subcommittee (IASS) – Scooper Operating Procedures Tasking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed Subject Matter Expert (SME) group for the tasking includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chief Pilots of Large Scoopers (Joel)</li> <li>Chief Pilots of FireBoss (Joel)</li> <li>Lead Plane pilot (float qualified) (Paul)</li> <li>ATGS/ASM – Ask committee to provide. (Paul)</li> <li>SEAT manager (Glen)</li> <li>FS Scooper Manager (Paul)</li> <li>SMS/Safety – Kirk Rothwell and John Mills (investigative piece)</li> <li>NWCG Publications (Jesse)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Will solidify membership of the group and draft tasking. Will need to rely on industry experience for completion of operating procedures. Will be able to lean on work that has already been completed in the past for requirements.</li> </ul>	Approved.
<p>Interagency Aviation Preparedness Task Team (IAPTT) Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members briefed on the edits made to the Standards for Aviation Operations in Response to Coronavirus Disease (COVID 19). The edits were minor and will be made on the website.</li> <li>Members briefed on the request for additional helicopter operations mitigations help improve employee safety and help prevent spread of COVID-19. The IHOPS believes there is enough leaders' intent in the mitigation for</li> </ul>	Approved.

Topic and Notes	Decision
<p>the potentials of contamination in helicopter operations. These concerns are similar in nature to those in other natural resource operations (e.g. wildland fire, search and rescue).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members discussed not wanting to release conflicting information and only identify the potentials for contamination that are unique to helicopter operations. Will adjust as needed.</li> </ul>	