



National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)

Rotor Wing Subcommittee (RWSC)

July 15th, 2026

Attendance:

Primary Members:

Chair: Eric C. Graff, USFS	☒
Vice-Chair: Taylor Schmadeka, NASF	☒
Joe Rogan, DOI (primary WFS)	☐
Kris Paxson, DOI (alternate WFS)	☒
Brian Mundie, DOW	☒
Elise Roberts, NASF	☒
Joel Tourtelotte, NASF	☐
Sarah Lee, NWCG	☒

Advisory Members:

Dave Ritchie, AMC Liaison	☒
Ashlee Nelson, USFS	☒

June Meeting Notes Approval:

YES ☒ / NO ☐ If no, provide corrections below. Once accepted, post to NWCG website.

July Topics and Presenter:

- IHOPS/RWSC Membership — Primary & Advisory (old & new) — Graff**
EG: In the past committee has had advisory members from aviation training, safety, pilots/inspectors. Would like to have group input on if RWSC maintains advisory members & if so, identifying secondary members.
TS: Seems to have worked well in the past having advisory members, would like to keep it similar.
EG: We do not need to identify reps now, please think it over & bring recommendations to next month's meeting.
KP: Obvious need from WFS side for representation, lots of moving parts still with transition. Could likely contribute someone from any of the areas (safety, aviation training, pilot/inspector) for an advisory member.
- RWSC SOPs & Objectives — Graff**
SL — Old IHOPs & subgroups webpages have been archived but are still accessible.
EG — Big ones to move over to new RWSC webpage will be aerial ignition and the NSHO. Short-haul should be set.
EG — TS & EG drafted initial SOPs, these are not set in stone and can be changed and updated as necessary. RWSC currently has helicopter short-haul unit (HSHU) and Interagency Aerial Ignition Unit (IAIU), they are still meeting & producing good work. NSHO group was dissolved for the time being. NSHO does need to be updated; a Microsoft Form was developed

& shared with old & new IHOPS/RWSC members to send to the field for comment. Will be open for at least the summer. TS will pull comments submitted for requests for change at the end of the summer. Once group reviews the comments RWSC will decide how to approach — complete changes as RWSC or stand up new NSHO group.

Review of SOPs — SOPs already need a few changes as personnel identified in SOPs have changed.

RWSC has oversight for the following positions: ABRO, DECK, HEBM, HECM, HMGB, and HMLR in near future.

3. **DECK IPTM Final Review** — Graff / Dakota Fulks — DECK Lead SME

- Comment for change in the documents, NOT tracked changes
- Due to NWCG from AMC by 1200 August 21st

SL — No changes to required training, desire to add recommended training L-280 & A-310/N9059 & S-270. No change to required experience requirements. SME group would like DIVS & TFLD maintains currency for DECK; if RWSC and AMC accept the recommendation, AMC will need to ensure agency alignment with their reps on the Qualifications Management Committee (QMC), which has replaced the former IPSC.

RWSC now needs to review the IPS & PTB

DF — The SME group was passionate about L-280 being included, understand it's an additional training requirement, also recommended A-310/N9059 being the position "leads" and is in charge.

SL — Recommendation of L-280 should have been required this entire time with it being a Level 2 leadership position. This aligns with the leadership level.

DM — Question regarding IPS FWPT, are there FWPTs at helibases or subordinates?

DF — The FWPT is an error and can be removed.

EG — IPTM process and timelines for all positions are a little bit different. IHOPs has completed HECM & ABRO. HMGB and DECK are currently in process, HEBM is next. Often very tight timelines may have a month to review.

SL — official stewardship for all positions moved up to AMC; intent is subcommittees are the "do-ers," then brief AMC on changes. DECK comments are due back August 6th to SL for August 8th AMC meeting/briefing. Do not need all final comments by the 6th. AMC will then have final vote and approval back to NWCG no later than 8/21.

EG — Will put together a Word document online that everyone can access; RWSC — August 1st deadline for comments. This will allow it to be sent to the AMC on the 6th for their review and approval and back to NWCG by 8/21.

SL — Do not edit the document, enter comments for changes only.

DF — If anyone has any questions, please reach out.

EG: HMGB IPTM final products received; In the process of revamping HMGB final products for HMLR. HMLR making transition to 310-1, waited for HMGB working group to finalize PTB & IPTS and then "stole" it to review & remove the higher complexity items to be HMLR specific. EG will send the group the HMGB package & HMLR documents for review/comparison this week. Comments will be due back to EG the week prior to August 19th RWSC meeting.

SL — It is beneficial to utilize the HMGB templates, so things don't get balled up in publications. August is the latest to have HMLR entered in the 310-1.

Round Robin:

National Association of State Foresters:

TS — Oregon activity is starting to pick up, lots of aircraft, and things are busy.

ER — Excited about the HMLR PTB, should help TX out a lot. TX is now in flood response.

AMC: National HIP meeting next month. Pilot Practical Test standards may change. About 20% above last year's flight time, surpassed a million gallons of retardant out of one state base already.

DOW: Fire season is typically spring but in a drying trend so may have fires this summer. May be able to get some single resources deployable.

WFS: With all the events that have been going on, appreciate all the support. With activity continuing in some areas in the east/south it has been difficult to send resources out west. Going through some hiring at regional and national level, names & contacts may change.

USFS RW: Much of the helicopter leadership has been attending memorials and funerals following three fatalities and supporting where we can there. Additionally, trying to provide support following Kmax fatality. All aviation resources are out and assigned. Down to 13 or 14 rappel ships right now due to maintenance, all eight short-haul are out and operating. Starting a FAST team, hopefully will be able to report out on that at next month's meeting.

NWCG: We still only have one out of three Coordinators and our Program Manager, Katie Wood, has taken a new job in the Great Basin Geographic Area. We are aware of issues with meeting invites and are working to establish new Teams sites and the new NWCG Standard Operating Procedures, PMS900. This is a time of grace both ways as we continue the full implementation of the reorganization. Please reach out if you need anything.

New webpage: [Rotor Wing Subcommittee | NWCG](#)

Legacy webpage: [Interagency Helicopter Operations Subcommittee | NWCG](#)

New PMS 900 publication: [NWCG Standard Operating Procedures, PMS 900 | NWCG](#)

Next Meeting is August 19th, 2026