

# Interagency Helicopter Operations NATIONAL WORKSHOP

Boise, ID February 10-12, 2004



## MEETING NOTES

**Attendance:** See attached list

**Tuesday 2/10**

### **Introduction, Agenda & Logistics** (*Kevin Hamilton*)

### **Management Perspective** (*Ron Hanks*)

- ? Kudos to the Helicopter Program for excellent safety record.
- ? Highest levels of management do not have great concerns with the Helicopter Program because it has history of progressive interagency oversight.
- ? FS 5-year Strategic Plan calls for 5% reduction of helicopter accidents.
- ? Blue Ribbon Panel identified need to train new fire helicopter pilots.
- ? HotHighHeavy Report is available. FS exclusive use rappel contracts will be awarded only to Part 27 helicopters starting 2005.
- ? IHOG Risk Management is a model that other programs are plagiarizing. May have new/revised and standard Risk Mgt process soon.
- ? IHOP needs to identify helicopter issues and share with management.
- ? Questions/Comments:
  - ✍ CWN helicopter program is **not** a program! Consists of a contract and a red-card qualification; has no management focal point. Needs management support and funding.
  - ✍ Helicopter and Air Operations personnel need tactical application and leadership training. This needs management support.

### **Awards** (*Kevin Hamilton*)

- ? Pete Kubiak received an etched glass award from IHOP SC for his excellent service as Chairman of the Aerial Ignition Working Group, 2001-2003.
- ? Stan Anderson gave Kevin Hamilton a BIA Fire & Aviation Leatherman tool for service as IHOP Steering Committee Chairman, 2000-2004.

## Helicopter Staffing Policy Review (Glenn Johnston)

- ? Major disconnect between Aviation Management and IMT Air Operations personnel. Critical information and policy changes are not always communicated to AOBD, ASGS, ATGS, etc.
- ? Difference in End-Product Contract oversight policy between FS and DOI is causing problems. FS has new policy similar to DOI in for approval.
- ? *Increased Exclusive Use Crew Size*. This is the most effective method of making more helicopter personnel available. Has long-term benefits which began to be realized in 2003. Budget cuts are now reducing crew size in some agencies. Funding must be maintained or manager shortage will increase again. **\*\*SC to brief agency Fire Directors on this issue as soon as possible.\*\***
- ? *“1 For 2”*. This policy seems to be an effective temporary measure that has been used frequently. Success is dependant upon the experience level of the one helicopter manager. Language should remain unchanged. **\*\*SC to draft Mob Guide language that encourages the use of HCWN Trainees when implementing 1 For 2.\*\***
- ? *Standard to Limited Type I and II*. This policy also is an effective, but temporary measure. Reported to be used infrequently. Keep as is.
- ? *Standard to Limited Type III*. Seems to be a manageable policy. Very few applications in its first year (2003). IHOG Working Group must carefully incorporate this language into the 2005 IHOG.
- ? *Exclusive Use Position Standards*. BLM, NPS, FWS and FS have agreed on exclusive use position standards. These will be published in 2004 Standards for Fire & Aviation Standards (“Redbook”, Ch 17). This will help immensely, especially crews that have interagency crewmembers. Some issues: potential conflicts with Personnel regulations, Fire Program Competencies and IAT requirements.

## HELB/HCWN (Kevin Hamilton)

- ? These Red-Card qualifications were compared to each other and to Exclusive Use Manager and Project Helicopter Manager. The background, development and problems with these positions were discussed. A special Task Group will be formed and charged with constructing a proposal for re-structuring the Fire Helicopter Manager position.

**Wednesday 2/11**

**S-372 Helicopter Manager** (*Les Herman* - work session in small groups)

- ? Groups were tasked with determining whether this course should be modularized, which and how many modules, should it be a stand-alone fire course, how does it suffice for Project Helicopter Manager training, etc. ***Following decisions were made to provide direction to Training Working Group:***

- ✍ *Continue development and NWCG approval as a stand alone S-Course.*
- ✍ *Pursue CBT elements/Pework to shorten classroom time.*
- ✍ *Identify core modules that provide for both Fire and Project instruction.*
- ✍ *Units must be generic; tailored by instructor for audience.*
- ✍ *Retain Project Helicopter Manager standards in the IHOG*

- ? Trainee Issue. It is very difficult to get Trainees assigned in such positions as HCWN, HECM, HEBM, etc. Trainee assignments under a good mentor is essential to task book completion and solid initial qualification. ***Following methods were suggested for SC to accomplish:***

- ✍ *Mob Guide language addressing the ordering/use of Trainees.*
- ✍ *NMAC memo emphasizing the utilization of Trainees*
- ✍ *Local tie-in with Exclusive Use Crews to facilitate Trainee exp.*

**Helispot Manager** (*Les Herman* – work session in small groups)

- ? Groups reviewed the draft HESM Position Standards and the draft HESM Task Book. Asked to determine if training course or job aids should be required. Each group submitted written recommendations. ***Training W. G. to finalize HESM standards and task book.***

**Helo Position/Task Book Consolidation** (*K. Hamilton* – work session in small groups)

- ? Groups reviewed the 310-1 position standards for HECM, ABRO, TOLC, DECK and HESM to determine if positions could be combined into one, or if task books could be combined or consolidated, and if progressive qualification could accommodate the HESM position. Each group submitted written recommendations. ***Training W. G. to review input and finalize 310-1 proposals/actions.***

### **Interagency Helicopter Load Calculation** (*K. Hamilton*)

- ? Pad of forms and copy of ordering memo provided to all attendees.
- ? Highlights of new form, instructions and features were presented/discussed
- ? Reviewed the Electronic Version as a training tool and operational form
- ? ***K. Hamilton to e-mail the electronic version to agency representatives on the SC. Each rep will disseminate within agency.***

### **Helicopter Re-Typing Update** (*K. Ross*)

- ? Special Task Group analyzed existing proposals. Developed their own proposal which leaves current Type categories unchanged and institutes a refined helicopter ordering process and computerized cost/efficiency tool for best value dispatching and mobilization.
- ? Web-based tool queries a helicopter performance database for all density altitudes and displays helicopters by N-number and cost-efficiency. Database would be common to ARS and AFF programs as part of “A-Suite”.
- ? If approved by Aviation Management Council, database would have to be developed, verified and maintained by aviation technical specialists (Pilot/Aircraft Inspectors).

### **Helicopter Pilot Fire Orientation** (*K. Hamilton*)

- ? IHOP SC has been tasked with developing a fire operations orientation/training for vendor helicopter pilots. Will include fire behavior, tactics, communications, airspace, ICS organization, etc.
- ? Single Engine Air Tanker program has initiated a Computer Based Training for SEAT pilots; one module has already been completed. CBT provides for on-line registration, training, testing and verification of completion. This format is needed to reach the multitude of helicopter pilots.
- ? Kim Reed (HIP, R-6) and Kevin Hamilton to develop additional module(s) specific to helicopter operations.

### **Fuel Truck Driver/DOT Regulations** (*Tom Monterastelli*)

- ? Agencies have been informed that there will be no relief from DOT Duty and Driving limitations. There is no exemption procedure other than slight chance of “declared emergencies”. Companies are responsible for monitoring and adherence to regulations. May have to hire two drivers; or switch drivers out at short intervals. Firefighting agencies are not DOT police; cannot and will not manage driver duty and driving. Idaho DOT is drafting letter of explanation and will make presentation at HAI Expo.

## **Aviation Transportation of HazMat** (*Tom Monterastelli*)

- ? Last year was a fiasco we are trying not to repeat. We had a faulty exemption and were out of compliance.
- ? An interagency team is working with DOT to determine the proper oversight roles of the using agencies and DOT for employees and service providers engaged in government functions.
- ? HazMat Handbook (in Cache by end of May?) and Training are being revised. All procedures to be similar to past practices. HazMat Emergency Response Guide may also be required onboard and/or on site. Kris Damsgaard to be national aviation hazmat lead.

**Thursday 2/12**

## **Pending Safety Alert/Passenger Briefings** (*Tom Monterastelli*)

- ? Current materials (IHOG, Briefing Cards) do not provide passengers with instructions on how to open/close the doors in normal operations. This is an FAA requirement; even though Helitack will be operating the doors and loading/unloading aircraft. Passengers still need to get directions in pre-flight briefing.
- ? DOI/USFS Safety Alert will address issue in the interim. ***IHOG Working Group to make appropriate change in 2005 IHOG.***

## **IHOG Working Group Update** (*Dave Underwood*)

- ? New Members: Dianne MacLean (FWS), Meg Gallagher (DOI) [vice Reese]. Looking for a STATE Representative.
- ? Call for IHOG comments and edits is out from now till October. Encourage input from the lowest levels. Comments should be consolidated by agency and review at agency national office prior to first draft of revision. New version will be done in Pagemaker. TIF files are recommended for graphics.
- ? Entire document will be revised; most work to be done in Appendices, Forms Package and Ch. 3 (Risk Management). Individual Task Groups to be formed and assigned.

## **Training Working Group Update** (*Les Herman*)

- ? S-271 given to NWCG September 2003 for final review and approval. Les to see about inserting new Load Calculation material. (Draft Disks available)
- ? S-371 still needs work. Will be a year before it goes to NWCG. (Draft Disks available)

### **Rappel Working Group Update** (*Bret McGee*)

- ? Handout: 2003 USFS Rappel Statistics.
- ? Currently 43 FS and 1 BLM rappel bases. 2-4 new FS bases proposed for '04.
- ? USFS letter strongly recommends Part 27 helicopter as rappel platform in '04; will be required in '05.
- ? National Base Review is ongoing; expect to review all bases within next 3 yrs.
- ? Rappel Guide to be revised for 2005; call for comment field season '04. Guide will contain new Risk Management procedures, Rappel Platform Screening & Evaluation Process.
- ? Raptor Knife to replace Jack/Ripper Knife. MTDC website will have procedures, Powerpoint and approved equipment.

### **Aerial Ignition Working Group Update** (*Brad Gibbs*)

- ? Brad Gibbs (BLM) new Chairman; Jill McCurdy (FS) vice-Chair; Vince Welbaum (DOI) new member.
- ? Aerial Ignition Guide has been revised; awaiting approval by AMC. Will be NFES# 1080 in Cache; hopefully by April. Guide and training packages will also be available on a website.
- ? New to Guide:
  - ✍ Contractor-Provided Helitorch Services language (in contract, too)
  - ✍ Req. for Class B Foam, Emergency Rally Pt. and Eyewash Station.
  - ✍ Req. to shut off all handheld electronic devices during mixing
  - ✍ Revised Prerequisite Training and Quals Matrix
  - ✍ Revised Forms Package with Individual Task Sheets
- ? New Initiatives:
  - ✍ MTDC Helitorch Design Specifications
  - ✍ Analyzing PSD Emergency Procedures
  - ✍ Evaluating harness attachment points
  - ✍ Develop liquid gelling agent specifications
  - ✍ Evaluate Raintance R2 Aerial Incendiary Machine (Aussie)

### **Short Haul Working Group Update** (*Les Herman for Bill Vandergraff*)

- ? Ryan Staley (DOI) to replace Les Herman on W.G.
- ? Handout: notes from Short Haul W.G. meeting held last week.
- ? SH Handbook is under revision. Only acceptable situation to jettison human load will be for entanglement. FAA TSO harness requirement for human external cargo; will affect short haul policies and requirements.
- ? May require that Spotter and Program Manager be Project Helicopter Manager qualified.

**ACETA Working Group** (*Mike Coffey, NPS*)

- ? ACETA Handbook has been finalized; to DOI for approval by end of Feb.
- ? Aviation requirements for ACETA aircrew are B3/S-271.
- ? Other, non-aviation, training is also required: firearms, drug handling, animal handling, etc.
- ? Interested in universal harness to be used by Rappel, Short Haul, PSD , ACETA (all doors-off missions)
- ? No ACETA accidents since inception in 1986 (NPS?)

**IHOP Steering Committee Update** (*Kevin Hamilton*)

- ? Chuck Taylor (USFS) has filled vice-JP Johnston slot.
- ? Glen Johnston (USFS) to begin as new SC Chairman following this workshop.

**Review of Workshop Taskings** (*Kevin Hamilton*)

- ? Ensure annual interface between HOS and IMTs. (*Agency HOS*)
- ? Alert Fire Directors to effects of under-funding of crews (*SC*)
- ? Restructure 310-1 Helicopter Manager positions (*SC/Special Task Group*)
- ? Strengthen Interface between IHOP and IAT Steering Committees (*SC*)
- ? Retain Project Helicopter Manager standards in IHOG (*IHOG W.G.*)
- ? Retain S-372 as stand alone S-Course. Finalize (*Training W.G.*)
- ? Finalize HESM position standards & Task Book (*Training W.G.*)
- ? Finalize helibase position/task book consolidation (*Training W.G.*)
- ? Institute methods to ensure “Trainee” assignments (*SC*)

**Workshop Notes** – K. Hamilton to compile and disseminate.

**2005 National Workshop** – Anaheim, CA with HAI Expo??? Glenn Johnston to verify and coordinate.

**Attendance** – *See Attendance List on next page.*

### Attendance List

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