

Interagency Helicopter Operations Steering Committee

Interagency Helicopter Rappel Subcommittee

Charter

1. Background

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) was formed in January 1974, to expand operational cooperation and coordination between various public agencies having jurisdictional responsibility for wildland fire management.

In 2007, NWCG was re-chartered, expanding its responsibility and adding new partners. The committee chartered herein is one of a number of support groups established by the NWCG to provide stewardship for specific business segment areas in fire management.

This group is a subcommittee to the Interagency Helicopter Operations Steering Committee

Historically, most of the functional business areas to be addressed by this subcommittee were the responsibility of the former Interagency Helicopter Rappel Working Group (IHRWG) .

2. Name

The name of this subcommittee, hereinafter referred to as the Subcommittee, is the Interagency Helicopter Rappel Subcommittee (IHRSC) of the Interagency Helicopter Operations Steering Committee (IHOps).

3. Authority

The Subcommittee is established pursuant to the authorities granted in the National Wildfire Coordinating Group Charter, October 11, 2007, U.S. Department of the Interior, Aviation Management, Board of Directors Charter, March 13, 1996 (updated, March 27, 1998) (350 DM 1; Appendix 1).

The deliberations of this Committee are exempt from the Federal Advisory Committee Act under section 204 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995.

The Subcommittee Chair is authorized to convene meetings and schedule agenda items. The Chair is also authorized to make contacts, negotiate work assignments, and make commitments on behalf of the Subcommittee.

4. Purpose

The Interagency Helicopter Rappel Subcommittee (SC) has been established under the IHOps as an interagency group providing oversight to interagency helicopter rappel operations. The mission of this Subcommittee is to ensure safe, effective and efficient helicopter rappel operations.

5. Membership

Subcommittee membership will reflect a mix of people who are knowledgeable in the subject area of the Subcommittee and who are from NWCG member agencies and organizations, including representation from DOI Aviation Management Directorate (AMD).

The Subcommittee will include one Forest Service Washington Office representative, one Forest Service Regional Helicopter Operations Specialist and one representative from each of the following agencies with rappel or cargo letdown programs: Aviation Management Directorate, Department of Interior Bureaus and cooperating State Agencies. Members will be assigned by the respective IHOps Steering Committee member. A liaison will be assigned to the Subcommittee from the IHOps Steering Committee

The Subcommittee Chair and Co-Chair will be assigned from the group members and rotate after a term of two (2) years. The rotation will be as follows AMD, BLM, FS, NPS and WO FS. Any new agencies will be added to the rotation in alphabetical order. At the end of the two (2) years term the Co-Chair will become the Chair and a new Co-Chair will be assigned.

Technical Advisors may include representatives from the Forest Service Technology and Development Program, a Helicopter Inspector Pilot, and an Aviation Maintenance Inspector. Technical Advisors serve as non-voting participants of the Subcommittee. Technical Advisors will be assigned by the IHOps Committee when requested by the Subcommittee. Additional technical advisors may be added as associate members with Subcommittee approval.

6. Organization

The Subcommittee is under the direction of the IHOps.

The Subcommittee may charge members or technical advisors with tasks, or create working groups and task teams.

The Subcommittee will work through the respective IHOps liaison to ensure appropriate coordination, collaboration, and information sharing with other groups and organizations for the subject matter and specific tasks of the Subcommittee.

7. Responsibility

The Subcommittee is primarily responsible to:

- Review and evaluate interagency helicopter rappel operations and issues.
- Solicit and address concerns with operations, personnel qualifications, safety, training, equipment and procedures.
- Maintain, update and distribute the Interagency Helicopter Rappel Guide.

8. Charter Amendments

Changes to, or revocation of, this charter must follow the process outlined in the *NWCG Operating Principles and Guidelines*.

9. Charter Approval

This charter is effective as of the date of approval by the Chair of the IHOps and shall remain in effect until revised or revoked.

Approved:

Chair, Interagency Helicopter Operations
Steering Committee (IHOps)

Date