



TO :

FROM : National Wildfire Coordinating Group

REPLY TO : NWCG@nifc.gov

DATE : 02/19/2003

SUBJECT : SAFETY ADVISORY : Aviation Resources Shortfall

The attached Safety Alert describes the prospective shortfall in the Federal Large Airtanker fleet for the 2003 fire season, and addresses the potential impacts on ground firefighting efforts.

Please insure this Safety Alert receives wide distribution within your organization .

SAFETY ALERT

Boise, ID 02-18-2003

AVIATION RESOURCES SHORTFALL: Following the disastrous airtanker accidents that occurred during the 2002 season, a Blue Ribbon Panel was convened to assess the health and safety of the Federal wildland fire aviation programs. The Departments of Interior and Agriculture are taking the initiative to mitigate the sources of high risks in aircraft and operations. However, these measures will have some short-term effects on aircraft availability and place new limitations on certain operations that are worthy of notice. Thus the subject of this alert is to make you aware of the potential impacts on ground firefighting efforts.

AIRTANKERS: 11 large airtankers have been permanently grounded and will not be replaced during the 2003 season. The remaining 33 tankers are undergoing extensive inspection and repair to prevent the structural problems that have occurred in the aging fleet. There is not as yet a good indication when the fleet will be returned to service in its entirety. The expectation is that tankers will be late in returning to service as they complete the process one at a time. This means firefighters may have difficulty acquiring retardant support until well into the summer season.

LEADPLANES: Approximately half of the Federal leadplane fleet may be affected by a decision to retire USFS Barons due to aging airframes and lifetime limits. Replacement aircraft are being sought and once again are expected to be somewhat later in arriving than the normal start-up period. Early season tactical air coordination may therefore by necessity be provided through other resources such as ASM and ATGS platforms.

EMPHASIS ON INITIAL ATTACK: Within the Federal Agencies, in order to make the most of limited resources, emphasis is being placed on initial attack in order to minimize acreage lost. Limited availability of leadplanes and airtankers dictates that they will be reserved for initial attack and likely will not be assigned to large fire scenarios. The National MAC Group will provide updates on the status and availability of limited aerial resources as the season progresses.

RECOMMEND: FMO's, Incident Commanders and Ops Section Chiefs should advise firefighters that aerial delivery of retardant may not be as available to them as in the past and to adjust ground tactics accordingly. Operational risk management procedures should take into account added safety measures to account for the possibility of reduced aerial support.



TO :

FROM : National Wildfire Coordinating Group

REPLY TO : NWCG@nifc.gov

DATE : 07/28/2003

SUBJECT : SAFETY ADVISORY : Jerry Williams Message

Please read the attached, general safety message from Jerry Williams, Director, Fire and Aviation Management, USDA Forest Service.



TO :

FROM : National Wildfire Coordinating Group

REPLY TO : NWCG@nifc.gov

DATE : 08/14/2003

SUBJECT : SAFETY ADVISORY : King Radio Clam Shell Issues

From James Reim, Assistant Safety Manager from the Pacific Northwest Region:

Please distribute the attached safety alert to supervisors of employees who are using King radios . While replacing the older model battery packs with the new ones is the best solution , several people have checked with the manufacturer, and found that clamshells for the new radios are in short supply . If batteries, and the spacer are properly installed, the problem with overheating is not expected to occur . Supervisors need to follow up and ensure their employees understand and follow correct battery installation practices.



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TO :
FROM : National Wildfire Coordinating Group
REPLY TO : NWCG@nifc.gov
DATE : 09/04/2003
SUBJECT : SAFETY ADVISORY : Group A Streptococcus

The following was received from Shelby Gales, Fire Operations Safety Manager for the BLM and FS in the Pacific NW Region. It is an update on an alarming situation regarding a firefighter infected by the Group A Streptococcus bacteria.

It is well to be reminded that firefighting and all the activities that surround it can adversely affect our immune systems. As an attachment I have provided a copy of the Wildland Firefighter Health and Safety Report No. 2 that deals with the effects of fatigue, nutrition, stress, etc. on our ability to combat even routine infections.

-ed-
Ed Hollenshead
USDA FS Fire Operations Safety Officer
NIFC

PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION SAFETY ADVISORY

Recently a firefighter was diagnosed with Group A Streptococcus (GAS) Necrotizing Fasciitis, commonly referred to as "flesh-eating bacteria." The firefighter is being treated in a local hospital.

Sometime during a work shift, the firefighter was stung by a bee, but initially had no adverse reaction to the sting. Within the next 24 to 48 hours, the firefighter noticed his hand and arm were swollen and sought medical attention. A diagnosis of GAS Necrotizing Fasciitis was made and the firefighter was transported to a hospital capable of providing the required specialized care. It is possible the bee sting was the entry point for the GAS infection.

The County Health Department tested the crew for signs of infection and all other crewmembers were negative for GAS. The disease is not easily spread and occurs only about 600 times a year in the United States.

The spread of all types of GAS infection can be reduced by good hand washing, especially after coughing and sneezing and before preparing foods or eating. All wounds should be kept clean and watched for possible signs of infection such as redness, swelling, drainage, and pain at the wound site. A person with signs of an infected wound, especially if fever occurs, should seek medical care.

For more information about GAS Necrotizing Fasciitis, please click on the attached link
http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/groupastreptococcal_g.htm



TO :

FROM : National Wildfire Coordinating Group

REPLY TO : NWCG@nifc.gov

DATE : 03/31/2004

SUBJECT : SAFETY ADVISORY : Int'l Harvester Corp. Mod. 4300 and 4400 vehicles

Yesterday the Stanislaus experienced a severe mechanical deficiency on a 2002 IHC Crew Carrier. The body shifted to the right (passenger side) while the vehicle was being operated with a full load of Crew and supplies. All mounting bolts from the right front spring hanger were found missing.

There is an active recall on the spring hanger bolts. IHC informs me the recall notices were sent out in March and April 2002 to the Consignee address. The Stanislaus Fleet Manager never received a copy of the recall notification.

Immediately have each IHC Crew Carrier, and other Model 4300 and 4400 models affected by this recall inspected by insuring the spring hanger bolts are tight to manufacturers torque specifications and take the vehicle to your local IHC dealer for the recall remedy. If you are aware of this recall and have not already taken the affected vehicles to your local IHC dealer for the recall remedy, do so immediately.



TO :

FROM : National Wildfire Coordinating Group

REPLY TO : NWCG@nifc.gov

DATE : 05/07/2004

SUBJECT : SAFETY ADVISORY : Wildland Firefighter Health and Safety Report No. 8

Wildland Firefighter Health and Safety Report No . 8

This issue focuses on efforts to maintain immune function in wildland firefighters . The research section provides summaries of recent field studies related to immune function . The risk management section outlines proven strategies for maintaining immune function during wildland fire suppression activities . The field notes section presents guidelines for selecting liquid and solid energy supplements to maintain immune function in wildland firefighters .

Health_and_Safety.pdf



TO :

FROM : National Wildfire Coordinating Group

REPLY TO : NWCG@nifc.gov

DATE : 06/10/2004

SUBJECT : SAFETY ADVISORY : Wildland Fire Behavior Alert for Southwest Area

The attached Wildland Fire Behavior Alert was issued yesterday for the Southwest United States . Please insure it receives wide distribution within your Agency .

fire_behavior_alert.pdf



TO : louise_bruck@oas.gov

FROM : National Wildfire Coordinating Group

REPLY TO : NWCG@nifc.gov

DATE : 07/02/2004

SUBJECT : SAFETY ADVISORY : Frequency Incompatibility - Narrowband / Wideband Issues

Please read this important memo from the National Multi-Agency Coordination Group



Frequency Incompatibility_Narrowband-Wideband Issues.doc
