

Standard Operating Procedures

For the

**Interagency Airtanker Base Subcommittee
(IABS)**

September 2021

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Overview

The Interagency Airtanker Base Subcommittee (IABS) was formed as a subcommittee below the National Interagency Aviation Committee (NIAC) which falls under the purview of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG).

The NIAC provides national leadership in wildland fire aviation. The NIAC facilitates the development and implementation of interagency fire aviation standards, procedures, and programs to enhance safety, effectiveness, and efficiency in all areas of aviation operations.

The IABS has been established to provide national leadership in all areas of interagency airtanker base operations. The IABS develops and disseminates operational standards that promote safe, secure, effective, and efficient airtanker base operations. These standards include facility and equipment requirements, operational and administrative procedures, and personnel qualifications and training.

Primary objectives of the IABS include:

- Provide technical assistance regarding airtanker base operations.
- Promote cooperation and standardization in interagency airtanker base operations.
- Identify airtanker base issues, develop solutions, and recommend corrective actions to the NIAC.
- Develop and support standardized training for airtanker base operations and provide leadership in training course development, implementation, evaluation, and revision for all participating agencies.
- Serve as a central source of information, guidance, and support for national and geographic area airtanker base decisions and operations.
- Provide contracting technical assistance and support as requested.

The IABS receives official taskings only from the NIAC.

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to document routine or repetitive activities, membership roles and responsibilities and information for incoming members.

Membership

Chair and Vice-Chair

Responsible for accomplishing the subcommittee mission. Manages the activities of the subcommittee. Distributes workload within the subcommittee.

The National Airtanker Base Specialist or agency delegate of the Forest Service and the BLM will serve as the Chair and Co-Chair and will alternate every three years between agencies.

Primary Members

Participates in decision-making.

3-Forest Service

1-Bureau of Land Management

1-State Agency (National Association of State Foresters)

Primary members are in addition to the Chair and Vice-Chair and will be approved by the NIAC and will serve a three-year term. The term may be extended by the Chair with approval by NIAC.

The IABS has a comment form on the [NWCG website](#) to ensure that bases throughout the nation have a voice.

Associate Members May participate in discussions but not decision making. Provides subject matter expertise, often from a separate functional area or multidisciplinary perspective.

WO Airtanker Program Manager

WO Airtanker Base Specialist

SEAT Program Manager-BLM

Subject Matter Experts

Individuals from outside the committee, having needed expertise, will be asked to participate when appropriate.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chair

The Chair and Vice-Chair are authorized to:

- Make specific work assignments to team members or appoint task units from outside membership to work on specific projects.
- Represent the IABS in presenting recommendations to the NIAC, and as appropriate, in contact with outside individuals and groups.
- Recommend to the NIAC the need for further resources and authorities as they become evident.
- Recommend all other committee members to the NIAC.

The Chair and Vice-Chair are responsible to:

- Ensure meeting logistics are complete.
- Formally accept the NIAC taskings and coordinate activities with the rest of the Subcommittee.
- Approve meeting notes and ensure they are posted to the web.
- Convene meetings.
- Approve meeting and conference call agendas.

Primary Members

Primary Members are responsible to:

- Actively attend and participate in all subcommittee meetings and Teams calls.
- Participate and represent their agency or program area.
- Serve as a conduit for transferring information to and from the subcommittee.
- Be responsive to the field.

- Represent the agencies best practices.
- Serve as direct link to respective director/agency/program.

Mentor current and potential future committee members.

Facilitator

The Facilitator is the Chair or Vice-Chair of the IABS and is responsible to:

- Facilitate meetings and Teams calls.
- Coordinate with committee members.

Executive Secretary

The Executive Secretary is responsible to:

- Take notes at meetings and Teams calls.
- Prepare meeting agenda.
- Ensure notes are prepared and sent to the Chair/Vice-Chair for finalization.
- Post final notes to the webpage.
- Maintain the Website and Briefing Paper and Taskings Tracker.
- Provide Logistical Support.
- Complete tasks as assigned by the Chair/Vice-Chair.
- Maintain the rosters for the IABS and Units.

NIAC Chair

The NIAC Chair is responsible to:

- Provide the NIAC overview.
- Task IABS with projects, tasks, and assignments.
- Serve as a conduit for the IABS for transferring information to and from the NIAC.
- Coordinate with other groups to reduce duplication, overlap, and possible conflict and to ensure interaction when needed with other NIAC Committees.

Subcommittee Business

Meetings

The IABS will, at a minimum, conduct meetings annually at a location agreed upon by the majority of the committee. Costs of the meetings will be absorbed by the agencies that sponsor the members. The meetings will be scheduled six to eight months in advance to minimize scheduling conflicts. Once the meeting location is determined, the Chair/Vice-Chair may task another committee member with coordinating meeting logistics then ensure they are complete.

Conference Calls

The IABS will normally conduct bi-monthly calls on Microsoft Teams. The meetings are scheduled for the first and third Wednesday of the month at 12 PM (MT) except during those months when an in-

person meeting is planned. The Chair/Vice-Chair has the discretion to set up additional meetings as needed.

Quorum

With the membership consisting of seven, four committee members will constitute a quorum. The committee may meet for non-decision-making purposes with fewer members at the discretion of the Chair/Vice-Chair. The use of alternates to make a quorum is not allowed.

Decisions

The committee will make decisions by consensus. In the event of a tie, the Chair will be the tiebreaker.

NIAC Taskings

The NIAC is the only group that can task the IABS to complete work. Taskings will come from the NIAC through the NIAC Chair. Once a tasking is received the IABS will review and determine the appropriate approach to respond to the tasking. IABS can self-assign tasks if it falls within the purview of these SOPs. When the IABS begins work on a task, they will send a memo to NIAC informing them of the nature, predicted workload and if there are additional approvals needed by the NIAC.

Unit Roles and Responsibilities

If a Unit is formed, the IABS will assign a Chair, select a liaison from the IABS to work with and mentor the Unit Chair, provide the Chair with IABS expectations and due dates, and approve or deny any requested additional members for the Unit.

The Chair will request membership from a list of RAO/SAM/State pre-approved names and develop Standard Operating Procedures.

Taskings and projects will be evaluated by the IABS and may be delegated as appropriate. Any products produced by the Units will be approved by the IABS prior to submittal.

NWCG Standards for Airtanker Base Operations Unit (SABOU)

The IABS is responsible for maintaining the SABO. The SABO will be reviewed annually and updated as needed. This responsibility has been delegated to the SABOU.

The SABOU has been established and assigned a Chair, IABS Liaison and primary members.

- Current SABO is validated for currency and relevance.
- Field comments are reviewed and addressed by the SABOU.
- Final SABOU draft is sent to the IABS.
- IABS sends final draft to the NIAC for review, approvals, and signatures.
- IABS works with NWCG to finalize the document for publication.

NWCG Airtanker Base Directory Unit (ABDU)

The IABS is responsible for maintaining the NWCG Airtanker Base Directory. The Directory is an application within EGP and updated as needed.

The ABDU has been established and assigned a Chair, IABS Liaison and primary members.

- The ABDU makes changes as requested and authorized, to the application.

Airtanker Base Training and Qualifications Unit (ABTQU)

The IABS is responsible for creating and maintaining the training and qualifications for airtanker base positions. The responsibility for this has been delegated to the ABTQU.

The ABTQU has been established and assigned a Chair, IABS Liaison and primary members.

Roles and responsibilities include:

- IABS issues tasks to the ABTQU having to do with training and qualifications.
- IABS will send training materials and curriculum out for field review.
- ABTQU will evaluate field comments for inclusion.
- Final draft is sent to the field for final evaluation.
- IABS works with the NWCG to finalize the curriculum for publication.

The IABS is responsible for coordinating the National Airtanker Base Manager Workshop every other year and delegates the logistical planning and coordination to the ABTQU.

Single Engine Airtanker Unit (SEATU)

The IABS has historically concentrated on LAT and VLAT bases. Recently the SEAT base specific training and operations have been added to the IABS purview. The NWCG Standards for Airtanker Operations and NWCG Standard for SEAT Operations have been combined into one document and labeled the SABO. All airtanker operations regardless of size has been incorporated into the SABO. To ensure the SEAT specific requirements are captured, the SEATU will focus solely on SEAT training, standards, and operations.

The SEATU has been established and assigned a Chair, IABS Liaison and primary members. Roles and responsibilities include:

- Ensure the SEAT community is represented with regards to training, standards, and operations in collaboration with the other IABS units.

Airtanker Base Operational Risk Management Unit (ABORMU)

The IABS has established the ABORMU to develop and maintain risk assessments and other risk assessment tools for the airtanker base community. The ABORMU has been established and assigned a Chair, IABS Liaison and primary members to help assess operational risk.

Roles and responsibilities include:

- Edit and maintain existing airtanker and airtanker base risk assessments.
- Develop and maintain new risk assessments when there is an identified need from IABS.
- Develop and maintain other risk assessment tools such as a Green Amber Red standard from for use by all airtanker bases.

Website Management

The Chair/Vice-Chair, or if appointed, the Executive Secretary, will be assigned to review and provide updates to the [IABS webpage](#) to ensure current and valid information is posted.

Forms Management

Forms will be reviewed by IABS and updated as needed.

SOP Review and Amendments

This Standard Operating Procedure should be reviewed annually to ensure currency.

Approval

This SOP is effective as of the date of signature by the IABS Chair and Co-Chair.

IABS Chair, Stan Goode

Date

IABS Co-Chair, Angie Forbes BLM, National SEAT Coordinator

Date