



Interagency Helicopter Operations Subcommittee

Standard Operating Procedures

1. Identification

The Interagency Helicopter Operations Subcommittee (IHOPS) is an active interagency NWCG subcommittee, known herein as the Subcommittee.

2. Strategic Intent

2.1. Vision

Helicopter operations involving NWCG and its partner agencies, are standardized and safe.

2.2. Purpose

The IHOPS provides national leadership in interagency helicopter operations. The IHOPS supports interagency efforts in helicopter safety, efficiency, standards development and implementation, procedures, programs, and coordination. The IHOPS also provides interagency guidance for law enforcement, search and rescue, and the resource management aviation for the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Department of Interior (DOI).

2.3. Objectives

- ☐ Promote safe, cost-efficient, and effective aviation service in support of agency and interagency goals and objectives.
- ☐ Define and standardize national interagency helicopter management and operational procedures for helicopter users from participating agencies.
- ☐ Through standardization, facilitate the ability of personnel from different agencies to work cooperatively on incidents and projects.
- ☐ Provide a framework within which areas, regions, states, and local units can provide supplemental site-specific guidance.

3. Organization Structure and Relationships

The subcommittee is positioned within National Interagency Aviation Committee (NIAC) for overall stewardship of helicopter operations. The Subcommittee manages several units chartered to attend to specific business area of helicopter operations.

3.1. Relationships

The Subcommittee is a subgroup of the NIAC.

3.2. Memberships

NWCG committees and subgroups are established and organized to accomplish the overall NWCG mission. They provide leadership to and represent the major functional areas of wildland fire management.

The term of the Subcommittee Chair appointment will be 2 years and may be extended at the discretion of the IHOPS. The term of the Vice Chair appointment will be 2 years and may be extended at the discretion of the IHOPS.

Agency rotation for Chair and the Vice Chair should follow directly after the chair position in this list, at the discretion of the Subcommittee:



- ☞ National Association of State Foresters
- ☞ Bureau of Indian Affairs
- ☞ U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- ☞ Bureau of Land Management
- ☞ U.S. Forest Service
- ☞ National Park Service

The term of each primary member will be indefinite. Technical advisors may be added as associate members with Subcommittee Chair approval.

3.3. General

Subcommittee membership consists of representation for both agency leadership and business area expertise. Subcommittee members represent agencies as their Helicopter Operations Specialist. One member represents the National Association of State Foresters. Three advisory members represent the business areas of National Helicopter Inspector Pilot, National Aviation Training, and Aviation Safety.

3.4. Attendance

Primary members should attend all meetings. Those unable to attend should ensure that their organization (or business area) is represented with an alternate participant who is fully-briefed and has decision-making authority on behalf of the absentee member.

Non-members may be invited to participate when their expertise is needed.

Contractors and non-government organization representatives may not serve as alternate representatives of government agencies.

3.5. Quorum

A minimum of two-thirds of the IHOPS primary members constitute a quorum. A quorum is required to make decisions and/or direct actions.

3.6. Primary (Voting) Members

One Helicopter Operations Specialist from these agencies:

- ☞ U.S. Forest Service
- ☞ Bureau of Land Management
- ☞ Bureau of Indian Affairs
- ☞ National Park Service
- ☞ U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- ☞ Office of Aviation Services
- ☞ National Association of State Foresters

3.7. Associate (Non-voting) Members

At the discretion of the Chair, technical advisor may be added as associate members.

4. Services

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The Subcommittee may provide the following products and services, but is not limited to the following:

- ☞ Provide or approve Subject Matter Experts as requested by other entities
- ☞ Review helicopter related NWCG and Interagency Aviation Training courses
- ☞ Review and approve Unit publications and guides
- ☞ Assist, as requested, in reviewing and updating helicopter-related support kits and equipment
- ☞ Review and approve helicopter-related equipment
- ☞ Make recommendations, through NIAC to NWCG
- ☞ Chair and/or members may act as liaisons or advisory members of other NWCG committees, subcommittee, and units
- ☞ Review and/or draft safety/technical/lessons learned bulletins (or similar documents)