

HOTSHOT SUPERINTENDENT WORKSHOP 1976-1987 (ACTION ITEMS)

January 21, 2000

ITEM 1 – 1976 (Little Tujunga Work Center)

SITUATION: Crews are coming to fires as “Hot Shot” crews because they are putting this designation on themselves. We need to define a Hotshot crew so that a receiving forest or fire team knows what to expect in the performance of the crews they are receiving.

ACTION: Suggest the Forest Service Manual Section 5131.41b be amended to read; The Regional Suppression Crews be given the exclusive right to be called “Hotshot Crews”. All other crews not meeting the qualifications of a Regional Suppression Crew be prohibited from using the “Hotshot” designation.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 2 – 1976

SITUATION: No standard job qualifications now exist for the position of a Hotshot Superintendent. What should the minimum qualifications be for a Hotshot Superintendent?

ACTION: Develop criteria for qualifications for Hotshot Superintendents.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 3 – 1976

SITUATION: No standard job qualifications now exist for the position of a Hotshot Foreman. What should the minimum qualifications be for a Hotshot Foreman?

ACTION: Develop criteria for qualifications for Hotshot Foreman.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 4 – 1976

SITUATION: A concern was expressed as to whether a certain grade structure should be established for the Hotshot Crew person positions. What should the minimum qualifications be for a Hotshot Crew person?

ACTION: Develop criteria for qualifications for Hotshot Crew persons.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 5 – 1976

SITUATION: Region 5 Hotshot crews vary in size, anywhere from 20, 21, 25 men, etc. What should the ideal size of a Hotshot crew be?

ACTION: A Regional Suppression Crew (Hotshot Crew) will consist of a minimum of 18 and a maximum of 20 men for any off forest assignment. For on forest fire assignments, where our own transportation is being used, we recommend that no restrictions be placed on the size of the crew, providing that they are being transported safely.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 6 – 1976

SITUATION: The organization of a Hotshot Crew varies from crew to crew. Some crews are structured with a 7-6-5-4 grade organization, others with 7-6-6-5 or any number of other possible combinations. We need to develop a standard basic structure, which will enable us to build a more professional team organization.

ACTION: Develop a Region 5 organizational chart, detailing the order of responsibility.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 7 – 1976

SITUATION: Other than the basic 32 hours of fire training, no standards exist for further training of Regional Suppression Crews (Hotshot Crews) and Inter-Regional Crews. We need to standardize the minimum training guidelines for the I.R. / Hotshot Crews.

ACTION: Develop a training program that will be made available to Hotshot Crews.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 8 – 1976

SITUATION: Hotshot Crews pull many night shifts under adverse situations. No night training takes place before crews are faced with night shifts.

ACTION: We feel there is a need to expose crews to line construction at night. A great deal is taken for granted when we send “green” crews out on night shift assignments. We are asking for an administrative change of tour of duty so that we could give the crewmen the opportunity to experience what is expected in a night shift assignment well in advance. The areas of training would cover cross-country travel, compass orientation, line construction, line location, etc. We feel this could be accomplished in eight hours and it would be included in our proposed ten day training package. A suggested tour change would be from 1600 hours to 2400 hours, thus making the available for its regular tour of duty.

STATUS: Pending. Steering committee to address.

ITEM 9 – 1976

SITUATION: Not enough highly qualified candidates are available for many of the vacant supervisory positions on the R-5 Hotshot Crews. We need to expand within R-5 the type of program initiated with the Redding Hotshot Crew.

ACTION: If significant interest is shown (based on the number of applicants received by the Redding Crew), we recommend that a similar program be initiated in the South Zone. The Redding program has proven to be beneficial in providing supervisory and management training for professionals and technicians in one season, where as it would take years to accomplish otherwise. The only drawback with Redding’s program is that we feel the scope in numbers of participants is too small. If this recommendation can not be realized for whatever reason, then perhaps detailers could be assigned to the training positions we have recommended under crew organization.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 10 – 1976

SITUATION: Some crews are maintaining records, which are a combination of training and performance. These records are normally forwarded when an individual is reassigned to another crew or forest. This in part may be a violation of his “Right to Privacy”. We need to develop a standard training record form which will document an individuals accomplishment and one which in no part violates the individuals “Right to Privacy”.

ACTION: Develop a training record form and get a determination from personnel management as to whether a referral or non-referral violates an individuals “Right to Privacy”.

STATUS: Pending. Steering Committee to address.

ITEM 11 – 1976

SITUATION: Hotshot overhead not being fully utilized in forest and regional training sessions. Same instructors are being used thus limiting the opportunity for others to benefit from this experience. How can we as Hotshot Superintendents get overhead to use our expertise in forest and regional training sessions.

ACTION: We ask that fire management take advantage of the expertise of Hotshot overhead in forest and regional training sessions. These opportunities are occurring only occasionally and we feel this to be an activity important to our career development.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 12 – 1976

SITUATION: Numerous incidents and accidents involving the use of fire tents, helicopters, fixed wing aircraft, equipment, etc, are occurring to Hotshot Crews throughout the region. Information regarding these incidents and accidents occurring in R-5 is not being reported to other crews who might some day be faced with the same situation. There is a need to do something to prevent the same type of accident or incident from occurring again.

ACTION: All incidents to be reported to the Regional Office and then to be shared with other crews so that the same situations are not repeated. Also, a quarterly “Hot Sheet” will be developed to relate incidents relating to the activities of the Hotshot Crews.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 13 – 1976

SITUATION: Crews arriving on fire or detail assignments are experiencing numerous transportation problems. Delays are occurring and money is needlessly being spent because crews are being left out on the firelines for long periods of time while awaiting transportation. Crews detailed to remote situation areas where transportation, either government or personal, is not available is thus causing morale problems.

ACTION: We recommend that a crew vehicle (s) and tool carrier be assigned to a crew by the receiving forest. This assigned vehicle (s) be kept during the duration of the fire or detail assignment. If it is projected that the detail will be for an extended period, then the crews should be allowed to bring their own transportation.

STATUS: Pending. Partially solved, ongoing consideration being given.

ITEM 14 – 1976

SITUATION: Some Hotshot Crews are being sent out on fireline without an air-net. Some Hotshot Crews are operating without an air-net or have had them removed because their forest feels they are an unnecessary item. This can result in safety problems for crews working in hazardous hot line situations.

ACTION: Recommend that all radios on all Hotshot Crews be equipped with air-net.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 15 – 1976

SITUATION: The number of radios assigned to Hotshot Crews in R-5 varies from one (1) to eight (8). There are, at the present time, no guidelines which state the minimum number of radios necessary for the safe operation of a Hotshot Crew.

ACTION: We recommend that a minimum of three (3) and preferably four (4) radios be assigned to each Regional Suppression Crew (Hotshot Crew). This arrangement would make three (3) radios available for fireline use and a spare, which would be used in the event of a breakdown of one of the other three (3). With splitting of crews into modules and the specialty assignments being given to Superintendents, there is no way we can live with less than three (3).

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 16 – 1976

SITUATION: The inter-crew frequency (168.200) is now available to anyone. BIFC cache radios have this channel and this frequency is being indiscriminately used by tanker crews, helitack, line overhead, PIO's, transportation, service, etc, etc, etc. Due to the critical position Hotshot Crews are consistently put in during hot line fire assignments, it is an absolute necessity that they have a means of communication readily available to them.

ACTION: We recommend that a frequency be established for the exclusive use of the Regional Suppression Crews (Hotshot Crews). We further recommend that this frequency like the air-net be used only for what it was intended and only by those people who have to depend on it. We understand that new frequencies are difficult to obtain so we suggest that an existing frequency from another Region be "borrowed" for our use.

STATUS: Solved. Regional Suppression Crews cannot have their own frequency.

ITEM 17 – 1976

SITUATION: The Regional Suppression Crews (Hotshot Crews) are being used more frequently for off-forest and multi-agency fire assignments. No means of cross communication is available between on and off forest crews in the first stages of a fire.

ACTION: We recommend that one (1), eight (8), or ten (10) channel scanner be purchased for each Hotshot Crew. The scanner should contain the crystals of the adjacent forests and agencies the crews are most frequently involved with on fire assignments. As future replacement radios are made, consideration should be given to purchase mobile radios with both scanning and transmitting capabilities.

STATUS: Solved. King radios are being purchased as replacements.

ITEM 18 – 1976

SITUATION: With the increasing number of Hotshot Crews and also other people using the inter-crew net it is often very difficult to get messages and instructions to each other. An alternate means of communication is necessary during the period of priority traffic or when the frequency becomes “crowded”.

ACTION: Hand signals to be developed similar to hand signals presently being used by tankers, tractors, and helicopters.

*NOTE: We intend to give these hand signals a field test this summer and if they prove to have merit, we will ask to have these signals included with the others (tractor, tanker, etc.) in the fireline handbook.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 19 – 1976

SITUATION: The Angeles National Forest crews are identified as crews 1 through 6. The Los Prietos Hotshots use the designation 4 through 7. Names like Sniegowski and Glotfelty are difficult to pronounce and remember. There is no standard identification for the Regional Suppression Crews (Hotshot Crews) in Region 5.

ACTION: We recommend that the Regional Suppression Crews (Hotshot Crews) in Region 5 be numbered for easier identification. Hotshot Crews are a resource, just as are helicopters and air tankers. By continuation of the numbering system presently used by the Angeles National Forest (Crews 1 through 6), the Region 5 crews would then be numbered consecutively, with occasional numbers dropped to allow for the possible addition of future crews. The advantages would be as follows;

- 1) Identification would be standardized.
- 2) Hard to pronounce names would be eliminated.
- 3) Less airtime would be used.

STATUS: Pending, Hotshot Crews are not willing to give up personal identity.

ITEM 20 – 1976

SITUATION: Through medical examinations are necessary to insure the high level of fitness required to function in the duties expected of the Hotshot Crews. The thoroughness of some medical examinations leaves much to be desired. Many “old timers” in the Hotshot organization have not had physical examinations since their early crewman days.

ACTION: 1) We recommend that annual physical examinations for all Hotshot personnel be required. (Note: this is presently a manual requirement for the Forest Service’s Inter Regional Crews, and we would like it further expanded to include the Regional Suppression Crews (Hotshot Crews)).

2) Cost of medical examinations for temporary crewmen will be at their own expense.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 21 – 1976

SITUATION: Physical training and conditioning is an integral and necessary program for the safe and efficient production of a Hotshot Crew. Little or no time is being allocated for daily conditioning and training programs. Team sports are not allowed or are being done illegally. There is no set minimum standards to be used as a condition of hire at present, other than the step test.

ACTION: Develop a minimum physical, training and conditioning program for Region 5 Suppression Crews. Minimum standards being suggested are those already established in the Region 6, Inter Regional Crew Workshop.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 22 – 1976

SITUATION: Some forests require nomex clothing to be the everyday work uniform, some allow khakis, and others have “loose” policies. No standard dress policy now exists for Hotshot Crews.

ACTION: Recommendation made that all Region 5 Hotshot Crews adopt the same policy for dress. All Hotshot Crews will wear nomex fire resistant pants and shirts on all projects and fire assignments.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 23 – 1976

SITUATION: Considerable apprehension exists concerning the new computerized hiring system to be used this year in Region 5. There is a lack of information and a great deal of inconsistency in the available information. The main area of concern is in regard to returnees.

ACTION: We have no proposals to the above problem at this time. Our consensus is that we are probably overreacting to a situation which has not yet occurred. We will support the system through its trial period and will make inputs and recommendations as we see flaws begin to appear.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 24 – 1976

SITUATION: An inconsistency exists among Hotshot overhead as to who has exempt or non-exempt status as pertains to FLSA. A morale problem is developing as a considerable amount of income is being lost by individuals who “max-out”.

ACTION: We need clear cut definitions of the status issue. He suggest that all Hotshot overhead be classified as “non-exempt” until correct status is determined.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 25 – 1976

SITUATION: In some instances line overhead, such as crew bosses are being assigned to sections of line being manned with Hotshot Crews. Assigning additional overhead to positions already being filled by the overhead of a Hotshot Crew is an inefficient use of manpower that could possibly be used on another part of the fire. This staffing results in too many supervisors and adds confusion to the chain of command.

ACTION:

- 1) Assign only one Sector Boss to a sector being manned by Hotshot Crews. Although the Hotshot Crew organization has qualified Sector Bosses, we feel this position should still be filled, for reasons of communication, liaison, knowledge of the area, etc.
- 2) The R-5 Hotshot Crews encourage the fire teams to assign trainees (Sector, Crew, Squad Boss) to any sector of line being manned. We accept the opportunity to assist these trainees in adding to their fire qualifications.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 26 – 1976

SITUATION: Hotshot Superintendents are being given specialty fire assignments which separates them from their crew, i.e., Division Boss, Tanker Boss, etc. If the Superintendent is given a specialty fire assignment and his Foremen lack a strong fire background, the crew may be exposed to a dangerous situation during a critical fire assignment.

ACTION:

- 1) Decision on the specialty assignment should be left to the discretion of the Superintendent. If the Superintendent has a strong Foreman and is confident that they can safely function in his absence we are willing to help fire management in any way we can.
- 2) If the Superintendent's specialty assignment (i.e., Sector or Division Boss) puts him in close proximity to the section of line his crew is working on, we feel this is an excellent opportunity for the Superintendent to receive additional training, and we encourage this practice without reservation. We feel this is a good management practice especially when the talent is already on the line, a dollar savings can be made by utilizing less manpower while still accomplishing our task. Finally we feel we can accomplish more production because we better understand the capabilities of our Hotshot Crews.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 27 – 1976

SITUATION: Hotshot Crews are being sent on numerous fire assignments, yet only a small handful of Performance Ratings are being received. Fire overhead are not taking the time to fill out performance evaluations on our crews.

ACTION:

- 1) We feel stronger direction is needed from fire management in this area. We feel the fire assignment is not completed until the overhead completes the overhead evaluation.
- 2) We encourage more use of the remarks column so that a Superintendent can relate to his crew the reasons for their rating. We also encourage more discussion of ratings. The majority of the Performance Ratings received by R-5 Superintendents during 1975 indicated "Not Available for Signature". We realize that this is not always possible.
- 3) We further suggest simplifying the rating system which is now a 1-3-5-7-9 rating to one which simply states that performance was satisfactory or unsatisfactory and why.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 28 – 1976

SITUATION: Unrealistic flight weight limitations for personal gear – 36 pounds. The 36 pound weight limitation is unrealistic for the amount of gear required in the Forest Service Manual and Fireline Handbook for the self-contained concept of I.R. / Hotshot Crews.

ACTION: Change the manual requirement of a 20-man crew not exceed a maximum weight limit of 4700 pounds. This total will include personnel gear, personal gear, saws, and miscellaneous items. This will allow each man a maximum of 235 pounds total, his own weight being part of the total.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 29 – 1976

SITUATION: Hotshot and I.R. Crews need a maximum number of chain saws with them at all times. Many crews do not carry enough saws or are unable to purchase them. Breakdowns occur on fires and if replacements are not available, crew performance is affected.

ACTION: A minimum number of four (4) chain saws should be dispatched with each Hotshot and I.R. Crew, to handle all fuel type situations, breakdowns, and to keep within the self contained concept.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 30 – 1976

SITUATION: Some crew members travel “light” while others resemble “pack mules”. No consistency between crews as to how crews come equipped. What equipment should a Hotshot crewman carry with him when he is sent out on a fire assignment?

ACTION: Develop guidelines for necessary personal protective equipment and operational items. Further recommend that if accepted, the guidelines be placed in the 1976 Regional Fire Mobilization Plan. Personal and Operational Protective Gear;

- 1) Personal protective equipment
 - a) Nomex fireshirt
 - b) Nomex trousers
 - c) Fire shelter
 - d) Hardhat
 - e) Gloves
 - f) Eye protection
 - g) 2-Ten man first aid pouches
- 2) Fireline accessories
 - a) Fire bag
 - b) Re-usable sleeping bag
 - c) Canteens
 - d) 12” smooth cut file with handle
 - e) Headlamp with batteries
 - f) 2-full meal rations

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 31 – 1976

SITUATION: No consistency in the “approved” method of carrying fuel in rotary-wing aircraft. Crews have been shipped to helispots without fuel, causing delays in accomplishing fire assignments. Helitack crews have own ideas on how to transport fuel.

ACTION:

- 1) Standardize one procedure region wide.
- 2) Obtain a FAA approved safety container, make them available through GSA and have them stocked in zone fire caches.
- 3) Have these fuel containers and their protective packaging added to the inventory of helitack crews and fire camp supply for the use by other than R-5 Hotshot Crews who might not have this equipment available to them.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 32 – 1976

SITUATION: There are no guidelines for the transportation of power saws and fuel containers on rotary and fixed wing aircraft. Crews are failing to empty saws and fuel tanks prior to loading on fixed wing aircraft.

ACTION: State in the Forest Service Manual under crew transportation the following guideline for fixed wing flights of power saws and fuel packs;

- 1) All fuel shall be emptied from power saws and fuel containers.
- 2) Chain saws shall be started and the fuel system run completely dry.
- 3) A defumer (texol purge) shall be sprayed into the empty chain saw fuel tanks and the empty fuel containers.
- 4) Responsibility for these regulations lies directly with the crew supervisors.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 33 – 1976

SITUATION: Availability of necessary personal crew gear such as military web gear, and other supplies are difficult to obtain. Crews are unable to find supply sources (such as GSA) for web gear, etc. and are not properly equipped. Some individuals have to purchase their own equipment from surplus stores.

ACTION:

- 1) North and South Zone fire caches should stock the necessary items carried by the I.R. / Hotshot Crews.
- 2) Find supply sources where items may be purchased or obtained on surplus.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 34 – 1976

SITUATION: New equipment and methods not being communicated to other crews. Individuals have developed new tools and new safety items have been obtained, but a lack of communication exists in making them known, i.e.; Super Pulaski (Los Prietos Hotshots) and nomex neck protectors.

ACTION: The “Hot Sheet”, which the Cleveland National Forest Hot Shot Crew will publish, will be used by the R-5 crews to make information on these new developments available to all crews on a regularly scheduled basis.

STATUS: Complete. (Hotshot Gazette no longer exists)

HOTSHOT STEERING COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT – 1979 ACTION ITEMS

ITEM 1 – 1979

SITUATION: Determination of actual gross weights of crew-carrying vehicles.

ACTION: This item obligated each Hotshot Crew to weigh their vehicles in specified configurations and send the data to Steve Arney, Truckee Ranger District on the Tahoe National Forest.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 2 – 1979

SITUATION: Determine acceptable standard tool inventories for Hotshot Crews.

ACTION: We intend to issue this inventory as a Regional supplement to the Fireman’s Handbook, FSH 5109.12, in Chapter 60. A standard regional inventory to be developed.

STATUS: Solved, see Fireman’s Handbook Chapter 60.

ITEM 3 – 1979

SITUATION: Develop regional policy for flight weights.

ACTION: Millar’s 5100 letter of March 30th 1979 establishes a regional standard crew weight of 4600 pounds. This standard will be adopted nationally as part of the FSM 5130 revision, currently in progress.

STATUS: Solved, see FSM 5130.

ITEM 4 – 1979

SITUATION: Develop a list of suitable packs and knapsacks that meet personal gear needs, without causing storage problems on aircraft or crew carrying vehicles.

ACTION: The Steering Committee developed a list of acceptable fire packs.

STATUS: Solved. List not necessary, Hotshot Crews can purchase almost any pack that they like.

ITEM 5 – 1979

SITUATION: Increase effectiveness of blue-card crews, human resource crews, and Forest Service regular crews.

ACTION: The National Crew Needs study addresses this issue, and is expected to be approved by the Washington Office shortly. The proposal under consideration would obligate Region Five to furnish the following crews, by category;

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>EXPLANATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
Category I	Hotshot Crew	20
Category II	Blue-card crews	32
Category III		

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 6 – 1979

SITUATION: Develop minimum standards for training of Hotshot Superintendents and Foremen.

ACTION: The Steering Committee solicit input from Hotshot Superintendents and develop a list of training courses for each position. We propose to issue this as a Regional supplement to FSH 5109.16, Fire Training and Qualifications Handbook.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 7 – 1979

SITUATION: Develop a list of publications in which to circulate safety notes, suggestions, and items relevant to suppression crews.

ACTION: The Aviation and Fire Management staff has researched the range of current publications that have some relevance to suppression crews and assembled a list of those publications.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 8 – 1979

SITUATION: Develop acceptable means of obtaining more utilization of crew-carrying vehicles on escaped fires.

ACTION: The Steering Committee has developed two alternatives to increased utilization of crew vehicles.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 9 – 1979

SITUATION: Increase our capability to use “Burnol” firing devices in a safe manner.

ACTION: Mark Linane of the Steering Committee in conjunction with Phil Russell of our Engineering Staff did an outstanding job of developing and directing a certification course for the use and storage of Burnol. 23 people were certified at the training session in Santa Barbara.

STATUS: Solved.

HOTSHOT SUPERINTENDENTS WORKSHOP – 1980

ITEM 1 – 1980

SITUATION: Develop Regional policy allowing Hotshot personnel one (1) hour for physical fitness programs. Some Hotshot Crews on some forests in Region Five are given a maximum of 30 minutes for physical training programs. This restriction results in not allowing an adequate warm-up and cool-down period, thus creating the possibility of injury to the individuals involved. Other crews have no established standards.

ACTION: Draft a Regional Supplement for Regional Forester and field review that specifies one (1) hour for physical fitness programs for Category 1 crews. The draft will speak to the necessity for reasonable warm-up and cool-down periods. As an interim measure, Forests are encouraged to permit one (1) hour physical fitness programs for Category 1 crews, pending establishment of a Regional standard.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 2 – 1980

SITUATION: Request interim waiver for the 1980 fire season concerning the restriction on transporting the lithium headlamp battery. The restrictions on the use, storage, and transportation of the lithium battery have failed to keep up with the progressive technology in making the battery safer to use. MEDC has told us that the batteries been improved considerably since the current restrictions were imposed.

ACTION: The Director, A&FM 5160 letter of May initiates this action with the Chief. We will keep you advised on our progress.

STATUS: Solved. Cannot fly with batteries.

ITEM 3 – 1980

SITUATION: Clarify the term “Face Protection”, section 5-17, item A, Protective Clothing, while operating a chainsaw, Health and Safety Code. The new Health and Safety Code states that face protection shall be worn when operating a chainsaw. What type of face protection is the Health and Safety Code referring to? Some types of face protection pose more hazards in restricted vision and added weight than they protect. No recommendations or sources of supply are available.

ACTION: Seek clarification of this issue with the Chief, and request a waiver from this requirement until MEDC can complete a study on what type of face protection is most appropriate, sources of supply, etc.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 4 – 1980

SITUATION: Allow Hotshot Crews the opportunity to evaluate the new fire resistant cotton clothing being developed by MEDC. MEDC will be evaluating fire resistant clothing in the near future. The items will be available through GSA, meaning whoever gets their order in first may secure the new clothing without any thought to its evaluation.

ACTION: Request the Chief consider a priority distribution of the new FR (Fire Resistant) cotton clothing to Category 1 Hotshot Crews, together with the obligation to test and evaluate the new clothing.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 5 – 1980

SITUATION: Develop a National policy instituting a standard Muscular Fitness Test and requirement for Category 1 personnel. Line workers are expected to pack heavy loads over difficult terrain. Workers need the leg strength to carry loads up and down steep slopes, to pull and pack hose, to carry and use backpack water pumps. These loads may be carried three (3) miles. The light and smaller individuals who qualify as being physically fit under the current Step Test system are generally experiencing difficulty in this area of work. Thus, they tire more quickly, will become less efficient, and pose a safety hazard to themselves and to the people around them.

ACTION: Review the development, evaluation, and validation of the Muscular Fitness Test conducted by the Missoula Equipment Development Center published in March 1980. Consider the implications and conclusions identified in this research project, along with our assessment of the positive and negative aspects of implementation of the Muscular Fitness Tests for Category 1 crews. Upon completion of this analysis, we will make our recommendation to the Chief. As the Chief indicated in his 1630 letter dated March 27th that he will establish a Service-wide policy on this matter. We have an opportunity to influence that policy.

STATUS: Solved.

HOTSHOT STEERING COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT – 1981 ACTION ITEMS

ITEM 1 – 1981

SITUATION: Crews are experiencing a lack of support at the District level in obtaining the “Certificate of Available Personnel”, for seasonal hiring purposes. This condition appears to be a Forest problem or responsibility. The crews are requesting assistance from your office in the form of a letter. They feel this would reinforce the Ranger District’s responsibility in assisting their sub-units in this area of concern.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 2 – 1981

SITUATION: Can the Regional Office develop a list (rotational) of Hotshot Crews available for reinforcement in South Zone? The Lassen Hotshots were last year’s example. As you know, they were detailed to the Angeles National Forest. Can other crews be put on a list so that they can be considered for such a detail?

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 3 – 1981

SITUATION: If this rotation list was approved, could the crew be guaranteed a minimum of two (2) days off for every thirty (30) days worked? During this time, could they be allowed to travel back to their official duty area for personal reasons?

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 4 – 1981

SITUATION: When South Zone Crews begin to lose their temporary employees due to college enrollment, would it be possible for Northern California crews who are laying off employees, to send them south to fill the vacant positions?

STATUS: Solved. Personnel can be reassigned.

ITEM 5 – 1981

SITUATION: Are Hotshot Crews restricted to 20 positions per crew? Can they hire additional crew members to make two (2) 10-person modules plus the Superintendent?

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 6 – 1981

SITUATION: What is the Region's policy on sleeping crews on the fireline without food, water, sleeping bags, etc, without pay?

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 7 – 1981

SITUATION: Can a Superintendent turn down a request by the Fire Boss for his services as a Division Supervisor or Branch Director position? I.E., Foremen are not ready to handle crew as a unit without direct supervision from Superintendent.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 8 – 1981

SITUATION: Do Hotshot Crews and other firefighting personnel fall under actual subsistence rates and systems when dispatched to wildland in an actual subsistence area?

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 9 – 1981

SITUATION: Has the Region standardized Hotshot Crew organizational structures?
Example: (1) GS-7, (2) GS-6's, (2) GS-5's, etc.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 10 – 1981

SITUATION: Can the Superintendent bring one Foreman to the future Hotshot Workshops?

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 11 – 1981

SITUATION: What is currently being done about the new 14,000 GVWR crew carriers? When will we see them?

RESPONSE: 1) Will not be available until 1982.
a) Problem with contracting negotiations.
b) Contract re-negotiations are being met at present.

2) The Forest contract will be for 6-8 vehicles rated at 17,000 GVWR.

3) Additional contracts will be specified as a minimum of 14,000 GVWR.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 12 – 1981

SITUATION: Have the restrictions been lifted on Lithium Batteries? Will we be able to order them this year?

RESPONSE: 1) Washington Office is still waiting for approval from DOT (Department of Transportation)

2) MEDC (Missoula Equipment Development Center) is working on a safe container for flying Lithium cells. To date, (not approved), aluminum conduit with PVC threads on each end, with PVC caps.

3) Safety:

- a) US Army has used 75,000 batteries with no problems, in inclement weather.
- b) A dead short will cause the battery to rupture, will not blow up.
- c) The gas from the battery is hazardous in an enclosed area.
- d) Affect is like shaking a can of beer or soda pop, and sticking a nail in it.

4) Price: \$12.00 to \$14.00 each. Cost will go down on larger orders.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 13 – 1981

SITUATION: Where is MEDC concerning the chainsaw chaps and fire resistant clothing? Will they be available this year?

RESPONSE: 1) Chainsaw Chaps have been contracted and will be available only after the old style are used up. (Safety First my ass).

2) Fire Resistant Clothing

- a) Nomex only available from GSA
- b) Evaluation underway, 1981 fire season on cotton and fire resistant rayon shirts and pants.
- c) Some crews in R-5 may take part in the evaluation.
- d) Any new contracts on Nomex pants will be a Western Cut style with slash pockets.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 14 – 1981

SITUATION: Will we see the new fire gear carrier and web gear this year? Will they be available through GSA?

RESPONSE: Will not be contracted during 1981 because of insufficient money allotted for this project.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 15 – 1981

SITUATION: What new items is MEDC currently working on?

RESPONSE: 1) MEDC now working on a one (1) gallon collapsible canteen to be contracted to GSA.
2) New paper sleeping bag, fiber fill, will be contracted through GSA. Cost expected to be the same, approximately \$11.00 each.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 16 – 1981

SITUATION: Would MEDC consider testing a new Bow Bar for chainsaws? Current manufacturer is selling poorly constructed equipment.

RESPONSE: MEDC has no knowledge of any problem with chainsaw bow bars, so nothing is being done.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 17 – 1981

SITUATION: Is the Region planning on using the 24 hour shift system in the 1981 fire season?

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 18 – 1981

SITUATION: Have any crews hired an extra employee as an extra driver? Have we pursued this?

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 19 – 1981

SITUATION: Is Region 5 planning on establishing Physical Fitness standards specifically for Category 1 Hotshot Crews?

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 20 – 1981

SITUATION: Are the cache radios going to be available for use to the Hotshot Crews? Did the Region decide on what frequency could be available for Hotshot Crews?

STATUS: Solved.

HOTSHOT STEERING COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT – 1983 ACTION ITEMS

ITEM 1 – 1983

SITUATION: The inability of the crews to purchase a saw of their choice.

ACTION: The Forest Service has again become an optional user of the GSA Chainsaw Contract. The Forest Service Washington Office advised GSA that we intend to remain optional users of the chainsaw schedule. Until further notice we are authorized to consider the schedule optional.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 2 – 1983

SITUATION: Evaluations and observations of equipment during the 1983 fire season.

ACTION #1: *Gloves:* The “second” gloves will be bought by GSA. The crews that had a chance to evaluate the “second” gloves felt they were worth the 50% reduction in cost. Hopefully the “seconds” will not prejudice the new design. The “second” gloves will be carried as a separate item in GSA catalogs as “seconds” at half price. They will also carry the “firsts” at full price. Gauntlet gloves not carried by GSA. Subject not pursued by the committee.

STATUS: Solved. Gloves were purchased and distributed.

ACTION #2: *Hand tool study.*

STATUS: Solved. Evaluations are available.

ACTION #3: *Rhinehart hand tool* – evaluations not available.

STATUS: Solved. Evaluations are available.

ACTION #4: *Web gear:* GSA will carry in 1984. Some crews do not feel the new gear will fill their needs.

RECOMMENDATION: It was recommended that crews should be able to purchase the type of web gear they want to suit individual crew needs. The crews need to do their homework to get an individual waiver.

STATUS: Solved. Web gear has been re-designed.

ACTION #5: *Retardant:* The short term retardant study is still underway. The California Department of Forestry is the lead agency doing the study. The airports involved are Fresno, Santa Rosa, and Chico. (Short term retardant - \$0.17/gallon, long term retardant - \$0.65/gallon). In theory the short term retardant has better penetration in grass. The Hotshot Crews may be asked to evaluate the results of short term retardant, Ken will send out the proper forms. Short term retardant is lighter in color and is thinner in consistency than long term retardant. It is also less likely to stick on drums of the fuel than the long term.

STATUS: Pending.

- ACTION #6: *Hard hats:* The new hard hat carried in the GSA Fire Equipment Catalog is not acceptable.
RECOMMENDATION: It was recommended that a letter be written addressing problems with the new hard hat. Ken was to develop a waiver to allow us to purchase a suitable helmet on the open market. Hard hat color-coding is a Forest option, not an ICS directive, so it is still up to the individual Forest to decide to change to the ICS color code or maintain their own color.
- STATUS: Pending.
- ACTION #7: *Tool handles:* The concern is that we cannot get Class “A” handles for pulaskis. Some crews are getting axe handles which have been more difficult to fit into a pulaski head.
RECOMMENDATION: If handles are bad, follow through with a GSA quality complaint form or the complaint form attached to the South Zone Fire cache catalog. Complaint forms need to be used whenever we have any GSA problems. GSA has corrected problems as a result of receiving complaints on items. This problem will also be turned over to the Regional Equipment Committee for follow-up. Jim Smith to check with Zone caches to see if they are getting Class “A” or “B” pulaski handles.
- STATUS: Pending.
- ACTION #8: *Personal Protective Equipment:*
1) Face protection chainsaw – letter dated 5/19/80 suspending H & SC, page 168.
2) Neck protection – MEDC is testing several models. The results are not available.
3) Nomex pants – the cost of Nomex is getting too high, and it is not expected to go down. Missoula has been doing some testing on an alternative that would be less but still provide protection. A study is also underway by Aviation and Fire Management on the cost effectiveness of fire pants.
RECOMMENDATION: The committee feels the cost of Nomex is getting too high, and that a 100% cotton pant treated to make it fire resistant would fill our needs. The pant will still be considered protective clothing and should be supplied through GSA.
- STATUS: Solved. Nomex will be used.
- ACTION #9: *Headlamps – Lithium:* Lithium batteries are still not permitted on aircraft. Tom Hatcher and Jerry Barney have done some work on converting the lithium headlamps to be able to use the lithium battery or smaller alkaline batteries by changing the bulb and battery pack.
RECOMMENDATION: Continue to attempt to get the proper clearance to carry lithium batteries in aircraft. Continue to develop and share ideas through the newsletter on ways to convert the lithium headlamps for use when traveling in aircraft.
- STATUS: Solved. Batteries cannot fly in aircraft.
- ACTION #10: *MRE's:* this will be the standard once the old C-rations are used. Some problems have been experienced with the Hamburger Patty entrée it requires water, stays hard and is one of the poorer entrees. The large plastic bag expands when the temperature rises. The bag can be ruptured when carried in the web gear or the contents can be removed from the large bag and carried separately.
RECOMMENDATION: Jerry Barney to send in a quality complaint to GSA on the Hamburger Patty entrée. We suggest that anyone else having problems should also submit a complaint to GSA.
- STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 3 – 1983

SITUATION: *Vehicles* – The concern over turning in keys in fire camp so that crew transportation can be used by other crews.

RECOMMENDATION: This should remain a local option. Keeping in mind that some vehicles require a Class II license to operate.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 4 – 1983

SITUATION: *New ICS Red Cards* – The Los Padres National Forest is doing the test run. The users guide has been sent to Forests and two (2) training sessions on the use of the new system will be held in the spring, one in North Zone and one in South Zone.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 5 – 1983

SITUATION: *Transportation* – We need to establish some standards for our crew carriers and buses.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Two (2) committees be developed, Crew Carriers and Buses. The crews should report to the newsletter on ideas for improvements to the Bus and Crew Carriers. The new bus standards will go through the Equipment Officers that have been working on the new buses. These standards will then be forwarded to the Regional Equipment Officer. The Crew Carrier Committee to develop standards and ideas and submit them through their Equipment Manager who in turn will submit them to the Regional Equipment Manager. Both committees will keep the newsletter informed so that the ideas can be published.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 6 – 1983

SITUATION: Can the 4600 pound weight restrictions be raised?

RECOMMENDATION: The 4600 weight limitation was primarily for the Twin Otter. We propose that the Regional Office look into raising the weight limitations to 4800 pounds for the Convairs and keep 4600 pound limit for flying in the Twin Otter.

STATUS: Solved. 4800 pounds is the new limit.

ITEM 7 - 1983

SITUATION: Flying crews in night flying helicopters.

RECOMMENDATION: The South Zone air unit should put together an orientation for flying Hotshot Crews in night flying ships. The orientation should include items that need to be reviewed prior to flight. This will help the crews review necessary items prior to being put into the position of flying in the night flyer.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 8 – 1983

SITUATION: ICS method of typing hand crews is weak and needs to be expanded. We need to resolve inconsistencies of performance expectations of various types of crews.

RECOMMENDATION: No changes to ICS terminology can be made until 1986. We realize that the present system of typing has limitations. The Regional Fire Management Office has set up an ad hoc group of which Barry Callenberger is a member, to address Action Item 9 of the Matilija Fire Evaluation. “Resolve inconsistencies of performance expectations of various types of hand crews in accomplishing line production targets”. Barry will report through the newsletter.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 9 – 1983

SITUATION: Crew need study.

RECOMMENDATION: Ken to follow up with cost reduction study notes affecting Hotshot Crews and the crew need study.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 10 – 1983

SITUATION: Program Budget Levels. The averages used by the Task Force (Nov. – Dec. 1982, Tom Fulk) for standard module. Cost effective use. The Region cannot dictate to the Forest Supervisor as to the amount that must be spent on the crews. The Region can only suggest. The Forest Supervisor has the option of how to handle the budget. How can the Hotshot Crews lengthen the time the crews are on?

RECOMMENDATION: Solicit the crews for cost saving benefits. How are some of the crews getting projects and money to help extend their season? Send your ideas to Barry to be published in the newsletter. We cannot sit quietly by waiting for projects and money to come to us. It’s up to us as Superintendents to solicit the department on the Forest for projects and salary money. Tom Hatcher to contact Rusty about his package he put together which helps “sell” his crew to the other departments. The package to be published in the newsletter.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 11 – 1983

SITUATION: What is the Max II Crew status? The Region only wants to develop the two (2) Max II Crews which are presently on board. At present the Region is not proposing the creation of any additional Max II Crews.

RECOMMENDATION: The Max II Crews are only to be coupled with the Category II Crews. During the 1984 fire season the Max II Crews should not be mixed in a strike team with Category 1 Crews. The Region to clarify the Max II Crew’s dispatch status with Zone dispatchers. The Hotshot Steering Committee supports the Max II Crew concept as a means of improving the quality of our Blue Card Crews. We do not feel that they should be used as a way to replace our Category 1 Crews.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 12 – 1983

SITUATION: Equipment testing. Several times we've been asked to test equipment. We've received the data too late to effectively do the testing.

RECOMMENDATION: Try to find out sooner what Missoula would like us to evaluate. We would also like to get more feedback on equipment we have tested. Perhaps we can have the newsletter publish results. We want to continue testing equipment for MEDC. It gives us an opportunity to have some genuine input into the equipment that is being developed.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 13 – 1983

SITUATION: There seems to be some discrepancies in our overtime pay while in travel status, particularly for the drivers.

RECOMMENDATION: Tom to research and to follow up with answers in the newsletter.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 14 – 1983

SITUATION: Logistics during the 24 hour work cycle on fires need to improve, particularly the supply of water.

RECOMMENDATION: This point was brought out by the evaluation of the 24 hour cycle.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 15 – 1983

SITUATION: Subsistence and Per Diem. If a crew misses a meal there is no way to be reimbursed for that loss. Can we return to Per Diem when on fires? Do we have to show a break while on the line on a uncontrolled fire?

RECOMMENDATION: Regional Office to ask for a review of the actual subsistence rules for clarification. While on the fire line on an uncontrolled fire you are not required to show a break for a meal.

STATUS: Solved. Addressed in the FSM.

ITEM 16 – 1983

SITUATION: Recruitment – Seasonals and Career Conditionals.

- 1) The Consent Decree is real, it is mandatory and we need to support it.
Superintendents need to actively recruit on their own to help fulfill the local needs.
Be advised the rules for Category 1 crews are set forth in the Manual.
- 2) Why can't we have all 20 people on board the first day of our fire season?

RECOMMENDATION: This is a local concern and needs to be handled locally. Encourage the personnel departments to get the hiring done early enough to get people on in time for the Hotshot Crews so they can be fire ready as soon as possible.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 17 – 1983

SITUATION: What are the various start and stop dates for this Region's Hotshot Crews?

RECOMMENDATION: A list of start and stop dates is available.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 18 – 1983

SITUATION: What performance standards are the different crews using to do performance ratings on their people?

RECOMMENDATION: Use the draft performance standards for your positions as a point to start. Each individual's standards are different and the performance standards should reflect this. Be specific with your standards but don't limit yourself either.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 19 – 1983

SITUATION: We are not always getting Fire Performance Ratings.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Do everything you can to get the performance ratings done prior to you or your boss leaving fire camp. Carry some Fire Overhead Performance Ratings with you in your briefcase.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 20 – 1983

SITUATION: Terminology: Foreman vs. Superintendent.

RECOMMENDATION: We are not going to change and neither are the other Regions.

STATUS: Solved. Superintendents.

HOTSHOT STEERING COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT – 1985 ACTION ITEMS**ITEM 1 – 1985**

SITUATION: Define one season of experience in reference to hiring crew persons on Interagency Hotshot Crews.

ACTION: Definition of one (1) season of experience:

- 1) Has received 32 hours of basic training in wildland fire fighting or equivalent.
- 2) Must have 65 working days in Fire Management as a fire fighting agency seasonal hire.
- 3) Emergency hires (example: AD crews, inmate crews) 35 days in fire suppression activities or two (2) summers on the crew.

Kent Clark take to Regional Office Personnel. Individual Superintendents take to home personnel departments to use as a tool in selecting employees for Type 1 crews.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 2 – 1985

SITUATION: What is the status of Rusty Witwer's Job Hazard Analysis for chainsaws?

ACTION: Look at R-6 Chainsaw Training Guide to Rusty. Tom Hatcher to assist Rusty in completing by 4/15/86. Superintendents share saw information with Rusty and Tom Hatcher to help with JHA.

STATUS: Pending. (Information Source)

ITEM 3 – 1985

SITUATION: Superintendent and Foreman up-grading.

ACTION: Mark Linane still working on it with his committee, presently on standby. Jim Cook, NPS to distribute his new job description once it has been reclassified. Several Superintendents are still working on their own job descriptions. Keep in touch when one of us has a breakthrough and notify the committee.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 4 – 1985

SITUATION: Development of a Wildland Fire Fighting Series.

ACTION: Tom Hatcher to continue work with Mike Vineyard, Personnel Officer to develop an issue statement with Kent Clark by 1/87.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 5 – 1985

SITUATION: Muscular Fitness Testing.

ACTION: See the attached 8/23/85 letter, Enclosure No. 1. Kenton to follow up on the status of the proposal.

STATUS: Pending.

HOTSHOT STEERING COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT – 1986 ACTION ITEMS

ITEM 1 – 1986

SITUATION: Crew Designation. You may have noticed a change with the "IHC – Interagency Hotshot Crew". This was one of the issues that we took on from Region 6. What should our crew title be, let's be more consistent nationally.

ACTION: "Interagency Hotshot Crew" is more consistent with the other Regions hence our new crew title. Our overhead titles are being accepted by other Regions – Superintendent, Foreman, and Squad Boss so maybe we can get some national consistency.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 2 – 1986

SITUATION: Charter. The Steering Committee Charter is proposed, as follows:

Role of the Steering Committee:

- 1) Select appropriate processes for resolution of issues as they surface.
- 2) Screen and consolidate Interagency Hotshot Crew concerns and present warranted concerns to the appropriate management level.
- 3) Recommend to Advisor the need for committee meetings and a regional workshop.
- 4) Establish the agenda for meetings and who should be present.
- 5) Gather, consolidate and evaluate new ideas, procedures, and equipment.
- 6) Publish a newsletter.
- 7) Chairperson serves as a representative to the Regional Equipment Development Committee.
- 8) A committee member will serve on the Regional Fire Cache Committee.

Role of the Regional Advisor:

- 1) Gives direction and advice to the committee, via the chairperson, on IHC program concerns.
- 2) Presents issues to and from Regional and Forest Fire management levels.
- 3) Coordinator for equipment evaluation and other equipment developments that are applicable to hand crews and are presented to the Region.
- 4) Gains understanding and support for implementing issues the committee deems important.

ACTION: Kent Clark to publish a letter to legitimize the roles with these meeting notes.

ITEM 3 – 1986

SITUATION: Update the Fire Training and Qualifications Handbook FSH 7/79 R-5 Supplement into an appropriate FSH location.

ACTION: Develop a document that will reflect the following revisions:

FIRE TRAINING CAREER GUIDES FOR TYPE IA HANDCREWS

The following training is recommended for hand crew specialists, assigned to Type 1A Interagency Hotshot Crews. The courses are not intended as prerequisites for selection to a position. It is expected an incumbent would acquire the desired training during the first year in the position.

TRAINING

Superintendent GS-7

Safety Management

Small Purchasing

I-339 Division Supervisor

Foreman GS-6

Instructor Training

Strike Team/Task Force Leader

Initial Attack Incident Commander

I-333 Crew Strike Team Leader

I-334 Engine Strike Team Leader

I-335 Dozer Strike Team Leader

Supervisor
Assistant Foreman (Squad Boss) GS-5
S-230 Crew Supervisor
S-260 Fire Business Management
S-270 Basic Air Operations
I-390 Intermediate Fire Behavior
3C National Fire Policy
Paracargo Retrieval (optional)
Rope Repelling

Crew Member GS-4, 3, 2
I-220 Basic ICS
Multi Media First Aid / CPR
S-130 Firefighter
S-190 Basic Fire Behavior
S-211 Water and Pumps
S-212 Power Saws
S-215 Firing Equipment
Ethics and Conduct
Affirmative Action

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 4 – 1986

SITUATION: Hotshot Superintendents need to get mail that is from the Regional Office, intended for them, sent directly to them.

ACTION: Kent Clark to mail official correspondence to the Forests, and a courtesy copy direct to the Superintendents.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 5 – 1986

SITUATION: The exempt and non-exempt status of Superintendents and FLSA.

ACTION: The Regional Office is in the process of requesting a change to the “max-out” rule, through OPM. Firefighting overtime is of an emergency nature and should be exempt from “maxing-out”. (Kent Clark)

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 6 – 1986

SITUATION: Who is responsible for crew persons when the crew is off shift?

ACTION: Bill Bowman to take this to the February IC Meeting. Crew supervisors need to reinforce several items.

- 1) You cannot hold a crew in camp without paying them.
- 2) You as the supervisor do have some leverage;
 - a) You as a crew supervisor can determine whether an individual is fit for duty when it is time to return to the fire.
 - b) As federal employees we fall under the provisions found in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Personnel, Appendix I “Employee Responsibilities and Conduct” and are obliged to obey them. We as Superintendents need to reinforce these rules particularly with respect to off duty time.
 - c) Subpart B. 0.735-11.b.1
Prohibited conduct – Engaging in criminal, infamous, dishonest, or notoriously disgraceful conduct, or other conduct prejudicial to the Government. We do have some tools that will help us take disciplinary action if problems arise while a crew is off shift. We cannot be responsible on off-duty time for the actions of our crew people.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 7 – 1986

SITUATION: Standby or holding a crew in camp.

ACTION: If you are locked up or your movements are restricted on a compound and you question the legality of holding a crew without paying them get it in writing from the individual holding you in camp so it is documented – do not push the issue at the incident. Take the issue up with your finance people on your home forest when you return, the documentation will help resolve the pay problem.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 8 – 1986

SITUATION: Keep the vehicles with the crews more, i.e., fly the crew and chase the vehicles.

ACTION: The advantages and the cost savings for chasing the crew with the vehicles were discussed with Bill Bowman who will take the concerns to the IC Meeting. Kent Clark will follow up with a letter to the field on the cost effectiveness of following with crew vehicles when crews fly within or adjacent to California.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 9 – 1986

SITUATION: When the old crew carriers are being turned in for replacement the crews are not getting back the same crew boxes that they sent into the shop.

ACTION: No change. The reason is to expedite getting replacements into the field. It is necessary to previously turned in equipment and send them out on the new bodies. This way there is no delay in getting the replacement vehicles back to the crews.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 10 – 1986

SITUATION: Lunches. Frozen lunches spoil quickly and the bread falls apart when defrosted. Also, would like more variety in the sandwiches.

ACTION: Kent Clark to check on national contract specifications and then follow-up on the issue of frozen lunches. Tom Hatcher to continue in development of a new lunch contract, which is near completion.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 11 – 1986

SITUATION: 24 hour shift cycle. Who has the authority to activate it and is it optional service wide? Logistics continue to be a problem.

ACTION: Kent Clark to update and redistribute the 24-hour shift cycle booklet service wide.

STATUS: Solved, R-5.

ITEM 12 – 1986

SITUATION: Invite a Class I Incident Commander to our Committee Meeting.

ACTION: Bill Bowman attended and we will continue to invite them.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 13 – 1986

SITUATION: Planning sections are not asking for current intelligence from crews coming off shift. Even when it is volunteered, crew Superintendents have been turned away.

ACTION: Bill Bowman to take to the IC Meeting. Some suggestions for us to use were:

- 1) At briefing meetings push the issue of debriefing, i.e., Superintendents, ask where and when the crew supervisors are to be debriefed after shift.
- 2) Planning Section: Set up a debriefing map covered with “corniflex” so line personnel can draw in the fire’s edge line construction and line held etc.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 14 – 1986

SITUATION: Briefings are not getting out enough maps or good intelligence.

ACTION: Bill Bowman to take to the IC Meeting. Suggestion by the committee is for all the crew supervisors, engine foremen, etc. below Division Supervisor be given at least a good map, not necessarily a copy of the entire shift plan and then be briefed by the Division Supervisor. Briefing meetings given by the fire team should not necessarily include people below the Division Supervisor.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 15 – 1986

SITUATION: Assigning a Strike Team Leader from a different agency is causing problems. Breaking up a Type 1 Strike Team at the incident, and reorganizing them with a Type 2 out of Region crew because they have no saws and are inexperienced causes problems.

ACTION: Kent Clark to check on the feasibility of requesting that out of Region crews come equipped with saws. The inexperience of the crew may still require the coupling of Type 1 and Type 2 crews. This will not necessarily mean that it will keep these new Strike Teams away from the hotter parts of the fire because of the reduced capabilities of the Type 1 Strike Team.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 16 – 1986

SITUATION: Crew start up dates – are they Regionally set and are they being adhered to? What are the funding options that the Region has given to the forests with Hotshot Crew funding?

ACTION: Kent Clark to follow-up.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 17 – 1986

SITUATION: Information on how budgeting and financing is handled. Is the “Fulk Study” valid?

ACTION: Kent Clark to follow-up with a letter on the Fulk Study. Barry and Bill Molumby to update crew needs section of the Fulk Study.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 18 – 1986

SITUATION: How can we get more help to return key people and crew replacements to the IHC crews on fires?

ACTION: Kent Clark to discuss with the zone dispatchers. What process would we use to make this happen? It might be easier to have the home forest initiate the action, not the fire.
(See memo 5130, 3/26/85)

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 19 – 1986

SITUATION: What is the possibility that the Redding Smoke Jumpers could repair and build equipment for us like the McCall Smoke Jumpers do?

ACTION: Kent Clark to explore with Redding.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 20 – 1986

SITUATION: GSA web gear is still not doing what we want. Redding type web gear, Dalton packs and MEI Hotshot Packs are superior alternatives.

ACTION: Tom Hatcher to work with Cache Committee to make special changes in the GSA web gear (9/86). Use local waivers to continue purchasing the alternatives.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 21 – 1986

SITUATION: Sleep periods. Five (5) hours of uninterrupted sleep. How did the Region come up with their interpretation?

ACTION: Amendment is policy at present. Like per diem was three (3) years ago. Tom Hatcher with Mike Vineyard to follow-up.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 22 – 1986

SITUATION: Dispatch and logistics people don't know all of the assistance capabilities of our Hotshot Crews in areas other than Fire Suppression, such as in the area of other natural disasters.

ACTION: At present, Chuck Mills from the San Bernardino National Forest is in Washington D.C., working with the state department on ways the Forest Service in general can assist in all types of National or International natural disasters.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 23 – 1986

SITUATION: Foreign foresters on Type 1 crews make things difficult for the crews.

ACTION: Regional office is discouraging putting foreign foresters on Type 1 crews.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 24 – 1986

SITUATION: Unemployment insurance – how will this effect our budgets?

ACTION: Obligation is on the forest. Find out how your forest is handling it. Should not be much of an impact.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 25 – 1986

SITUATION: Where is the Burnol? Burnol shipping and receiving, are we (the FS), imposing rules on Burnol shipments that are stricter than those of the State and Federal governments?

ACTION: Kent Clark to follow-up.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 26 – 1986

SITUATION: Is there a ratio for number of showers per person?

ACTION: There are rules of thumb standards. Tom Hatcher to take to the Fire Cache Committee to look at the standards and see if they should be updated. Also need to look at having forests look into their pre-attack packages where fire camps are located if we can hook up directly to city septic systems to lower gray water disposal costs. This was an exceptional year (1985) and we ran out of a source for shower units.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 27 – 1986

SITUATION: Weight limitations of 4800 pounds for 20 person crews. Individual verses crew or what?

ACTION: All Superintendents carry the Regional Office letter dated 7/09/85 – Subject Weight and Gear Limits. Remember 4800 pounds is the crew's total weight limitation with all equipment. The 35 pound individual gear weight is only for individuals travelling as small crews or individuals, it is not a limitation from crew persons on organized crews.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 28 – 1986

SITUATION: What happened to the two (2) headlamps (air cells) per crew and the combination tools that were to be tested? What is the status of the air cell headlamps – can we get them from GSA yet?

ACTION: Kent Clark to follow-up.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 29 – 1986

SITUATION: Regional Equipment Committee – Barry. Combination tool. Before GSA goes into final production the Hotshots would like to reevaluate the tool to see if all suggested corrections were made to the tool. MRE's are not fulfilling our needs.

ACTION: Barry to take to Equipment Committee Meeting. Tom Hatcher to take to the Fire Cache Committee Meeting. The specifications need to be changed which may mean a separate GSA contract for someone other than the military to provide the retorts and accessories. The Forest Service may need to develop their own ration packages. The waste of the MRE's is wide spread.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 30 – 1986

SITUATION: There seems to be a big controversy over the proper oil/gas mixture for chainsaws.

ACTION: Greg Overacker to research and to follow-up in the newsletter.

STATUS: Solved.

HOTSHOT STEERING COMMITTEE PROGRESS REPORT – 1987 ACTION ITEMS

ITEM 1 – 1987

SITUATION: Safety – Fire shelter deployments have almost become a part of fire fighting. There are a lot of perceptions of what is going wrong, but we need to get to the root of the problem. We have come very close to some major fatalities with no apparent concern to correct what went wrong. We appear to have a lot of inexperienced people in key overhead positions.

ACTION: Set up an eight (8) hour period at the R-5 IHC Workshop to gather information on the types of safety problems experienced by the Superintendents.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 2 – 1987

SITUATION: IHC Injury Records.

ACTION: Fire related injuries of Hotshot crews are counting against the crew's home forest. This is a problem that needs to be addressed by management, not the Superintendents.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 3 – 1987

SITUATION: The problem still exists with our flight weights and weigh-in for transportation by air.

ACTION: Ken Blonski of the National Fire Coordinator group has written a policy which clarifies this problem. The policy has not yet been approved by all agencies. Ken Blonski to mail out new direction.

STATUS: New regulations are in the National Mobilization Guide.

ITEM 4 – 1987

SITUATION: What can and can't we do on our own time while on fires? Who's policy do we follow?

ACTION:

1. Refer to 1986 Steering Committee notes, Item #6.
2. Ken Blonski to put on R-5 I.C. meeting agenda.
3. R-3 policy, see attachment.
4. Follow the policy of the fire team or Region you are in. Don't do anything that will reflect on you, your crew, or your region.
5. An individual on an Alaska Fire Crew has started congressional inquiry on freedom of movement. Dave Dash to keep us informed.
6. Will be placed on National IHC meeting agenda.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 5 – 1987

SITUATION: What is one season of fire fighting experience?

ACTION:

1. Refer to 1986 Steering Committee notes.
2. Ken Blonski to take to R-5 Personnel Department.
3. Will be presented to Regional FMO meeting by Ken Blonski.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 6 – 1987

SITUATION: Flight vs. vehicle travel. Refer to R.O. letter, 3/26/86, mobilization of IHC's.

ACTION: Reissue the above letter, emphasize the effectiveness of using our own vehicles. R-3 and R-6 are looking at the same issue.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 7 – 1987

SITUATION: Standardize crew structure of the IHC crews.

ACTION: None, it's been dealt with in the past.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 8 – 1987

SITUATION: National Workshop.

ACTION: Barry and Ken to pursue with Kent. R-6 has shown a strong interest in hosting a National Workshop in Portland, Oregon. To be held March 7-11, 1988.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 9 – 1987

SITUATION: Drug and Alcohol abuse.

ACTION: Dave Conklin to develop a position statement with the help from all IHC crews in the Region. We continue to confront the problem. This will be an agenda item at the R-5 IHC Workshop. Continue to educate and enforce our regulations via the "CONCERN" program.

STATUS: Unsolved. Dave Conklin has written the position statement and has mailed it to the R.O.

ITEM 10 – 1987

SITUATION: Regional Type 1 coordinator to coordinate IHC crews and other crews. Create the establishment of a list of crew availability during the off season for emergency situations for fast mobilization.

ACTION: Mark Linane to continue action of putting together a prospective on what the crews are capable of doing and his other ideas on the subject. Mark to pass on to Ken Blonski, who will present to Kent Clark. Mark also needs to present his ideas on the new Coordinator position.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 11 – 1987

SITUATION: Poor turn around time on getting new crew carriers.

ACTION: Barry to follow up at Equipment Committee meeting. The last delay was the result of a poor contract. Frank Wiener does not believe we will have this problem with future contracts.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 12 – 1987

SITUATION: The “Fresh Crew” concept. Are crews really fresh when they get dispatched at 2200, arrive on the fire at 0600, and are sent to the line as a “fresh crew”?

ACTION: The Superintendents need to take responsibility for their crews status. If you feel your crew needs to be rested that” your responsibility to handle. Right now the Regional Office is evaluating a National proposal after 14 days assigned to a fire you must take a mandatory 48 hours off. We do not support this but we do support the Superintendents taking the responsibility of caring for their people. We passed on a report from M.E.D.C. on Fire Fighter Fatigue that is presently being considered.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 13 – 1987

SITUATION: When will the overhead positions (Superintendents and Foreman) , on IHC’s be upgraded? The way the classifiers look at it throughout the Region is different.

ACTION: We need some Regional intervention in establishing upgraded position descriptions for the overhead. Dick Harrell and Ken Blonski to take the lead. J. Barney to get a copy of his new position description to Ken. Also, we need to continue to communicate with each other. At present the Angeles and San Bernardino Superintendents and Foremen GS-8 and GS-7 PD’s have been approved. Rusty Witwer has established a GS-8 Superintendent position description and it will be shared with all.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 14 – 1987

SITUATION: Crew funding and length of season. A more realistic look at actual funding level needs and length of season.

ACTION: To be followed up by Ken Blonski.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 15 – 1987

SITUATION: “Max-out”. What can we do? What has been done? Status of some grievances.

ACTION: Several grievances have been filed through the Forest Service. Congressional responses are coming back positive but with no solutions. The responses from OPM indicated the need to address the fact that it’s an emergency situation and therefore “max-out” does not apply.

STATUS: Solved (temporarily). This item will be brought up to date at the R-5 Workshop.

ITEM 16 – 1987

SITUATION: Creation of a Wildland Fire Fighter job series.

ACTION: Tom Hatcher has done some extensive work and is continuing to develop the series with Anthony Escobar’s (BLM) help. Next step is to meet with Regional Personnel Department staff to refine and get some new direction. Tom is at the point that he needs to create the issues. Don Feser has been added to the group.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 17 – 1987

SITUATION: 1986 National Reinforcement of crew needs analysis.

ACTION: Attached is the executive summary, which has not yet had the blessing of the National Directors.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 18 – 1987

SITUATION: User programmable hand held radios.

ACTION: Field programmable radios are the best and most technologically advanced radios available. They provide for a safer means of communication than has been previously available. The IHC's don't have to be saddles with only being able to have the 48 channel radios. The 48 channel radios were purchased by the Region for the IHC crews because at the time they were the most technologically advanced radios on the market. Crews should be permitted to purchase a radio that meets their needs better than the 48 channel radios. Ken to take up issue with Kent. We need to reemphasize the need for frequency discipline and using the proper frequencies. Reissue Interim Directive #1 and #2 – 7230 – Radio Communications, June 30, 1986. King radios are available and programming privileges available to the Superintendents.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 19 – 1987

SITUATION: E.F.F. inexperienced crews are being put into critical situations with IHC crews, which is a serious safety violation.

ACTION: Dave Conklin to follow up to gather more details for Ken Blonski. These problems should be handled on scene. Chuck Hartley feels we should make the Safety Officer the contact for these problems. To be discussed with safety at the R-5 Workshop.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 20 – 1987

SITUATION: MRE's – There is a question as to whether the military is still using them.

ACTION: A. Juklan to review "20/20" story. Will get back to Barry Callenberger.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 21 – 1987

SITUATION: MRE's are still the choice by fires when they are the easiest to be provided.

ACTION: Barry Callenberger to check Equipment Committee notes to see if they are included in the R-5 Equipment Committee recommendations. We will continue to eat MRE's.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 22 – 1987

SITUATION: The Committee feels crew carrier replacement of 15 years may be too long.

ACTION: Don Feser to collect data to establish the credibility of a shorter replacement period.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 23 – 1987

SITUATION: Are we causing some of our own problems in our physical fitness programs? Are we falling behind the times with our ideas?

ACTION: Crews seek local assistance from sports medicine specialists. Hotshot Journal to feature a medical and physical fitness section.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 24 – 1987

SITUATION: What is the status of a physical fitness test as a requirement or condition of hire? What was the answer to Dick Montague's inquiry? This is a safety problem which has cost us money when we hire people who are not physically fit.

ACTION: Ken Blonski to follow through. Set up a meeting including Priscilla Stuart, Beth Miller, and Dave Conklin. Dave and his District Ranger are following through with a report to the R-5 Workshop.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 25 – 1987

SITUATION: Inaccurate information is being given out on out of Region assignments. R-3 failed to support the R-5 crews when they were held in R-3. There was no R.L.O. with the R-5 crews sent out to R-3. Many problems could have been solved by the R.L.O. Why wasn't there one sent with the R-5 crews.

ACTION: Ken Blonski to follow through.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 26 – 1987

SITUATION: When we get fire assignments the Superintendents are asking dispatch legitimate questions, and are not getting the information needed from dispatch. Such as;

1. Type of assignment, detail or fire? If it is a detail, how long will it last?
2. Who is the I.C.?
3. What frequency do we make contact on?
4. Accurate contact point and make it a place you can count on meeting someone.

ACTION: Ken Blonski to contact Regional dispatcher.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 27 – 1987

SITUATION: Why do we continue to couple Type 1 and Type 2 crews in strike teams? Zone dispatchers continue to mix typing. Max II is a Type 2 crew, not a Type 1 crew. The typing must be adjusted to reflect the lowest typing.

ACTION: Ken Blonski to follow through with Regional dispatcher.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 28 – 1987

SITUATION: What is the crew typing? Who is what? The inconsistency in typing is getting a lot of inexperienced Type 2 crews into hazardous situations. Are we expecting too much from them?

ACTION: Ken Blonski to take to the National Workshop. R-5's typing to make the National typing more consistent. The March 1987 R-5 supplement to the Fireline Notebook spells out what the typing is for R-5.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 29 – 1987

SITUATION: The requirement of FERS Hazardous Duty Retirement is that you must stay in a primary position for ten (10) years. This applies to anyone hired after January 1, 1984. We may be locking our people into ten (10) years at the GS-6 level and below.

ACTION: Ken Blonski to take to the Regional Personnel office and to the Regional FMO meeting. See attached letter.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 30 – 1987

SITUATION: Safety First. "We should never knowingly jeopardize lives for acreage". This is our agency concept. By placing crews in positions that we cannot support them logistically or tactically day or night, i.e. – by using "Coyote Tactics" are we gambling with our lives? Are we as an organization going to continue in unsafe strategies and deployments, due to the lack of support? Example: Chilicoot Complex – you get the crew out so far, someone is injured that cannot be flown out to save his life.

ACTION: From a safety point of view, we feel that the tactics are unsafe, take advantage of the employees, place people in unsafe positions, and don't properly compensate the employee. R-5 Workshop agenda item.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 31 – 1987

SITUATION: Would it be possible to get a list of gas stations that are open twenty-four (24) hours?

ACTION: Greg Overacker to follow up and publish a list with Jim Cook.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 32 – 1987

SITUATION: Training packages need to be brought up to date with the new fire orders and 18 watch out situations. Start by incorporating them into all new training packages.

ACTION: Barry to contact Ted Rex, Boise Training Officer. Issue will be presented by Barry at the R-5 Workshop.

STATUS: Solved.

ITEM 33 – 1987

SITUATION: Military transportation. The military is putting two (2) National Guard personnel in the cab, not the crew supervisor. We need the crew supervisor in the cab to control the drivers. There are no seat belts and no seat covers. Why are we using the military when we have not exhausted civilian resources. Drivers need to know that they are working for the crew supervisor when transporting crews. Transportation is becoming a safety problem and needs to be addressed.

ACTION: Will be an agenda item at the R-5 Workshop.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 34 – 1987

SITUATION: Items for MEDC: zinc air batteries, CO poisoning, and lung testing.

ACTION: Barry Callenberger to follow through. Art Jukala will be attending the R-5 Workshop.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 35 – 1987

SITUATION: There is an inconsistency with how per diem is claimed throughout the Region. What are the rules?

ACTION: Don Feser to follow up before the R-5 Workshop.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 36 – 1987

SITUATION: Define R & R. What will the policy be? What are acceptable R & R facilities? Crews need to be moved away from fire camp situations and closer to community facilities. They should be placed in motels or returned home for R & R. Time for R & R should not include travel times to and from the R & R site.

ACTION: Ken Blonski presented issue at the National Coordinator's meeting 12/31/87. Recommendation will go to National Director's meeting for direction to the Washington Office for resolution.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 37 – 1987

SITUATION: What are we going to be used for in disaster situations? Are we going to get the training to meet the task? I.E; Hotshot crews used in the Mexico City earthquake assistance. We need specialized training to accomplish the tasks.

ACTION: Ken Blonski to discuss with Chuck Mills and report at the R-5 Workshop.

STATUS: Pending.

ITEM 38 – 1987

SITUATION: Affirmative Action. A meeting was held in the Regional Office. The notes from the meeting were attached to the tentative agenda for the April 1988 R-5 Workshop. Affirmative Action is a continuing process that we need to support to the best of our ability.

ACTION: Continue to share ideas and concerns. Affirmative Action will be an agenda item for the R-5 Workshop. Barry Callenberger and other committee members will attend the Regional Affirmative Action Expo in Sacramento February 9th and give a report at the R-5 Workshop.

STATUS: Continuing.

ITEM 39 – 1987

SITUATION: Fire Suppression Work and Rest Guidelines dated June 23rd, 1987 letter and the Washington Office letter dated April 10th, 1987 “Suppression Force Management”. These letters were issued prior to the great fire bust. Immediately these guidelines were out the window.

ACTION: Proper rest cycles are as important as the actual suppression activity itself. In the initial attack stages of suppression (first 24 hours) of activity, due to poor logistics we are unable to maintain normal work / rest periods. We try to return to regular shifts as soon as possible. In major fire situations we must not lose site of reasonable and safe rest periods.

STATUS: Pending.