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**GBCG Correspondence: 2014-4**

**To:** Great Basin Operations Committee  
Great Basin (Rocky Basin) Interagency Hotshot Crew Committee

**From:** Mike Morcom, Chair Great Basin Coordinating Group

**Subject:** Great Basin Interagency Hotshot Crew (IHC) Certification Process

The *Standards for Interagency Hotshot Crew Operations* (SIHCO) provides interagency policy for Interagency Hotshot Crews (IHC). This document clarifies the crew certification process as described in the SIHCO and adds additional Great Basin requirements.

Before any Great Basin agency or cooperator considers beginning the process to have a new IHC crew certified, the Agency operations group representative must present a proposal to the Great Basin Operations Committee (GBOC). This proposal must include intent and rationale for adding an additional IHC within the Great Basin. The GBOC will consider the request and make a recommendation to the Great Basin Coordinating Group (GBCG). The GBCG will make the final determination on the proposal to add a new IHC crew. Upon approval to begin the process to add a new IHC, the crew certification process as described below can go forward.

**Great Basin Crew Certification Process**

1. A hosting Great Basin agency or cooperator receives approval from the GBCG to begin the process to add a new IHC crew to the Great Basin.
2. Host agency completes the SIHCO Peer Review for Initial Certification of IHC, Appendix E.
3. Host agency coordinates with Great Basin (GB) Crew Coordinator to arrange for an embedded reviewer to review the crew.
4. Embedded reviewer forwards a recommendation to the GB Crew Coordinator and the GBOC.
5. Upon successful recommendation from the embedded reviewer, the GBOC will request the GB Crew Coordinator to begin the Crew Certification Field Review process as described below.

## **Embedded Review**

The Peer Review Process, Appendix E of the (SIHCO) must be complete before the Embedded Review process is initiated.

The Great Basin Crew Coordinator will schedule for an embedded reviewer to go on an assignment(s) with the crew. This will help verify the crew is ready for the Crew Certification Field Review. This will normally take place the season before the Crew Certification Field Review is scheduled. The embedded reviewer's recommendation will be sent to the Great Basin Crew Coordinator and the Chair of the GBOC. The embedded reviewer will consist of a present or past IHC Superintendent.

## **Crew Certification Field Review and Certification**

All requests for a Crew Certification Field Review will be made no later than April 10<sup>th</sup> to the GB Crew Coordinator. Because of time commitments during the fire season, it has been determined by the GBOC that Crew Certification Field Review dates will be between May 1<sup>st</sup> and June 15<sup>th</sup>.

Before requesting the Crew Certification Field Review, the crew should insure all SIHCO standards are met. The host agency must ensure the crew readiness for certification and ensure that a billing mechanism for the field certification team member's travel, per diem and other associated costs is in place so that re-imbursement of funds can be processed if necessary.

The GB Crew Coordinator will work with the host agency to schedule the review and select a certification team leader. The crew certification team leader will utilize SIHCO, Chapter 5, items 8 through 17 to complete the review.

The Crew Certification team leader will forward the final decision to the GBOC. The GBOC will review all documentation and forward a final recommendation to the GBCG. Upon final approval by the GBCG, notification will be made to the Great Basin Coordination Center (GBCC). The respective GBCC forward the certification to the National Multi-Agency Coordination Group (NMAC) and the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC).

Once all approvals and notification are complete, the crew will be status as an IHC and made available for assignment.

If the crew is unsuccessful in receiving certification during the field review, the crew will remain as Type 2IA. In this case, the GB crew coordinator and the GBOC will provide guidance to the host agency on additional attempts at gaining certification.

## **Crew Recertification**

Host agencies may request recertification of an IHC after a substantial change in overhead structure, performance and/or safety issues. The recertification requires the same process as outlined above under Crew Certification Field Review and Certification.

If you have any questions about this process should please contact Tracy Swenson, Chair GBOC at [tracy\\_swenson@fws.gov](mailto:tracy_swenson@fws.gov) or 801-625-5507, or Brian Cardoza, Great Basin Crew Coordinator at [bcardoza@fs.fed.us](mailto:bcardoza@fs.fed.us) or 208-392-2147.

/s/ Michael Morcom

Cc: GBOC  
GBCG  
Chair, Rocky Basin IHC Steering Committee