



Forest Service Aviation Information Bulletin



No. FSIB 13-03

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Subject: Proficiency Rappels While Assigned To Incidents

Area of Concern: Rappel Operations

Distribution: Fire and Aviation Operations

Discussion: Some Incident Management Teams are preventing rappel crews from performing proficiency rappels while assigned to incidents.

On July 30, 2012 the National Multi-Agency Coordination Group issued a memo (attached) stating that both DOI and USFS require proficiency rappel operations in order to meet Initial Attack requirements as specified in agency/bureau policy.

The following guidelines are to be followed for rappel proficiency operations:

- Proficiency rappels will be allowed on DOI and USFS fires in accordance with the requirements in Appendix N of the Interagency Helicopter Rappel Guide (http://www.nifc.gov/PUBLICATIONS/ihrg/Appendix_N.pdf).
- Incident Commanders will determine an acceptable time and location for proficiency rappels.
- Costs associated with proficiency rappels will be the responsibility of the agency contracting the helicopter.

In addition to Appendix N, New USFS policy is outlined in the [USFS National Rappel Operations Guide](#) (NROG) Chapter 5, Section II.

Please contact your agency National or Regional Aviation Office if you have any questions.

/s/ Gary Sterling

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July 30, 2012

To: Geographic Area Coordination Groups
From: National Multi Agency Coordination Group
Subject: Proficiency Rappels for Exclusive Use Crews When Assigned

Several Geographic Areas have raised questions regarding the scheduling and funding of proficiency rappels for exclusive use rappel crews during fire assignments. Rappel resources are a critical initial attack resource and must maintain their proficiency and readiness at all times. Normally proficiency is an agency responsibility, but DOI and USFS have agreed to the following common proficiency guidance for rappel resources assigned to incidents:

- Proficiency rappels will be allowed on DOI and USFS fires in accordance with the requirements in the Appendix N of the Interagency Helicopter Rappel Guide (http://www.nifc.gov/PUBLICATIONS/ihrp/Appendix_N.pdf).
- Incident commanders will determine an acceptable time and location for proficiency rappels.
- Costs associated with proficiency rappels will be the responsibility of the agency contracting the helicopter.

Questions or concerns regarding this issue should be directed to the national aviation office of the appropriate agency.

/s/ John Segar
Chair, NMAC