



WHITE PAPER

July 11, 2024

TO: FIRESCOPE Board of Directors
 23300 Castle Street
 Riverside, CA 92518-2200

FROM: FIRESCOPE Operations Team, Task Force, & Wildland Subcommittee

SUBJECT: Hand Crew Guidelines

APPROVAL: **The FIRESCOPE Board of Directors approved this White Paper on July 11, 2024.**

OVERVIEW

The FIRESCOPE ICS 420-1 (FOG Ch.13-3) standard for Hand Crews (HC) does not address training, qualification and staffing descriptions for agencies with crew programs and those wishing to implement a crew program. Currently, many HC programs are based on agency philosophies, rather than cohesive standards. This lack of detail creates inconsistency among HC’s with respect to span of control, qualifications, training, and experience. Additionally, the current lack of standardization creates blind spots for fire line leaders, who need to know resource capabilities to ensure they are matching a resources capabilities to complexity of assignment and creates challenges navigating the different types of crew configurations for agencies wishing to establish programs. The following table is the only information provided in ICS 420-1 regarding hand crews:

RESOURCE	RADIO CALL	COMPONENTS	TYPE 1	TYPE 2
Hand Crew	Crew	*Personnel, Equipment, and Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest training level • No use restriction • Fully mobilized • Highest experience level • Fully equipped • Permanently assigned supervision <p style="text-align: center;"> <u>State</u> <u>Federal</u> CAL FIRE (13) Hotshot (18) Fly Crew (8) Regular (18) Fly Crew (10) <u>Local Government</u> Inmate (12) Fly Crew (8) Paid (10) Hotshot (18) </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum training, or • Some use restriction, or • Not fully mobilized, or • Moderate experience, or • Minimum equipment, or • No assigned supervision <p>Federal (Blue Card) (18) State (12)</p>



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In 2021, the leadership of HC programs from across the State came together to discuss differences and similarities in training, qualifications, staffing and capabilities. From this meeting, a Hand Crew Steering Committee (HCSC) was formed. The committee is made up of representatives from local government, USFS, Cal Fire, and Cal OES. While there were several reasons the steering committee was formed, the one overarching factor identified was to consider updating and modernizing HC standards. Topics discussed included safety and accountability, span of control, staffing, training, qualifications, typing, and a certification process for Type 1, Type 2IA, Type 2, Suppression Modules, and Fly crews.

TASKING RECOMMENDATIONS

The FIRESCOPE Wildland Subcommittee has received input from the HCSC as a starting point for the development of standardized crew typing's. The subcommittee would like to validate and further develop the recommendations and is asking for a tasking from the BOD to move forward.

The FIRESCOPE Wildland Subcommittee is requesting the following tasking from the BOD:

- Update and modernize the FIRESCOPE standards pertaining to hand crews (local, state, and federal) by producing a guidebook to describe a standardized resource that is predictable and orderable within the IROC System.
- Draft an Operation System Description, or other appropriate ICS document, that provides clear direction for typing, review, and mobilization. This document shall define the requirements for Type 1, Type 2IA, Type 2 crew, Suppression (Crew) Modules, and Fly Crews, along with foundational information to facilitate crew formation and standardization across wildland fire agencies; essentially a "Guidebook for Hand Crew Composition and Operations."
- Continue collaborating with the HCSC for data, inputs, and recommendations.
- Research and vet these guidelines with local government, USFS, DOI, Cal Fire, and Cal OES to ensure there are no ill-intended consequences from the formation of such guidelines and standards and ensure consensus among all partner agencies.

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