National Fire and Aviation Executive Board

Memorandum

To: **Fire Management**

From: **National Fire and Aviation Executive Board**

Date: **June 20, 2007**

Subject: **Fire Shelter Transition Update**

The Federal Wildland Agencies, States, and Cooperators began purchasing the new generation fire shelter in the spring of 2003. At that time, the objective was to phase-out the old fire shelter over a five year period.

The National Fire and Aviation Executive Board (NFAEB) requested an update on where the agencies were at relative to the transition from the old style fire shelter to the new generation fire shelter from the National Fire Shelter Task Group (FSTG) that is chartered under NFAEB. In addition, NFAEB also requested what options exist for the field relative to the disposal of the old style fire shelters. Options identified are attached to this memo.

The FSTG presented the estimated numbers outstanding to complete the transition, options for getting the agencies fully transitioned, and disposal options available. The NFAEB does not want the old shelters in the system after the cut-off date so they will be deemed out of service.

Based on the estimated outstanding numbers, it appears the federal agencies current transition process will meet the intended target date of January 1, 2009, but will definitely be completely transitioned by January 1, 2010. January 1, 2010 is the date which all agencies and cooperators are to be transitioned, as well as any contracted resources.

The local units are requested to work with their cooperators to determine numbers of new shelters needed in order to meet the phase-out date. The States are working with the Forest Service to identify grant opportunities as well as Department of Homeland Security funding initiatives for first responders. As units identify need, they can work with their partners to determine funding options, and then utilize ordering shelters and the training materials either through their servicing National Interagency Support Cache or direct from the General Services Administration.

Efforts need to be made during the transition period to ensure the appropriate shelter training is accomplished. Units may take advantage of fireline refresher training to facilitate issuing new

generation shelters and collecting the old style shelters. Funding of this exchange will have to be determined in advance and may require appropriate agreements to be implemented.

As stated above, the transition to the new generation fire shelter is expected to be accomplished by January 1, 2010. However, due to the large number of cooperators there is opportunity for resources to appear on an incident without a new generation shelter. In these situations, the host unit will need to determine the best method to facilitate providing a new generation shelter with training prior to assigning the resource.

We ask for your cooperation in assisting the agencies in meeting the January 1, 2010 date.

Karen L. Wood
for Marc Rounsaville
USDA-Forest Service
Fire and Aviation Management
Deputy Director

Timothy M. Murphy
Bureau of Land Management
Fire and Aviation
Deputy Director

Lyle Carlile
for Bureau of Indian Affairs
Fire Director

for Brian McManus
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Fire Director

Tom Nichol
for Mike Wallace
National Park Service
Fire Director

For Dan Smith
National Association of State Foresters
Fire Director

DISPOSAL OPTIONS FOR OLD STYLE FIRE SHELTERS

The following are options available to units for the disposal of the old style fire shelters:

1) Recycle: Use the shelters to produce Cabin Wrap (Cabin Wrap can also be used to protect structures, bridges, signs, etc.)

   Use a contractor to convert old-style shelters into "Cabin Wrap". Cabin Wrap produced new from one source costs approximately $3.05 per lineal yard. Options include:

   a) Cutting two rectangular pieces from each shelter to produce individual sheets approximately 34 X 70 inches. One hundred sheets per box at $2.08 per sheet would cost $208.00 per box of 194 lineal yards. Resulting cost: $.93 per lineal yard. Shipping to and from the contractor would be an added cost.

   b) Cutting two rectangular pieces from each shelter approximately 34 X 70 inches, stitching approximately 51 pieces end to end, and spinning the product onto rolls containing 100 yards. A 100-yard roll would cost $108.00. Resulting cost: $1.08 per lineal yard. Shipping to and from the contractor would be an added cost.

      The product from option (b) would probably be faster and easier to apply, would save labor, and would likely provide a better seal thereby limiting the entrance of embers between the sheets of cloth.

   c) Old Style Shelters could also be used by local units for the following:
      - Back-country campfire pans
      - Welding blankets
      - Heat protection for vehicle pneumatic hoses such as brake lines (San Dimas T&D evaluation concluded commercial devices are available and preferred.)
      - Wrap coolers and juice troughs at fire camps to help keep cool

2) Disposal:
   - Each local unit disposes of their own shelters
   - The units within a geographic area work with their servicing National Interagency Support Cache for collection of shelters and the Cache facilitates disposal