

Appendix 7

NMAC Guidelines for the use of Tactical Aviation Resources

Tactical aviation resources include Type 1, 2, 3, 4 airtankers, MAFFS, Type 1 and 2 helicopters, smokejumper aircraft, lead planes, ASMs, and Air Attack platforms.

Strategic Principles

- Initial attack fire operations are the primary mission for tactical aviation resources.
- Assignment of these resources to non-initial attack fires, regardless of complexity, will be on a case by case basis. The following criteria will be used:
 1. Imminent threat to human life including occupied structures.
 2. Imminent threat to communities, community infrastructure, historically significant cultural resources, commercial businesses, and principal residences.
 3. Threats to other structures and improvements such as seasonal homes, cabins and high value outbuildings.
 4. Threats to natural resources.
 5. Threats to low value structures.
- Requests for use of these aviation resources on non-initial attack fires must include the above criteria to enable dispatch centers to effectively allocate limited resources.
- Type 1 and 2 airtankers and MAFFS, will be prepositioned based on NMAC strategic considerations and prioritization criteria. This prepositioning will be implemented by NICC.
- Use of retardant must be restricted to situations where ground forces are available and able to take advantage of the retardant drops.

Operational Procedures

- NICC has delegated authority from NMAC to guide strategic deployment and prepositioning of airtankers, MAFFS, helicopters, lead planes and ASMs, and smokejumper aircraft.
- These resources will be prepositioned by NICC in consultation with the Geographic Area Center Managers and Geographic Area MACs as appropriate.

- On the morning GACC/NICC conference call, daily assignments will be validated and aircraft reallocated as necessary. In the event of disagreement on the resource allocation, NICC will make the final decision.
- GACC/NICC afternoon conference calls will determine aviation requirements and position strategy for the following day. NICC will be the final decision maker, if necessary.
- GACCs will establish priorities when competition for aviation resources exists within the Area.
- When requested to make tactical aviation resource available to move to a location of greater risk, the local unit or GACC will do so without hesitation.

Approved Aircraft

- Federal Aircraft: Aircraft procured and approved by federal firefighting agencies are authorized for use on wildland fire operations managed by federal, state and local governments.
- Approved Cooperator Aircraft: Aircraft procured/owned by cooperating agencies (state and local) may be utilized on federally managed fires only when federal cooperative agreements are in place that approve those aircraft and pilots for the intended use and that authorize payment procedures.
- Federal Lands under State Protection: States may use airtankers not identified above on federal lands, when and where the State has formal protection responsibility as long as the state maintains operational control of those aircraft.
- Federal Firefighters on State Fires: Non-federally approved airtankers remain under State operational control regardless of the agency affiliation of the firefighters on the incident.
- Federal Airtanker Base: Non-federally approved airtankers are approved to use, and load retardant at federal airtanker bases.
- Contracting Oversight: No federal personnel may be assigned as a State Contract Officer's Authorized Representative (COAR) on a non-federally approved airtanker contract. No federal employee may be assigned to a position that exercises operational control of a non-federally approved airtanker.
- Federal Aerial Supervision: Federal aerial supervision: Federal personnel may provide aerial supervision, including "lead profiles", to non-federally approved aircraft under existing standard procedures and agreements, only when operational control is maintained by the state or local agency.

- In the case of Very Large Airtankers (DC-10), the leadplane or ASM providing aerial supervision must have received prior written approval from their respective National Aviation Office for such operations.
- Emergency Circumstances: In an emergency circumstance, where lives and property are immediately threatened, in the current burning period, by wildland fire on federal lands under federal protection, a local federal line officer may, with state concurrence, take operational control over state contracted airtankers if sufficient federal aircraft are not available to protect the public. The local federal line officer must obtain prior approval from their Fire Director, or Fire Director Designee. Any such use will be documented by the approving federal line officer, and the documentation will be forwarded to the agency national aviation headquarters within two weeks.

The following individuals are designated as approving officials for the emergency circumstances described above, for their respective Geographic Area.

<u>Primary Contact</u>		<u>Alternate</u>	
NR	Maggie Dougherty 406-329-4903	Allen Edmonds	406-896-2912
RM	Sandra LaFarr 303-275-5740	Bill Ott	303-275-5749
SW	Kris Damsgaard 505-842-3359	John Selkirk	505-954-2192
GB	Dan Johnson 801-620-1862		
CA	Joe Millar 707-562-8925	Paul Bannister	916-978-4433
NW	David Summer 503-808-2145	Bobbi Scopa	503-808-6518
AK	Dave Whitmer 907-356-5642	Kent Slaughter	907-356-5505
EA	Tim Caughlin 414-297-3744	Billie Terry	610-557-4145
SA	Stephen Weaver 404-347-2726	Eddie Morris	404-606-3414

The intent of this direction is to keep non-federally approved air tankers under the operational control of the sponsor agency. If needed, further clarification on these issues can be obtained from agency regional/national aviation and fire operations offices.