



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Fire & Aviation Directorate



Operations Alert

No. 10-01

Date: June 10, 2010

Subject: Use of aerial supervision aircraft to enhance the safety, effectiveness, and efficiency of incident operations

Various after action reviews have identified that aerial supervision resources (ATGS, ASM, and Lead) are intermittently underutilized during initial attack. This has occurred even when aerial supervision resources were readily available.

Aerial supervision resources are capable of significantly enhancing the safety, effectiveness, and efficiency of incident operations.

Recommendations:

- Managers should review the local Fire Danger Operating Plan (including run cards) and ensure that the plan supports the use of aerial supervision resources, especially during initial attack responses.
- Managers should consider dispatching aerial supervision platforms prior to other tactical aircraft in order to maximize the efficiency of fire chemical operations. Uncoordinated aerial operations and poor target descriptions often lead to higher aircraft loiter times, which increase risk exposure to air and ground personnel.
- Managers should ensure that appropriate personnel are familiar with the capabilities of aerial supervision resources. These capabilities include the following:
 - Rapid response to incidents (120-250 mph).
 - Ability to deliver timely and accurate size-up information.
 - Efficient target description to airtankers/helicopters.
 - Ability to guide ground resources into incidents.
 - Ability to manage the Fire Traffic Area.
 - Ability to provide communications between incidents and dispatch when ground radio issues occur.

References

- *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations* (p.16-14)
- *Interagency Aerial Supervision Guide* (p.32)

Remember: Tactical aviation resources including heavy airtankers, SEATs, helicopters/helitack, smokejumpers and aerial supervision are most effective during initial attack.

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