

GREAT BASIN LEAD PLANE/AIR ATTACK REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES

To ensure effective supervision and timely mission accomplishment of all aircraft over an incident, units shall adhere to the following guidelines and requirements for ordering and utilization of lead planes and air attack aircraft:

SITUATION	LEAD PLANE REQUIREMENT/ GUIDELINE	AIR ATTACK REQUIREMENT/ GUIDELINE
Non-initial attack rated air tanker pilots	Required (must not drop unless lead plane is on scene)	None
Dropping of retardant in congested ¹ areas	Required	Must be ordered
Multiple aircraft operating in a congested area	None, unless air tanker operations	Must be ordered
Retardant operations conducted during the period ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunrise, and ½ hour before sunset to ½ hour after sunset	Air tanker must not be dispatched unless lead plane <u>or</u> air attack can be on scene during drop operations	
Military Aerial Fire Fighting System (MAFFS)	Required (must not drop unless lead plane is on scene)	Must be ordered
Canadian air tanker operations	Must not drop unless lead plane <u>or</u> air attack is on scene	
Multiple air tanker operations	Automatically request the lead plane; if not readily available, keep order active if extended attack is anticipated and lead plane can arrive in time to supervise operations	None, unless other criteria are met (i.e., mix of different tactical aircraft types and incident complexity dictates need)
Single air tanker operations where a lead plane is co-located with the air tanker	Automatically request the lead plane	None, unless other criteria met
Mix of different tactical aircraft types (e.g., air tanker, helicopter, smokejumper) and the incident complexity dictates the need for air tactical coordination	None, unless air tanker operations dictate need	Must be ordered
Conditions of visibility and/or terrain create a serious hazard to ground or air resources	None, unless air tanker operations dictate need	Must be ordered

Other situations may also warrant a Lead Plane or Air Attack Aircraft.

Units shall facilitate these requirements by assigning separate “A” Request Number(s) for Lead Plane and/or Air Attack following the request for the air tanker(s) or other tactical air resources.

The Coordination Centers shall advise the ordering unit if a lead plane and/or air attack is not readily available. The Unit shall then advise the Center on whether or not to keep the order for a lead plane and/or air attack active. The lack of readily available lead plane or air attack resources shall not delay the dispatch of an air tanker piloted by an initial attack rated air tanker pilot.

¹ See Interagency Airspace Coordination Guide, Chapter II, Definitions

When competition for lead planes and/or air attack aircraft exists within the Great Basin Coordination area, the Center shall coordinate priority reassignments of these resources. Replacement of an incident's lead plane or air attack aircraft reassigned to another incident will be negotiated between the Center and the using unit.

BLM OV-10s may be dispatched as Lead Planes with BLM Air Tactical Group Supervisors on board, and may function as dual Lead Plane/Air Attack aircraft; once incident complexity increases beyond the capability of the single resource to perform the dual roles, then additional resource(s) (Lead Plane or Air Attack) should be ordered. This applies as well to other-agency Lead Planes performing an air coordination role.

Within the Great Basin, contract or agency-owned dedicated Air Attack aircraft shall be dispatched with both a Pilot and Air Tactical Group Supervisor on board.

Agency Lead Plane or Air Attack Pilots certified² as Air Tactical Group Supervisors (ATGS) may function as an ATGS until such time as the workload or incident complexity adversely affects piloting performance, ability to respond to ground or air coordination needs, pilot duty hours, or agency requirements for lead planes.

For incidents on which significant flight time may accrue, units and Coordination Centers should mutually anticipate the need for relief Air Attack or Lead Plane resources.

²Including the past experience requirement as a Strike Team/Task Force Leader.