

# National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group

3833 South Development Avenue; Boise, ID 83705

NMAC Memorandum 2021-16

June 28, 2021

To: Geographic Area Coordinating Group Chairs

From: National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group

Subject: Surge Capacity Type 1 Helicopter Mobilization Direction

The Forest Service is augmenting the National Exclusive Use Helicopter fleet with an additional 20 Surge Capacity helicopters, as part of continued enhancement to the national response effort. Forest Service contracted Type 1 helicopters are a strategic National Resource, contracted to support the national firefighting effort.

The Surge helicopters will be available for a 120-day contract availability period, beginning June 1, 2021 (except for the Santa Fe Surge). Additionally, these aircraft have a unilateral option to extend for an additional 30 days. Early coordination with the Forest Service National Aircraft Coordinator will allow for the Forest Service to exercise this option. These surge Type 1 helicopters and crews are National Resources allocated and prepositioned in accordance with the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) strategic considerations for geographic capability and prioritization criteria. Helicopter distribution is often very dynamic, balancing priorities between preparedness, initial attack, extended attack, and large fire support, geographically and nationally. Significant fire potential is also an important consideration when allocating and reallocating these resources.

Each of the Western Geographic Areas have identified initial host bases for each of the Surge Capacity Type 1 helicopters to begin their 120-Day Mandatory Availability Period (MAP), while providing for continuous staffing for these aircraft. As the national fire situation progresses, the National Interagency Coordination Center, (NICC) in conjunction with the Forest Service National Aircraft Coordinator, and Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACC), will determine the appropriate assignment/realignment for each respective surge helicopter.

***Reassignment of these resources will be determined by the following factors:***

- Predictive Services outlook by Geographic Area
- National & Geographic Area Preparedness Levels
- National & Geographic Area Priorities

**Key Points:**

- Daily availability for these aircraft is fully funded by the Forest Service Washington Office, during the MAP and 30-day extension.
- The Geographic Area is responsible for any extended standby time, flight time, personnel cost (including OT), and miscellaneous costs associated with these aircraft.
- National reassignment and mobilization of Surge helicopters will be coordinated between NICC, the National Aircraft Coordinator, and the sending/receiving GACC.
- Forest Service Exclusive Use, Surge Capacity, and activated CWN helicopters will respond to an initial attack dispatch within 15 minutes, dispatches that require extended flight planning are allowed up to 60 minutes to respond.



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- Once assigned to a Geographic Area, the GA will determine whether the resource is best utilized for initial attack, extended attack, or large fire support.
- These aircraft *are surge capacity*, augmenting the existing Exclusive Use fleet, as such, utilization will be closely monitored by the agency, and mobilization to areas of high priority during the aircraft MAP, will be emphasized.

/s/ Joshua Simmons Chair, NMAC

