



NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

14 May 2014

National Association of State Foresters
c/o Bob Harrington, Chair, NASF Fire Committee
444 North Capitol Street., NW Suite 540
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Follow Up Yarnell Hill – NWCG Assistance to NASF (VLAT)

To All NASF Fire Committee Members:

Introduction:

This briefing paper is in response to a request from the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) for assistance in developing a brief technical tip for fire supervisors/agency administrators on the effective use of Very Large Airtanker (VLATs).

Guidance found in the Interagency Aerial Supervision Guide, National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) Memos, Forest Service Information Bulletins, and Daily Airtanker Briefing Reports was used as a basis for this recommendation.

Background:

The DC-10 VLAT was awarded an exclusive use contract by the Forest Service in 2013. The DC-10 has been available and used regularly on federal and state fires since 2009 and information on effectiveness and operating procedures has been collected and disseminated as we learn more about the aircraft. The following information (attached) was disseminated and available through normal chains of communication by 2013 or prior to:

- US Forest Service Fire & Aviation Management DC-10 Briefing Paper (May 1, 2014)
- VLAT to Large AT (P2V) Comparison (September 15, 2006 and July 30, 2013)

Conclusion:

As new technology and resources are added to the federal and state firefighting arsenal, NWCG, NMAC, the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC), and the Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACCs) will continue to disseminate information regarding the cost, use, and operational considerations of the aircraft. We encourage each agency to review their respective ordering and approval processes to ensure timely mobilization of VLAT's to incidents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dan Smith
Chair, National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG)

cc: NWCG Executive Board
NWCG Program Management Unit