

## EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT COMMUNICATION WITH AERIAL RESOURCES

Aerial supervision, airtankers, and helicopters are all exceptional tools used to support incident goals and objectives. Effective communication between air resources and ground crews is essential to maximize the efficiency of these resources.

Here are some tips to get the most out of air resources.

- ◆ Utilize aerial supervision (ATGS or ASM) to reduce your span of control when using multiple air resources. This will drastically reduce chatter on the assigned air-to-ground frequency.
- ◆ Ensure incoming resources have correct radio frequencies before they launch. Out of area resources may not be familiar with local frequency plans.
- ◆ Designate a crewmember as the primary contact for air resources. This person should monitor the designated air to ground frequency only. **No scanning!!**
- ◆ Be patient with aircraft when calling them. They talk to each other on a discreet AM frequency, so they might not hear your initial call.
- ◆ Describe targets using fire anatomy (head, heal, flank, shoulder, spot, island). Avoid compass (cardinal) references.
- ◆ Use the clock method to guide resources. Be sure you and the aerial resource can see each other.
- ◆ Be definitive; avoid terms such as should, maybe, and probably. When asked if the line is clear for a drop, it either is or it isn't.
- ◆ Anticipate water and retardant drops and clear the line ahead of time. Useless radio chatter is created when aircraft have to go around.
- ◆ Use objective terms as descriptors. Avoid subjective terms like windy, hot, dry, etc. Be specific.
  - ~ Example: The wind is 15-20 out of the north.
- ◆ Practice delivering common operational messages in the same sequence with standard verbiage each time you transmit.
- ◆ Remember the button is a push to talk, not push to think.

*Contributed by Gil Dustin, Air Tactical Program Manager, BLM NAO*