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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
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OAS INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. 98-3

To: All DOI Aviation Operations

From: Elmer Hurd, Director

Subject: Agricultural Aircraft Procured under the Aircraft Rental Agreement (ARA)--
Single Engine Air Tankers (SEAT)

BACKGROUND

This Information Bulletin has been developed to provide guidance to users, procurement staff, and inspectors in obtaining the above aviation services.

Federal acquisition regulations indicated that the acquisitions of SEAT-type aircraft were regularly exceeding the small purchase authority of the Basic Ordering Agreement/Aircraft Rental Agreement. OAS established the national Call-When-Needed (CWN) contract at the request of the Bureau of Land Management, which was appointed as the lead agency for SEAT operations by the DOI and USFS interagency fire community.

At the request of the lead agency, all single engine agricultural airplanes dispensing material on fires are to be part of the (SEAT) CWN system, or are to be approved for operations within a limited area.

DEFINITIONS

Agricultural (Ag) aircraft: an aircraft approved for the special purpose mission of aerial dispensing under 14 CFR 21.25 and 21.185 (airplanes and helicopters).

Agricultural operator: a commercial or government provider of services who is approved for aerial agricultural aircraft operations under 14 CFR 137.

SEAT airplane: a single engine agricultural airplane meeting the requirements of, and operating under a CWN or exclusive-use procurement issued by the U. S. Department of Interior (DOI), or owned and operated by a cooperating state government. SEAT aircraft may also be known as a type 4 airtanker. NOTE: Some SEAT aircraft may be capable of dispensing liquid and/or solid material for other than fire operations. Refer to the SEAT contracting officer for the appropriate contract modification.

PROCEDURE

All procurement requests for agricultural airplane dispensing operations in the fire environment must be coordinated through the requesting agency's fire staff at the national level. In no instance will an airplane be approved for this use under any procurement vehicle without the approval of the national SEAT coordinator and the Chief, Division of Technical Services, OAS headquarters (CTSHQ). NOTE: To avoid confusion, Ag aircraft ARA procurements will not be approved for fire requests where SEAT aircraft are reasonably available (determination will be made by the national SEAT coordinator).

Procurement requests for Ag aircraft for other than fire environment operations will be made through the OAS area or regional office. A determination must be made that the project cannot be reasonably completed using a CWN SEAT before requesting that additional aircraft be added to the ARA.

Equipment standards for all agricultural aircraft will be coordinated by the area offices and approved by the CTSHQ.

Aircraft and pilots with only the "agricultural operations" endorsement will not be carried on the "public" source list.

Elmer Hurd, Director