



# Interagency Aviation Accident Prevention Bulletin



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**Subject:** Mobilization of Aviation Resources

**Area of Concern:** Aviation Operations

**Distribution:** Aviation Operations

**Discussion:** Aircraft mobilization has been mentioned in a number of Interagency SAFECOMs and has been the topic of discussion by pilots and air tanker base personnel. The three primary areas of concern are: late afternoon/evening dispatches, the appearance of “shopping” for aircraft if others have refused a mission, and the issue of “lost revenue” when the order gets filled elsewhere.

The tactical and/or strategic requirement for processing requests for air tankers late in the afternoon and evening will undoubtedly continue. If duty day, weather conditions, or adverse safety of flight issues are present, the expectation is that the Pilot-in-Command (PIC) will refuse the mission. This does not however, preclude Geographic Area Coordination Centers (GACC) or the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) from filling the order elsewhere. The intent is to provide support to the incident by positioning aircraft so they are prepared to start fresh at the beginning of the next operational period. There may be times when one aircraft will be by-passed for another, if it can safely make the trip (with respect to duty day, days off, weather, and safety of flight) There may also be a time when an aircraft may be requested to fly part way. In either case, there will continue to be instances where orders that are turned down in the evening are not available the following day, simply because they were filled by other aircraft or the needs of the incident changed.

**Recommendation:** All personnel involved should consider human factor issues associated with late departures. A late departure may result in exceeding the duty day as a result of additional fueling, loading or unloading retardant, flight planning, avoiding late afternoon thunderstorms, or looking for meals and lodging at the destination base. Open communications between pilots, bases, and dispatchers is essential to aviation safety and mission accomplishment. Any aircrew or support personnel concerned with unsafe conditions are encouraged to contact their Agency Aviation Safety Manager first and then file a SAFECOM.

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