



File Code: 5700

Date: June 15, 2006

Route To:

Subject: Cooperator Aircraft

To: Regional Foresters, Area Director, IITF Director

Recently, several questions about the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Airworthiness Directive (AD 2006-01-05) on a series of helicopter engines were brought to our attention as it applies to State cooperator aircraft and Forest Service use. These questions address whether Federal Excess Personnel Property (FEPP) aircraft, operated by the States, specifically those Huey UH-1 and Cobra AH-1 aircraft with the engine components listed, must comply with this AD.

The Forest Service has not "grounded" any FEPP aircraft. The Forest Service requires AD compliance of our fleet, contract aircraft, and cooperator aircraft participating in Forest Service operations. Aircraft not in compliance will be considered as Unapproved Cooperator Aircraft.

The U.S. Army Safety of Flight messages (SOF) was considered by the FAA upon issuance of this AD and determined that those life limits were unique to the U.S. Army Mission profile. This did not change the compliance requirements of this AD.

The following Aviation Management FSM 5700 references clearly indicate that, as state cooperators, they must "provide a level of safety and mission effectiveness comparable to contract aircraft":

FSM 5700 5710.35 Cooperator Standards Policy

"Cooperator agreements for all aviation services provided to the Forest Service by other agencies and cooperators must specify levels of operational standards and safety comparable to those required of contractors."

FSM 5700 5713.43 Military and Cooperator Aircraft Approval

"Approve military and aircraft of other civilian agencies or cooperators for Forest Service Use only if:

1. Their condition and equipment provide a level of safety and mission effectiveness comparable to contract aircraft:
2. They are compatible with other Forest Service operations; and,
3. Approval of such aircraft is documented by a signed letter from the National Aviation Officer for Airworthiness and Logistics, or the Regional Aviation Officer."



U.S. Forest Service limitations on these unapproved aircraft do not extend to the jurisdiction for which the State has authority. Cooperators may use these aircraft according to existing direction in State Cooperative Fire Agreements, Operating Plans, including Federal lands if the State has protection responsibility or under mutual aid agreements as long as the State maintains operational control of the aircraft.

Regional review of the State Aviation Operations Plan is also required for compliance with the FEPP program.

Contact Larry Brosnan at 202-205-1505 with further questions.

/s/ Tom Harbour

TOM HARBOUR
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