



File Code: 5700

Date: JUN 06 2018

Brigadier General Thomas K. Wark  
A23610  
3500 Fetchet Avenue  
Joint Base Andrews MD  
20762-5157

Dear Brigadier General Thomas K. Wark,

The Department of Defense Air National Guard RC-26 Block 25/25R aircraft (as listed in the Request for Action) and Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTAC) support personnel for wildland fire infrared operations are approved through Interagency Agreement # 15-IA-11132543-040. Operations shall be conducted in accordance with Forest Service Manual 5700 and Forest Service Handbook 5709.16, applicable operations plans, and the appropriate Air Force regulations. Reference the attached briefing paper for additional operational considerations.

The RC-26 mission in support to wildland fires is within the scope of the agreement and of the RC-26 missions in support of the U.S. military. No special inspections of aircraft or flight crew are needed to conform to wildland fire support missions. This letter serves as the approval of the pilots and Department of Defense Air National Guard RC-26 Block 25/25R aircraft.

If Joint Terminal Attack Controllers are not requested or deployed with the aircraft, RC-26 produced maps and detection data is sent to a GIS person at the Geographic Area Coordination Center (GACC). The information is processed, distributed, and posted so it can be accessed by Incident Management Teams (IMT) and fire managers.

The RC-26 will operate at 10,000 feet or more above the Fire Traffic Area (FTA) ceiling or the Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) ceiling whichever is higher. Other intelligence collecting aircraft owned or contracted by the Forest Service are operating on fires in the western U.S. this season. The National Infrared Operations (NIROPS) aircraft, the Aerial Firefighting Aircraft Use and Effectiveness study (AFUE) aircraft generally will operate between 8,000 and 12,000 feet above ground level. The Forest Service Night Watch fixed-wing generally operates 3,000 to 8,000 feet above ground level depending on fire size. RC-26, NIROPS, AFUE and Night Watch personnel must coordinate with each other prior to flights when in the same geographic area and communicate on frequency 123.450 in the air. Points of contact are listed on the attached briefing paper.

Forest Service personnel may ride on the RC-26 aircraft as essential crewmembers during missions to facilitate fire situational awareness if requested by RC-26 flight crew. The Forest Service personnel shall get approval by the appropriate Regional Aviation Officer prior to boarding the aircraft.



The Joint Terminal Attack Controllers may or may not be deployed with the aircraft depending on need. Joint Terminal Attack Controller personnel are fireline qualified. If deployed, they can be assigned to different Divisions (or the Incident Command Post) on the same fire, or can be split among several fires in the same geographic area. Reference the attached briefing paper for additional information regarding Joint Terminal Attack Controller capabilities.

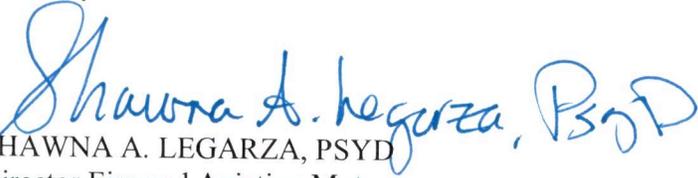
Forest Service Regional Office or National Office personnel may perform quality assurance reviews to verify compliance with the Interagency Agreement # 15-IA-11132543-040, Forest Service Manual 5700 and Forest Service Handbook 5709.16 whenever aircraft are or might be used on federal incidents.

This letter shall be maintained within the RC-26 aircraft and made available for inspection upon request.

Questions regarding this Letter of Approval should be directed to USFS Washington Office – Kim Christensen, Deputy Assistant Director Operations (208) 867-5082 or Paul Linse, Branch Chief, Aviation Operations (202) 557-1545.

This Letter of Approval expires on December 31, 2018.

Sincerely,

  
SHAWNA A. LEGARZA, PSYD  
Director Fire and Aviation Mgt

cc: Major Sean Recame, Paul Linse, John Nelson, John Kent Hamilton, Rock Parrilla, Tonya Rymer, Mary Verry, Regional Aviation Officers, Regional Fire Directors, and Regional Aviation Safety Managers