



U.S. Forest Service/Bureau of Land Management Fire and Aviation Management Briefing Paper



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Topic: Oregon and Washington Army National Guard Aircraft Capabilities

Background: The Oregon (OR) and Washington (WA) Army National Guard (ARNG) are utilized on federal incidents each year providing Medevac, extraction, and fire suppression capabilities. The HH/UH-60 (Blackhawk) helicopter will be the primary heavy lift platform available for wildland fire use in 2015 for both Oregon and Washington ARNG Units. In the past, a lack of clarity regarding the capabilities and configurations of aircraft from each State's Guard Unit has caused confusion over the type of missions they can conduct when ordered under state agreements.

There are three options when ordering and utilizing National Guard HH-60 or UH-60 Helicopters:

1. Medevac (ORARNG Only):

- ORARNG HH-60M aircraft can be ordered as a "Medevac" resource.
- Medevac includes extraction capability via hoist and cable.
- Paramedic level care can be provided to the patient on the aircraft while being transported to the nearest medical responder or facility.
- First-aid/trauma supplies and equipment will be maintained onboard the aircraft.
- Only Department of the Army approved rescue equipment, in accordance with the US Army Airworthiness Release (AWR 980), will be used with a HH-60M rescue hoist.
- Agency provided stretchers used to package and transport injured patients cannot be used for hoist operations – the injured patient must be transferred to Army approved rescue equipment prior to hoisting.
- Crew compliment consists of four personnel: Pilot, Co-pilot, Crew Chief/Hoist Operator, and Medic.
- Due to payload and configuration limitations, no firefighting equipment (i.e., water bucket) will be provided when the aircraft is ordered for Medevac operations.
- A dedicated Medevac helicopter can be located at any airport or other facility that enables delivery of fuel, security, and dedicated phone communications, in addition to logistical support to the aircrew.

2. Extraction (WAARNG Only):

- WAARNG UH-60 aircraft can be ordered as an "Extraction" resource.
- Extraction capability via hoist and cable.
- Extraction capability will be used to remove a patient from the ground environment and transport them to the nearest medical responder or facility.
- Only basic level of care may be provided to the patient on the aircraft.
- It may be necessary to hoist and transport a ground EMT with the patient in order to sustain care while in flight.
- No first-aid/trauma supplies beyond basic kits will be maintained on board the aircraft.
- Only Department of the Army approved rescue equipment, in accordance with the US Army Airworthiness Release (AWR 980), will be used with a UH-60 rescue hoist.
- Agency provided stretchers used to package and transport injured patients cannot be used for hoist operations – the injured patient must be transferred to Army approved rescue equipment prior to hoisting.
- Crew complement consists for three personnel: Pilot, Co-pilot, and Crew Chief.
- Aircraft can maintain firefighting capability (i.e., bucket work) when configured for extraction.
- Flight crew duty restrictions may affect the ability to provide extraction capability each day.

3. Fire Suppression:

- Both ORARNG and WAARNG aircraft can be ordered as a "Fire Suppression" (bucket operations) resource.

- ORARNG MH-60's configured for bucket operations are not crewed or equipped for hoist Medevac operations.
- WAARNG UH-60's configured for bucket operations may also be crewed and configured for hoist extraction operations when requested.
- Not all WAARNG UH-60 flight crews performing fire suppression operations are qualified to perform extraction operations.

Additional Information:

- Requesting units should order aircraft in accordance with their needs (i.e. Medevac, Extraction and/or Fire Suppression).
- It may take two days and a return to home base in order to reconfigure ORARNG aircraft equipment and aircrews from one capability to the other – Medevac to Fire Suppression or vice versa.
- Aircrews dedicated to Medevac operations may draw down firefighting capability and vice versa.
- CH-47 (Chinook) helicopter support will be limited in 2015.

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