

## CHAPTER 50 AIRCRAFT

**Aircraft Refer** to RMG (Ch. 50)

**Aircraft Mobilization** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

Between the hours of 2000 and 0600 charter pilots shall not be dispatched or contacted to ensure crew rest requirements are met (10 hours of uninterrupted rest). Orders for charter aircraft should not be placed with vendors between these hours, unless they have a company dispatcher available. Pilots should ensure duty limitations are being met.

### **Ordering Procedures**

#### **Aerial Fire Detection**

All requests for aerial detection within the CRC area for ongoing incidents or after thunderstorms should originate from the zone FMOs, be coordinated with the duty officer, and be placed through the dispatch center. USFS & NPS requests should be placed to CRC through the appropriate agency FMO or their designee. Coordination and prioritization will occur in the event that multiple units request a flight. The dispatcher will then initiate procedures to acquire the appropriate aircraft from either Colorado DFPC or Federal, Forest Service or DOI, source lists. CRC will establish the flight following process in accordance with the Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (Red Book).

Counties within the CRC Zone may go directly through their dispatch centers to order one of the DFPC Multi-Mission Aircraft (MMA).

#### **Air tankers and Lead Planes**

All air tanker and lead plane requests will be placed through CRC. The acquisition of aircraft will follow agency guidelines. All requests for tactical aircraft will be filled on a first come, first serve basis unless multiple incidents require the establishment of priorities. In such an instance, the CRC center manager will consult with the Local Multi-Agency Coordination Group. Until that meeting can occur, priorities will be established in accordance with policies and procedures set forth in the National Mobilization Guide. **Aerial retardant drops will be used only when authorized by the agency with jurisdictional responsibility.**

#### **Helicopters**

All requests for helicopters and helitack crews will be placed through CRC with dispatching done according to agency guidelines. Flight following will be conducted through the dispatch center.

All Mob/Demob requests for R&R, joining up with a crew already on assignment, etc will be placed through the chain of command. For helicopters assigned to an incident this will be the IC, AOBD or Ordering Manager, as determined by the incident. For severity or prepositioned resources this will be the appropriate Duty Officer. This individual will then notify CRC that the resource may be ordered/released, as appropriate.

**Prioritizing Incidents** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

## **Aircraft Demobilization** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

### **Flight Management Procedures**

- **Point-to-Point**

Point-to-point flights originate at one developed airport or permanent helibase, with a direct flight to another developed airport or permanent helibase. These types of flights are often referred to as "administrative" flights. These flights require point-to-point approved pilots and aircraft. A point-to-point flight is conducted higher than 500 feet above ground level (AGL) except for takeoff and landing.

- **Point-to-Point Flight Following**

The sending dispatch center has the ultimate responsibility for flight following. This responsibility may be handed off to RMCC for fire mobilization flights. If the flight was originated by CRC then the Chief of Party/Flight Manager or pilot will notify CRC of any delays and upon arrival at the final destination (unless the flight following has been handed off to RMCC). For all point-to-point flights a Flight Request Form will be filled out.

- **Mission Flights/Special Use:**

Mission flights will be documented using IROC or a resource order form. Special use flights are generally resource oriented and will require a Project Aviation Safety Plan and a Flight Request Form.

The flight following procedures for aircraft flying non point-to-point missions require a status check-in at 15-minute intervals. This can be accomplished utilizing Automated Flight Following (AFF) or by radio check-ins.

The following information should be documented at each 15 minute interval:

- Time of check-in.
- Current position of aircraft (Latitude/Longitude and geographic landmark if known).
- Direction of travel (unless orbiting or consistently working in one area).
- Any changes in flight plan or status.

Prior to any flight, the aircraft dispatcher should have a full understanding of the purpose of the mission, destination, duration, persons on board, check-in intervals, communication networks, and emergency procedures in the event of an accident/mishap. The aircraft dispatcher and pilot must agree to which method of flight following will take place (AFF or radio check-ins). Pilots must monitor at least one predetermined radio frequency as an alternate means of flight following in the event the AFF system fails in the aircraft or dispatch; or in case dispatch needs to cancel a mission, divert the aircraft to a higher priority incident, or relay other critical information regarding hazardous weather, TFRs, etc. Regardless of AFF being used, radio communications must be maintained with all aircraft that the dispatcher has agreed to flight follow. If radio communications cannot be maintained through the duration of the flight, the flight will be immediately terminated, and the dispatch office contacted. For flights crossing dispatch area boundaries and/or when the aircraft has flown out of radio contact, CRC will

contact the dispatch center whose area the aircraft has flown into and assure the aircraft is “handed off”. The flight will not be closed out with CRC until it is confirmed that another dispatch center has radio communication with the aircraft.

Refer to Airspace Boundary Plan, in the Northwest District Fire and Aviation Aviation Plan for flights taking place in the common corridor along dispatch boundaries.

### **Automated Flight Following (AFF) Requirements & Procedures**

When aircraft is initially airborne and outside of sterile cockpit environment, the pilot will contact the dispatch office via radio stating, “Nxxx off (airport or helibase name), SOB, FOB, and ETE on AFF”. This is required to positively verify that both the aircraft and the dispatch office are utilizing AFF, radios are operational, and the dispatcher can ‘see’ the aircraft on the computer screen. If there is a problem at this point, change to radio 15-minute check-in procedures until the problem is resolved.

If radio contact cannot be established, the pilot will abort the mission and return to the airport/helibase.

If there is a deviation from the planned and briefed flight route, the pilot will contact the dispatch office via radio with changed information. The dispatch office will keep the AFF system running on the computer for the entire flight and will set a 15-minute timer, monitor the computer, and document the aircraft call sign, lat/long, and heading for the duration of the flight.

For more detailed information refer to NMG (Ch. 50)

### **Flight Management Procedures** Refer to the CRC Unit Aviation Plan, NMG (Ch. 50)

#### **Aircraft Incident/Accident Reporting** Refer to Local Aircraft Incident/Accident Response Guide

All incidents and accidents will be reported immediately to CRC and appropriate line officers. Emergency procedures will be followed as outlined in the Aircraft Incident/Accident Response Guide. SAFECOMs need to be filed by persons that observed or were involved with the incident. A copy of the SAFECOM will be provided to the respective unit aviation officer/forest aviation officer.

#### **Overdue and Missing Aircraft** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

### **Infrared (IR) Support to Fire Operations** Refer to NMG (Ch. 50)

#### **State Owned Aircraft** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

#### **Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control MMA**

Federal MMA requests for ongoing fires must be placed through CRC to RMCC. Local cooperators may go direct to the Denver Regional Colorado State Patrol (CSP) dispatch office

via the State Emergency Operations Line at: 303-279-8855. Request to speak to the DFPC Duty Officer. Orders are to include standard information for ordering Tactical Aircraft.

### **Lead Planes** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

If a lead plane is not available, a qualified Air Tactical Group Supervisor (ATGS) may be used until a lead plane arrives, as long as the Airtanker Pilot-In-Charge (PIC) is IA rated. Non-IA rated PIC requires a lead plane. For additional information regarding aerial supervision requirements in the Rocky Mountain Area refer to RMG (83-1).

### **Aerial Supervision Modules (ASM)** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

### **Aerial Supervision Requirements** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

When aerial supervision resources are co-located with retardant aircraft, they will be launched together on the initial order to maximize safety, effectiveness, and efficiency of incident operations. Incidents with 3 or more aircraft over/assigned to them will have aerial supervision over/assigned on the incident. Federal policy dictates additional requirements as listed below.		
<b>Situation</b>	<b>Lead Plane/ASM</b>	<b>ATGS</b>
Airtanker not initial attack (IA) rated	Required	--
MAFFS	Required	--
Very Large Airtanker (VLAT)	Required	--
When requested by airtanker, ATGS, LP, ATCO or ASM	Required	Required
Foreign Government airtankers	Required if no ATGS	Required if no Lead/ATCO/ASM
Multi-engine Airtanker: Retardant drops conducted between 30 minutes prior to, and 30 minutes after sunrise, or 30 minutes prior to sunset to 30 minutes after sunset.	Required if no ATGS	Required if no Lead/ATCO/ASM
Single Engine Airtanker (SEAT): SEATs are required to be "on the ground" by ½ hour after sunset.	See Level 2 SEAT requirements	See Level 2 SEAT requirements
Level 2 SEAT requirements: Level 2 rated SEAT operating over an incident with more than one other tactical aircraft on scene.	Required if no ATGS	Required if no Lead/ATCO/ASM
Retardant drops in congested/urban interface areas	Order	May use if no Lead/ATCO/ASM
Periods of marginal weather, poor visibility or turbulence	Order	Order
Night helicopter water dropping operations – 2 or more tactical or non-incident helicopters	Not Applicable	Order

### **Air Tactical** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

### **Large Transport Aircraft** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

RMCC will notify CRC if a large transport is expected to come into the Yampa Valley Regional Airport (YVRA) located in Hayden, Colorado. CRC will then notify YVRA of the large transport's ETA and arrangements. This is especially important if the large aircraft is scheduled to land after regular airport hours.

- **Passenger/Cargo Manifest**  
All crews must have a manifest and send a copy to RMCC via e-mail or fax within 2 hours of their departure.

### **Helicopter – Call When Needed (CWN)** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

All CWN helicopters will be ordered through CRC. If the CWN helicopter is for fire suppression the order will then be placed with RMCC.

When a CWN helicopter is used, it must have appropriate level of supervision depending on size and mission. A qualified Helicopter Manager or Project Manager must inspect the aircraft prior to use.

Modules are not automatically ordered by RMCC when a helicopter order is filled by a CWN aircraft. CRC dispatchers need to order the module upon notification that a CWN helicopter is filling the order. The module is ordered on an overhead order and cross-referenced with an aircraft order.

Refer to the appropriate agency aviation plan for guidance concerning use of aircraft for non-fire flights and projects.

**CRC CWN Helicopters** Refer to the DOI/OAS Source List or USFS Rental Agreements.

**Exclusive Use Contract Helicopters** Refer to NMG (Ch. 50)

### **Airtankers** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

Airtankers are initially ordered through Grand Junction Dispatch or Ft. Collins Dispatch. If Grand Junction or Ft. Collins do not have any available, the order is then placed with RMCC. Values at risk and estimated time to impact of those values must accompany all orders for prioritization purposes.

### **Very Large Airtankers (VLAT's)** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

*An order for an airtanker may be filled by a VLAT. However, this will not occur without dialogue between NICC and RMCC and the ordering unit. Documentation and dialogue will be critical for a positive outcome in these scenarios, especially if the ordering unit is not willing or able to accept a VLAT.*

An IC may specify "no VLAT" when ordering if terrain, cost, or other factors limit the use of a VLAT. CRC will specify "No VLAT" in special needs on the order and list the limiting factors described by the IC. These restraints will also be communicated verbally with the GACC.

**Airtanker use in Optional and Post Season Periods** Refer to NMG (Ch. 50)

**Modular Airborne Firefighting Systems (MAFFS)** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

**Helicopters: National Guard** Refer to RMG (CH 50)

National Guard Helicopters may be available out of Buckley AFB on the Front Range and Eagle on the Western Slope. These resources may be used on wildland fires, for extraction, or for other emergencies and natural disasters. They require special procedures for activation via the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control. Incidents managed completely by the State or a County require different procedures than for incidents on Federal lands.

**Single Engine Airtankers (SEATS)** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

See RMG and the SEAT Operations Guide for general policy and guidelines.

For CRC dispatched resources: if county-ordered aircraft is on scene of a fire, resources should assure LCES is in place prior to engaging the fire and may need to engage on a different area of the fire than the SEAT is working in until communications are established with the aircraft. A local SEAT Manager should be ordered as soon as possible upon activation of a SEAT.

**Colorado State SEATs** Refer RMG (Ch. 50)

**BLM – Colorado & Wyoming SEATs** Refer RMG (Ch. 50)

**Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR) (FAR 91.137)** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

All TFR's will be ordered through CRC. CRC will then place the order with RMCC. It is important that after the need for a TFR no longer exists, CRC is notified so the TFR can be released.

**Military Training Routes (MTR) and Special Use Airspace (SUA)** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

There are no MTRs/SUAs within the boundaries of the CRC area.

**Airspace Conflicts** Refer to Appendix F, Airspace Boundary Management Checklist, in the Northwest Colorado Fire Management Unit Aviation Plan, RMG (Ch. 50 Pg. 127) and NMG (Ch. 50)

**FAA Temporary Control Tower Operations** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

**Dedicated Radio Frequencies and Management** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

**Time Conversion Table** Refer to RMG (Ch. 50)

**Sunrise and Sunset Table**

Refer to <http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/> for Sunrise/Sunset Tables for the CRC Zone.

## **Commonly Used Airport Capabilities and Services**

For more information use Ac-U-Kwik Directories or [www.airnav.com/airport](http://www.airnav.com/airport)

### **Craig-Moffat Airport (CAG)**

N40-29.7 x W107-31.3

Elevation: 6197 ft.

VOR: CHE r247@10nm

EKR r021@31.6nm

Fuel: Jet A

AvGas

FBO: Mountain Airspray : 970-824-6335

Control Tower: No

Runway: 5600 ft. x 100 ft.

Weight Limitations:

Single Wheel 35,000 lbs.

Double Wheel 40,000 lbs.

Uses by CRC:

Helibase

SEAT Base

Satellite Smokejumper base at terminal

Air Attack Base

Small Charter aircraft (Recon, PAX transport, cargo transport)

Food & Lodging:

Food, none on premises, but golf course has a restaurant and is located

North of airport within walking distance

Lodging 2 miles into Craig

Ground Transportation:

None

### **Hayden – Yampa Valley Regional Airport (HDN)**

N40-28.9 x W107-13.1

Elevation: 6606 ft.

VOR: CHE r106@4.6nm

BQZ r261@15.8nm

Fuel: Jet A

AvGas

FBO: Spectrum Jet Center 970-276-3743

Control Tower: No

Runway:

10000 ft .x 150 ft.

Weight Limitations:

Single Wheel 75,000 lbs.

Double Wheel 170,000 lbs.

Double Tandem Wheel 260,000 lbs .  
 Uses by CRC:  
     Jetport  
     Small Charter aircraft (Recon, PAX transport, cargo transport)  
     Air Attack Base  
 Food & Lodging:  
     Lodging & food 2 miles into Hayden  
 Ground Transportation:  
     Commercial rentals  
     Various shuttles

### **Kremmling Airport (20V)**

N40-03.2 x W106-22.1  
 Elevation: 7415 ft.  
 VOR: RLG r34@4.6nm  
     BQZ r124@33.7nm  
 Fuel: Jet A  
     AvGas  
 FBO: Grand River Aviation 970-724-0611  
 Control Tower: No  
 Runway: 5600 ft. x 100 ft.  
 Weight Limitations:  
     Single Wheel 46,000 lbs.  
     Double Wheel 68,000 lbs.  
 Uses by CRC:  
     Helibase  
     SEAT Base  
     Air Attack Base  
     Small Charter aircraft (Recon, PAX transport, cargo transport)  
 Food & Lodging:  
     Lodging & food 1 mile into Kremmling  
 Ground Transportation:  
     Courtesy car

### **Meeker Airport (EEO)**

N40-29.9 x W107-53.2  
 Elevation: 6415 ft.  
 VOR: RIL r334@32.2nm  
     EKR r107@2.1nm  
 Fuel: Jet A  
     AvGas  
 FBO: Coulter Aviation 878-5045  
 Control Tower: No  
 Runway:  
     6500 ft. x 60 ft.  
 Weight Limitations:



Single Wheel 21,000 lbs.  
Double Wheel 27,000 lbs.

Uses by CRC:

Helibase  
SEAT Base  
Air Attack Base  
Small Charter aircraft (Recon, PAX transport, cargo transport)

Food & Lodging:

Lodging & food 2 miles into Meeker

Ground Transportation:

None

### **Rangely Airport (4V0)**

N40-05.7 x W108-45.7

Elevation: 5278 ft.

VOR: VEL r102@37.6nm

EKR r258@38.4nm

Fuel: AvGas

FBO: Rangely Airport 970-675-2316

Control Tower: No

Runway:

6400 ft. x 75 ft.

Weight Limitations:

Single Wheel 25,000 lbs.

Uses by CRC:

Helibase  
SEAT Base  
Air Attack Base  
Small Charter aircraft (Recon, PAX transport, cargo transport)

Food & Lodging:

Lodging & food 2 miles into Rangely

Ground Transportation:

None

### **Steamboat Springs Airport (SBS)**

N40-31.0 x W106-52.0

Elevation: 6882 ft.

VOR: CHE r77@20nm

BQZ r352@3.2nm

Fuel: Jet A

AvGas

FBO: Steamboat Springs Airport 970-879-1204

Control Tower: No

Runway:

4452 ft. x 100 ft.

Weight Limitations:

Single Wheel 50,000 lbs.

Double Wheel 60,000 lbs.

Uses by CRC:

Helibase

SEAT Base

Air Attack Base

Small Charter aircraft (Recon, PAX transport, cargo transport)

Food & Lodging:

Lodging & food 3 miles into Steamboat Springs

Ground Transportation:

None