Memorandum

To: State Coordination Centers, Fire Managers, and Incident Commanders

From: Nancy Ellsworth, SACC Center Manager

Subject: Short-Haul Extraction Helicopter Use, Placement, and Ordering Procedures

Discussion
Unless otherwise specified, in the Southern Area Geographic Area, the term “short-haul helicopter” refers to an Interagency approved Type 3 Helicopter and crew having the specialized capability for evacuating injured personnel from a remote site via a specialized line attached to the helicopter’s airframe. Available helicopters may vary in number, make and model of aircraft. In all cases, a helicopter’s principle mission will be firefighting/initial attack. Short-haul is an additional crew and aircraft capability that can be utilized as needed.

Aircraft Positioning
Given that firefighting is the principle mission, short-haul helicopters will be assigned to active incidents or pre-positioned at a local unit in support of initial attack. Within this specification, the helicopters will be intentionally assigned so that short-haul capability can be readily available across a broad expanse of the Geographic Area, ideally in those areas where extraction potential is perceived to be greatest. Please be cognizant to stage the aircraft where cell phone and Wi-Fi availability can be maintained to ensure adequate communication when or if an order is placed. Maps depicting current short-haul helicopter locations and 100-nautical mile effective response circles can be found online:

- [SACC Short-Haul Extraction Helicopter Map](#)

Ordering a Short-Haul Helicopter for Emergency Medevac
- Refer to online map for the short-haul helicopter within effective range of or nearest your incident.
- Each helicopter location has an associated table that will provide the helicopter tail number and the name and phone number of the hosting dispatch center. Ordering Units may order a short-haul helicopter by placing a call direct to the hosting dispatch center. **Ordering Units or Incidents must supply the necessary information to facilitate an emergency response.** At a minimum, include the following items, which are found on the standard aircraft dispatch card “kneeboard”:
  - Incident Name
  - Incident Air-to-Air frequency
  - Incident air-to-ground frequency
o Incident geographic location and latitude/longitude
o Incident Ground Contact
o Other aircraft on the incident
o Hazards if known

- A request for short-haul will be processed by the host dispatch center or hosting IMT as a priority emergency response.
- The host dispatch center will contact SACC (678-320-3000) whenever a short-haul mission is launched. SACC will follow-up with a “commit” message to all SA State Coordination Centers.
- If hosting IMT utilizes the short-haul aircraft for a medical emergency, the IMT will notify the hosting dispatch center to ensure proper notifications are made.
- SACC will notify all SA State Coordination Centers and update the appropriate web products in a timely manner whenever there is a short-haul resource status or location change.

Flight Hours and Response Times
Short-haul extraction can occur only during daylight flight hours, during which an estimated 30 minute response time is observed. **Night operations are not possible.** However, orders can be placed at night to facilitate an aircraft launch at the earliest possible time.

**IMPORTANT!**
If your incident is NOT within the 100-mile effective range of a short-haul helicopter or the short-haul helicopter is not available, still consider requesting the next closest short-haul helicopter. Although the aircraft may need to stop and refuel enroute, it may still be the quickest response alternative or a prudent contingency.

Consider other alternatives, such as calling 9-1-1, when short-haul aircraft are not available. Local County, commercial, National Guard, or other DOD assets may provide more timely patient evacuation and subsequent care. Reference the current Emergency Helicopter Extraction Source List for additional information on alternate extraction options and how to order.

Short-haul ordering procedures are not valid for use with National Guard medevac or other non-Interagency extraction and hoist resources. **If National Guard aircraft are activated, letters addressing extraction procedures or medevac ordering will be issued and posted to the SACC webpage under the Emergency Medical Evacuation.**

For questions regarding the coordination of short-haul ordering or mobilization, please contact Nancy Ellsworth (d nellsworth@fs.fed.us) at 678-320-3001. For questions on management of interagency short-haul helicopters or aircraft capability, please contact Scott Fry (sfry@fs.fed.us) at 940-210-0155.