

AZ Flyer News

Summer 2015

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- ▶ During the 2015 registration period, 7680 aircraft were registered. This number includes stored, salvage, balloons, gliders, experimental, homebuilt, antique and classic aircraft.
- ▶ Did you know non-airworthy and stored aircraft must be registered with ADOT/MVD if the FAA registration number is active?
- ▶ Are you engaged in the business of buying, selling, or exchanging aircraft? Offering to assist another person with the purchase, sale or exchange of an aircraft for compensation? If so, it is very likely you need to be licensed as an aircraft dealer. If you are not licensed in Arizona, contact the Aircraft Registration Unit at 602.712.6995 or email acreg@azdot.gov



SOUTHWEST WILDFIRE PREPARATION



By: Christy Crowell, Revenue Field Auditor III

On a trip to the Sierra Vista Municipal Airport (FHU), the Aeronautics Team from ADOT's Revenue Audit noticed an enormous helicopter off in the distance at the far side of the airport tarmac. It appeared to have two huge spotlights atop it, which we presumed were for search & rescue. As it turns out those weren't spotlights on top of the helicopter they were jet-engine intakes!

Ignatius "Iggy" Soriano, Airport Technician for FHU graciously took us out onto the tarmac and over to this monster helicopter. Daniel Bunziak, ADOT Revenue Field Auditor, is shown standing in front of the helicopter.

The helicopter pictured, a Sikorsky rotorcraft nicknamed "Sky-Crane" (model CH-54B) has two 4800 horsepower jet engines and a wing

span of 72 feet. This aircraft, along with a variety of other aircraft, is used in the State of Arizona to help battle wildfires during the busiest months of fire season, which is approximately May through October. It is outfitted with a storage tank on the undercarriage that can hold liquid such as water or foam fire retardant. This beast can hover over a water source and draw up 2500 gallons of liquid in about 30 seconds using the hose connected to the bottom of the tank. Some very impressive video footage of this helicopter in action can be seen online:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P7LjsmnFavs>

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While photographing the helicopter, our group noticed a small pillar of smoke off in the distance. Iggy said the fire was being addressed and offered to show us the “set-up” for wildfire season at the Sierra Vista Municipal Airport.



Usually around March and April firefighting equipment is set-up at several locations around the state for the preparation of wildfire season. This is done through the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG) comprised of representatives from each of the five Federal land management agencies (National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Bureau of Reclamation of the Department of Interior) along with land management agencies of Arizona and New Mexico. An important responsibility of the SWCG is to function as part of the Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) Group once fire season begins. The MAC Group is comprised of command centers of multiple agencies throughout the United States utilizing communication and strategies to manage large-scale incidents and emergencies.



Scout planes are sent out in areas of high-danger fire areas as well as areas in which fires are known to have been spotted. These planes are the eyes and the frontline for the firefighting equipment that follows. It is an extremely dangerous job that involves knowledge and experience in aviation and the nature of fires with extreme heat, winds and down & up drafts.

Not all wildfires are fought by air. Ground crews are commonly sent in by ground vehicles to fight wildfires. They are invaluable at performing controlled burns that help reduce the risk of larger, hotter fires starting spontaneously or by people.



Fire retardant concentrate is stored at Sierra Vista Municipal Airport. In addition, large tanks of water, each holding as much as 20,000 gallons are kept on the premises to mix with the retardant.

Our group arrived mid-April 2015 during the initial setup for fire season. As many as 1,000 firefighters are making this airport their home during the summer months sometimes eating up to 10,000 calories per day just to maintain the ability to continue working.

It takes a lot of time, resources, and people working together to help protect the residents, visitors, wildlife and forests of the State of Arizona. ADOT would like to thank all the men and women involved in protecting our great state.