

SEAT HOT LOADING PROCEDURES

For

LARGE AIRTANKER BASES

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this document is to provide a basic supplemental plan to be added to the operational plan written for the large airtanker bases for hot loading Single Engine Airtankers (SEAT). This plan will provide general procedures for all aspects of the hot loading of SEATs out of large airtanker bases.

AUTHORITY:

All SEAT operations will be conducted within the guidelines established in the Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Operations Guide (ISOG), SEAT Contracts and established base operational plans. *(insert additional manuals / handbooks etc identified for each base if needed)*

This plan will be reviewed and approved annually by *(insert who will approve /review)* prior to conducting any operations at the beginning of each season.

DISTRIBUTION:

A copy of this plan will be provided to all airtanker base personnel and retardant contractors at the beginning of each season. In addition to the airtanker base personnel, a copy of this plan should be provided to all agency aviation managers in the surrounding area that may utilize SEATs during the fire season.

RISK ASSESSMENT:

A basic Risk Management Worksheet (RMW) or Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) for conducting hot loading operations with SEATs must be completed and reviewed by all airtanker and retardant contractor personnel prior to operations. The RMW / JHA for this base is posted *(insert the location)*. *Note: A basic RMW for Ramp and SEAT Operations has been completed and is available in the Interagency SEAT Operational Procedures Handbook to use as a guide in developing one for each base.*

REQUIRED TRAINING:

Personnel considered qualified in hot loading SEAT operations will have successfully completed the following training: *(List the type of formal and practical training that each of the airtanker base and retardant contractor personnel will receive.)*

All training will be documented *(insert how / where training will be documented)*

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Airtanker Base Manager (ATBM): The ATBM is responsible for the overall management of the airtanker base including all operations conducted with SEATs. The ATBM will coordinate with the SEAT Manager (SEMG) and provide them with the local procedures and information necessary to conduct safe and efficient operations from the base. The ATBM is responsible for establishing a main point of contact for the SEMG to report to for any problems, concerns, or support needs while operating at the base.

SEAT Manager (SEMG): The SEMG is responsible for ensuring that all operations conducted at the airtanker base are in concurrence with guidelines established in the ISOG and SEAT Contracts. The SEMG must continually coordinate with all airtanker base personnel to ensure all operations are conducted safely and under the guidelines established at the local level.

Ramp Personnel: The Ramp Manager (RAMP) is primarily responsible for the overall supervision of the ramp area and will provide direct supervision to the Parking Tenders. The RAMP will coordinate all movement of aircraft, vehicles, and personnel working on the ramp area. The RAMP will ensure that qualified personnel are designated to monitor communications, loading operations, and the movement of aircraft. The SEMG will continually coordinate with the RAMP to ensure that SEAT hot loading procedures are in compliance with established guidelines and procedures and help mitigate any problems or concerns that may occur.

Retardant Contractor Personnel (Loaders): The Retardant Contractor personnel are responsible for all retardant operations including inventorying, mixing, loading, and monitoring the product for compliance with the national quality assurance program. The SEMG will monitor all loading operations and ensure that the pilot and loading crew are familiar with the established loading procedures. *(Note: These responsibilities are based on a full-service contract, bases that have government personnel in these functions will need to modify this section.)*

SEAT Support Personnel: The SEAT Support Personnel are responsible for reviewing and monitoring the loading procedures that are established and provide the necessary input to help ensure the proper loading of the SEAT. The SEAT Support Personnel may be required to provide additional support to the SEAT when it is in the pit (cleaning windshields etc.), but will not do so without full concurrence with RAMP and the loaders. *(Note: Some bases may or may not allow the SEAT Support Personnel to be involved with the actual loading of the aircraft, it is important that the plan clearly defines who can load the aircraft.)*

RAMP AND PIT SET UP:

(Insert a brief narrative about the ramp and pit set up for the base. Try to include general information like: the rotation pattern, general side the aircraft are loaded from, number of functional loading pits, and the base policy for loading SEATs at bases with large airtankers. Make sure to clearly define the trigger point established for moving the SEAT to an alternate site when heavy airtanker use increases at the base.)

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES:

Initial Arrival: Upon initial arrival into the airtanker base the SEAT pilot will shut down and participate in a complete briefing with the designated airtanker personnel and retardant loading crew. The initial briefing will include the following items:

- ? Review of the general operating procedures for the base and the specific procedures established for hot loading SEATs.
- ? Review the approach and depart pattern established for the ramp and pit areas.
- ? Obtain a briefing on the communication plan and frequencies established for the ramp and pit areas.
- ? Review the role of the SEMG and SEAT Support Personnel while operating at the base and during the hot loading procedures.
- ? Review of all hand signals used by the Ramp Manager or Parking Tenders established for operations in the ramp and pit areas.
- ? Obtain a briefing from the retardant loaders on the loading procedures, sequences, and hand signals utilized during the operation.
- ? Confirmation of pump loading capacity (Gallons per Minute) with the pilot and SEAT Support Personnel.
- ? *(Include additional items specific to each base that should be reviewed on the initial arrival.)*

Communications: The SEAT will remain in communications with the designated ramp and pit personnel through out the hot loading operations. If communications are unable to be established and maintain, the hot loading operation will be discontinued until positive communication is re-established.

(Base Specifics: Insert the frequency that will be monitored for all ramp and pit operations.)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

(Base Specifics: Insert the required PPE established for personnel operating on the ramp and pit areas. Identify the PPE that the SEMG and SEAT Support Personnel must have when accessing the ramp area.)

Authorized Personnel:

(Base Specifics: Insert the personnel who are authorized to be on the ramp or pit area during the hot loading operation.)

Refueling Operations: Refueling operations are the sole responsibility of the vendor and will not be performed by government personnel. All fueling operations will be

conducted in a secure area and without presenting any undue hazards to other aircraft or personnel. Only aircraft that are approved with the appropriate dry-break equipment are authorized for hot refueling operations. All loading procedures will be conducted within the guidelines established in the ISOG and SEAT Contracts. There shall be no **simultaneous** hot loading and refueling.

(Base Specifics: Insert the base policy for hot fueling. Note: Most airtanker bases do not allow hot refueling on the ramp area. The plan needs to clearly state the fueling plan that is currently in place for the base and the options for conducting hot refueling at an alternate site with the support vehicle and personnel.)

Ramp / Pit Area: The Ramp Manager and/or Parking Tenders have full authority for all operations conducted on the pit and ramp area and no other personnel are authorized to give instructions for moving or positioning aircraft. The SEAT pilot will remain in positive radio contact with the Ramp Manager during the hot loading operation. The SEAT will be directed into the correct pit for loading and will put the engine at idle or flat pitch and lock the brakes before the loading sequence begins. The SEAT pilot will remain at the controls during the hot loading operation.

(Base Specifics: Insert procedural details for the Ramp Manager and /or Parking Tender for the base. The procedures generally include:

- ? *Identify the position of the Ramp Manger during the hot loading procedures.*
- ? *Procedures used to signal the loaders to approach the SEAT for loading..*
- ? *Signals used for emergency procedures.*
- ? *Procedures used when the SEAT has completed the loading and is ready to depart.*

Loading Operations: The loaders will approach and depart the aircraft only in the safety area behind the trailing edge of the front wing. All hot loading operations will be conducted in this designated safety area. The Pump Operator will remain at the pump and must be in contact with the loader at all times. A Mixmaster must be present to monitor and record the retardant quality control and amount loaded into the SEAT. The Mixmaster will provide the SEAT Support Personnel with the gallons loaded and the refractometer reading for each load.

(Base Specifics: Insert the procedural details for the loading operation for the base. The procedures generally include:

- ? *Approach and depart paths to the SEAT.*
- ? *Communication procedures used between the loaders and pilot for beginning the hot loading.*
- ? *Sequence for hooking up the hose, turning on /off pumps and valves.*
- ? *Role of the Mixmaster and Pump Operator during the hot loading procedures.*
- ? *Jettison procedures utilized at the base due to an emergency or overloading.*

Pump System: SEATs should be loaded using a pump capable of producing no more than 300 gallons per minute.

(Base Specifics: Insert the type of pump use for SEATs, with the gallons per minute and other specifics.)

Metering System: A visual indicator monitored by the SEAT pilot **must** be used in addition to the established metering system at the base to help prevent overloading.

(Base Specifics: Insert the type of established metering system at the base and the visual monitoring procedures utilized for ensuring the SEAT will not be overloaded.)

Areas of Concern:

(Base Specifics: Each base has a unique setup or set of circumstances that may cause some concerns when hot loading SEATs. List below some of the areas that may be of concerns, and make sure to identify them to the SEMG, and SEAT contractor personnel in the initial briefing: Some examples:

- ? Loading aircraft from the right side only with the established pattern.*
- ? Overloading a SEAT and mitigation procedures.*
- ? Base capabilities to off-load retardant from SEATs.*
- ? Cool down times for turbine aircraft when having to shut down.)*

ALTERNATE SITE:

(Base Specifics: Insert the details for moving the SEATs to an alternate site to load. Make sure that the SEAT Manager and SEAT contractor personnel receive a complete briefing prior to operating out of the site.)

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