

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF AIRCRAFT SERVICES
SAFETY ALERT

No. 00-07

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Subject:

Helicopter Water Bucket Payloads

Distribution:

All DOI Aviation Activities (Coordinated with Forest Service Aviation Safety)

Discussion:

In some instances, helicopters arrive for firefighting missions with buckets that cannot be adjusted to within allowable payload limits for local environmental conditions. As a result, payloads cannot be accurately determined by dipping partial buckets without the use of an onboard weighing system.

Recommendation:

Determine allowable payloads using the Interagency Load Calculation method, while using the appropriate HOGS helicopter performance charts and current local environmental conditions.

At the beginning of the fuel cycle, adjust the bucket capacity so as not to exceed the actual payload limit. If the bucket being utilized cannot be adjusted to the allowable payload, it is recommended that bucket operations not be conducted.

Future contract language will reflect this change.



Robert Galloway
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