



Interagency Aviation TECH BULLETIN



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SUBJECT: Airtanker Base Frequencies—There is no “National Standard 123.975”

DISTRIBUTION: Aviation Operations

DISCUSSION: There is no “National Standard” frequency to be used as the go-to tanker base frequency. The new airtanker base directory will be coming out soon and all the radio frequency information in it will be correct. There is no “National Standard of 123.975”; DO NOT USE THIS FREQUENCY WITHOUT PROPER AUTHORIZATION.

All A/A AM frequencies belong to the FAA. The FAA engineers each frequency and authorizes the use of the frequencies each year. In 2010 we had a meeting with all of the UDSA, DOI and FAA frequency managers to come up with standards for supporting aviation assets with A/A AM and A/G FM frequencies for Initial/Extended Attack, Project fires, All-Risk incidents and this included the tanker bases. The FAA stated that every frequency used by the USDA and DOI must be reviewed and engineered each year. That is the only way that they can provide frequency assets to us that are legal, authorized and protected.

If a tanker base is not listed in the national tanker base guide, there is no frequency assigned to that base. When a temporary base is activated, a ROSS order must be placed requesting a frequency for that location. Per FAA engineering, each tanker base frequency is authorized for a service volume of 40 nautical miles and a 5000’ ceiling. Each project/all-risk incident service volume is engineered at 20 nautical miles and a 5000’ ceiling. When placing a ROSS order for an A/A AM frequency for a temporary tanker base, you will need to state in the request that this is for a tanker base or else the FAA will only authorize a service volume on 20 NM and 5000’ ceiling.

We realize that aircraft may have to change frequencies but the name of the game is safety and we can only use what is legal, authorized and protected. If we just pick a frequency, we may cause interference to someone else and jeopardize their safety, as well as ours.

Please see the Interagency Aviation Information Bulletin IAAB 14-01 that was recently distributed on the new Airtanker Base Frequencies for 2014 at: http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/av_safety/promotion/Information_Bulletins/IAIB%202014-01%20AT%20Base%20Freq%20changes.pdf

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