



Cross Border Airspace Management



GUIDELINE

Version 1.0

January 2024



1 Purpose

This guideline is to be used by partner agencies involved in co-operative aerial fire-fighting operations and mitigation activities within the vicinity of, or as part of agreed interstate cross border operations.

This guideline is to be used in conjunction with existing jurisdictional procedures and interstate memoranda of understanding, however where differences between respective jurisdictions exist, this document can be used to ensure safe aerial firefighting operations.

2 Principles

Participating jurisdictions operate a State Air Desk (SAD) or equivalent co-ordination facility to ensure effective aerial fire-fighting communications, management and support within their respective jurisdiction.

Individual jurisdictional agencies and/or SAD are responsible for managing and engaging aircraft from operators who are approved within ARENA and maintained by the National Aerial Fire Fighting Centre (NAFC).

Cross border airspace arrangements are to be instigated where applicable between jurisdictional border agencies when fire activity is occurring within 15 kilometres of a jurisdictional border and firefighting aircraft are involved.

The controlling SAD shall advise a neighbouring SAD of an actual or potential of aerial fire-fighting operations being undertaken near a State/Territory border. This advice must include:

- dispatched aircraft call signs
- allocated Fire Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (Fire CTAF)
- locality of the fire activity
- specific operations being undertaken
- designated air bases and/or reloading facilities
- location contact details for the responsible Incident Management Team (IMT)

3 Operations

The following airspace management procedures shall be enacted by the controlling SAD on dispatch of the first fire-bombing aircraft.

- Discussions regarding the incident shall be initiated immediately and maintained between the respective SADs.
- Clear definition of the controlling IMT or Incident Controller (IC) shall be confirmed between the respective SADs. This may include IMTs either side of a State/Territory border.
- Clear definition of the mutual response or cross border area shall be confirmed between the respective SADs.
- Fire CTAFs shall be determined and allocated only by the controlling SAD in discussion with the adjoining State / SAD



- The controlling SAD shall ensure that an Air Attack Supervisor (AAS) is initiated when any fire-bombing aircraft is dispatched to operations within the confirmed mutual response or cross border area.
- The respective SADs shall ensure all AAS and dispatched aircraft are briefed on all relevant information including Fire CTAF and ground communications.
- The first on site AAS shall ensure overall coordination of aircraft until controlling AAS arrives. Consideration of fire sectorisation can then be considered.
- All dispatched aircraft shall initiate a mandatory 5NM inbound broadcast radio calls on the designated Fire CTAF and/or Area frequency or local CTAF. Calls outside of these arrangements may be varied as directed by the Incident AAS.
- Large Air Tankers (LAT) shall make an additional 10NM inbound broadcast call on the designated Fire CTAF and/or Area frequency or local CTAF. Calls outside of these arrangements may be varied as directed by the Incident AAS.
- An incident specific NOTAM shall be considered by the controlling SAD in consultation with the adjoining jurisdiction. Both SADs can have controlling authority for their respective jurisdiction.
- A Temporary Danger Area (TDA) or Temporary Restricted Area (TRA) may be initiated by agreement between both SADs.
- If there are multiple fires conflicting in the designated mutual response area or encompassing both sides of the jurisdictional border, the SADs will initiate a TRA via the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) Office of Airspace Regulation (OAR) encompassing all aircraft operations. Under CASA OAR requirements, an individual SAD may act as an airspace controlling authority for their respective operation.
- The IC shall ensure an Air Operations Unit is established consistent with the Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS) and jurisdictional procedures.
- As aircraft activity builds, consideration may be given by the SADs or IMTs to complete an Air Operations Complexity Analysis (see TAB A).
- Where aerial fire-fighting operations remain ongoing, the established Air Operations Unit(s) are to ensure all aircraft and ground crews have established ground to air communications.
- Release of any aircraft by the respective IC is to be communicated between the SADs.



Air Operations Complexity Analysis			
Incident Name:	Date:	Yes	No
10 or more aircraft utilising airbase / helibase. Mandatory requirement for Air Operations Manager at IMT.			
Level 3 wildfire incident involving multiple aircraft. Mandatory requirement for Air Operations Manager at IMT.			
Large number of aircraft working from a single airbase >6 aircraft.			
Multiple incidents in a confined geographic area.			
Aircraft assigned to incident working from multiple airbases / helibases.			
Area Command structure implemented. Mandatory requirement for Air Operations Manager at IMT.			
Mission Profiles			
Helicopters are conducting fireline crew transport operations into inaccessible or remote locations.			
Large Airtankers and / or Type 1 helicopters operating at incident/s.			
Multiple mission types are being supported out of the airbase / helibase.			
Major escalation in aircraft activity is anticipated due to increase in fire activity.			
ADF resources operating at incident or conjunctionally from airbase. Mandatory requirement for Air Operations Manager at IMT.			
Operational Environment			
Complex hazards to aircraft exist i.e. listed danger and / or restricted areas, parachute / flight schools, power transmission lines, tourism flight routes.			
Complex airspace issues exist i.e. bordering or within controlled or military airspace, VFR flight lanes.			
Airbase located at an airport with a moderate or significant amount of general aviation activity			
Incident within high value asset urban interface			
Interstate jurisdictions involved in incident (cross border operations)			
If you have checked "Yes" on 5 or more of the analysis boxes, a request for an Air Operations Manager and / or limit aircraft or aircraft flights until corrections can be made			

<i>Endorsed by the NAFC Strategic Committee</i>	<i>10 April 2024</i>
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