

# NEBRASKA

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Good Life. Great Strength.

November 1, 2018

Governor Pete Ricketts and  
Patrick J. O'Donnell, Clerk of the Legislature  
State Capital  
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Governor Ricketts and Mr. O'Donnell:

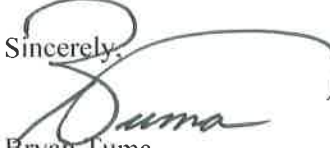
Nebraska Revised Statute 81-827 requires the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to contract all costs to maintain one single-engine air tanker (SEAT) in Nebraska available to provide aerial suppression flights in fighting wildfires. NEMA is also required to report annually, no later than December 1<sup>st</sup>, to the Governor and the Clerk of the Legislature regarding deployment of the SEAT to include:

- A. Date and time each request for deployment of the SEAT was received.
- B. Date and time each time the SEAT was deployed.
- C. Explanation for any delay of more than an hour from the time a request was received until the SEAT actually deployed.
- D. Explanation for the denial of any request for SEAT deployment.

Nebraska works in coordination with surrounding states to allow deployment of the Nebraska funded SEAT to locations outside of the state as long as fires within the state of Nebraska receive priority for deployment of the Nebraska SEAT over requests to support fires elsewhere. The Great Plains Interagency Dispatch Center (GPC) manages the deployment of all SEAT aircraft in the entire region.

The most recent contract/activation period for the Nebraska SEAT occurred July 16 through September 15, 2018 (62 operational days). A list of aerial suppression flights flown in 2018 (Table 1) as well as a report of costs associated with the SEAT program for 2018 (Table 2) are attached.

Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,  
  
Bryan Tuma  
Assistant Director

Attachments as stated

Daryl Bohac, Director

**Nebraska Emergency Management Agency**

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**TABLE 1 –SEAT PROGRAM  
AERIAL SUPPRESSION FLIGHTS 2018**

<u>REQUEST RECEIVED</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME DEPLOYED OR ON-SCENE</u>	<u>REQUEST DENIED/REASON /ACTION TAKEN</u>	<u>DEPLOYMENT DELAYED/REASON</u>	<u>FLIGHT HOURS/ SORTIES FLOWN/ BILLED TO/BY</u>	<u>RETARDANT USED/ BILLED TO/BY</u>
July 23 1630 hours	Bach Fire Dawes County, south of Chadron, Nebraska	1640 hrs. on-scene	No	N/A	0.93 flight hours	1,400 gallons
July 24 1030 hours	Antelope Fire Dawes County, south of Chadron, Nebraska	1045 hrs. on-scene	No	N/A	0.48 flight hours	700 gallons
July 24 1320 hours	Abear Fire near Eagle Butte, South Dakota	1415 hrs. on-scene	No	N/A		700 gallons (on SEAT when it left Chadron base) Billed to BIA by NEMA.
August 11 1655 hours	Vineyard Fire, near Hot Springs, South Dakota	1713 hrs. on-scene	No	N/A	4 sorties. Flight time billed directly to Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) by Fletcher Aviation.	2,876 gallons from the Chadron base billed to South Dakota Fire by NEMA.
August 12 1011 hours	Return to Vineyard Fire, near Hot Springs, South Dakota	1030 hrs. on-scene	No	N/A	14 sorties. Flight time billed directly to South Dakota Fire by Fletcher Aviation.	9,810 gallons from the Chadron base billed to South Dakota Fire by NEMA.
August 18 1450 hours	Dorm Fire, Dawes County, south of Chadron, Nebraska	1455 hrs. on-scene	No	N/A	0.88 flight hours.	1,440 gallons
August 27 1720 hours	Wall Canyon Fire, Hot Springs, South Dakota	1735 hrs. on-scene	No	N/A	6 sorties. Flight time billed directly to South Dakota Fire by Fletcher Aviation.	1,320 gallons of retardant (used in 2 of 6 sorties) from the Chadron base billed to South Dakota Fire by NEMA.
August 27 1720 hours	Wall Canyon Fire, Hot Springs, South Dakota	1735 hrs. on-scene	No	N/A	6 sorties. Flight time billed directly to South Dakota Fire by Fletcher Aviation.	1,320 gallons of retardant (used in 2 of 6 sorties) from the Chadron base billed to the Chadron base billed to South Dakota Fire by NEMA.
August 27	Wildcat Hills in Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska	N/A	Yes <sup>1</sup>	N/A		
September 8 1253 hours	TRAINING EXERCISE: Echo Spot Exercise Wildcat Hills area near Scottsbluff, Nebraska	SEAT participated in training exercise with several Volunteer Fire Departments in the Wildcat Hills area.	N/A	N/A	2.81 flight hours billed to Nebraska Forest Service by NEMA.	

**TABLE 1 – SEAT PROGRAM  
AERIAL SUPPRESSION FLIGHTS 2018 (con't.)**

<sup>1</sup>On August 27, 2018 the Great Plains Interagency Dispatch Center (GPC) received a request for SEAT support on a fire in the Wildcat Hills located in Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska. Under Nebraska's agreement with surrounding states, fires that occur within the state have priority and in-state requests are not to be denied for non-availability of the Nebraska SEAT. In this instance, a relief GPC dispatcher was on duty and not aware of this clause in the agreement which led him to mistakenly deny the request because the Nebraska SEAT was flying on a fire in South Dakota. NEMA officials contacted the GPC supervisor to discuss the situation and received the following response. Additional issues are not anticipated.

Copy of email from Great Plains supervisor below:

To Whom It May Concern

On behalf of Great Plains Interagency Dispatch Center (GPC) please accept my apology for the actions taken on Monday 08/27/2018, when Tanker 875 was requested for a fire in Nebraska and they were told it was committed to a fire in South Dakota. This will not happen again. I have gone over Tanker 875 dispatching protocols with the staff at GPC and it is understood if T875 is being barrowed [sic] to assist with a fire in South Dakota and it is requested for a fire in Nebraska it will be released form [sic] the SD fire and redirected to the fire in Nebraska. In addition proper permission will be acquired before dispatching T875 to fires in South Dakota.

Paul A. Reiter  
Communication Specialist Supervisor / Assistant Center Manager  
South Dakota Department of Agriculture, Wildland Fire Division  
Great Plains Interagency Dispatch Center  
8123 Mt Rushmore Rd Rapid City, SD 57702  
Direct 605-399-3160, Cell 605 381-1459

**TABLE 2 – SEAT PROGRAM  
ASSOCIATED COSTS FOR 2018**

	<b>Standby (days)</b>	<b>Flight Time (hours)</b>	<b>Ext Pilot (hours)</b>	<b>Ext Driver (hours)</b>	<b>Per Diem (days)</b>	<b>Support Truck (miles)</b>
7/15-31/2018	14.5	2.41	1	1	38	150
8/1-31/2018	30.5	0.70	1	1	74	300
9/1-15/2018	15.0	3.81	3	7	36	346
<b>Total</b>	60.0	6.92	5	9	148	796
<b>Price</b>	\$ 2,750.00	\$ 2,750.00	\$ 55.00	\$ 33.00	\$ 144.00	\$ 2.45
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$ 165,000.00	\$ 19,030.00	\$ 275.00	\$ 297.00	\$ 21,312.00	\$ 1,950.20
<b>Total contract amount billed for 2018</b>						
		\$ 207,864.20				
<b>Inception to date Funding</b>						
		\$ 2,049,000.00				
<b>Inception to date Expenses</b>						
		\$ (1,631,387.95)				
<b>Balance Remaining</b>						
		\$ 417,612.05				