

Public Aircraft

A Contractor's Perspective



Neptune History

- Neptune Aviation purchased the assets of Black Hills Aviation in Alamogordo, NM in 1993.
 - Included 6 P2V Neptune Tankers
 - US Forest Service contracts
 - Moved operations to Missoula
 - Retained employees



Neptune Today

- 170 employees
- 10 P2V Neptune Airtankers
- 7 spare P2V airframes
- 1 Bae-146 Airtanker
- 1 B100 KingAir
- 1 Falcon 50EX
- Largest P2V Neptune operator in the world
- Largest US Forest Service large airtanker contractor
- Owns all technical data for P2V-7 Neptune



Maintenance Operations

- All aircraft are returned to service under Neptune's part 145 repair station
- P2V-5 and -7 aircraft have an FAA approved Continued Airworthiness Program (CAP)
- Neptune developed an FAA Approved Aircraft Inspection Program for the P2V aircraft (AAIP)
- BAe maintained under manufacturer's chapter 5 inspection program
 - Retained Part 25 Transport Category
 - BAe designed mission specific inspection factoring

Maintenance Operations

- Maintenance
 - All phases of AAIP are completed annually (A, B, C, D)
 - Perform over 4000 man hours per P2 aircraft, per year



Maintenance Operations

- Supporting aircraft during contract
 - Two technicians per aircraft. Personnel are deployed for 2 months at a time on a rotational schedule
 - One vehicle per aircraft
 - 24/7 Maintenance Control
 - Modeling 121 operations



Flight Operations

- Flight Department
 - 29 pilots
 - 1 DPE
 - 2 PPEs
 - Over 300 hrs of flight training per year
 - Annual 61.58 and USFS checkrides
 - Flight crews away from home up to six months a year
 - Operate under Part 137 and public use
 - A separate Part 135 certificate for charter operations
 - Falcon 50EX and B100 King Air



Contract

- Exclusive Use Contracts with the US Forest Service



Contract

- Area of Operations
 - Alaska to Florida
 - California to the Carolinas
 - Have dropped retardant in over 25 states



Contract

- Retardant Dropped (gallons)
- 2008 - 4,723,680
- 2009 - 3,741,920
- 2010 - 3,207,360
- 2011 – 4,836,440



Contract



BAe-146

- Currently under contract with the US Forest Service
- Interim IAB approval
- Ultimately replace the P2V



Challenges with Public Use

- Public Use
 - Is needed for unique operations and missions
 - Not understanding the contracted agency's rules
 - Operators not receiving all the tools they need
 - Restricted category aircraft inaccurately regulated. Do not realistically “fit” within present categories
 - Each agency “passing the buck” to the other
 - FAA guidance requiring notification
 - Should be very little difference in base operations

Questions

