

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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CAL FIRE Receives FAA Award for Third Year in Row Despite Busy Winter Air Fleet Maintenance Remains Priority

Sacramento – For a third year in a row the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) presented CAL FIRE and DynCorp International with the FAA’s Diamond Award of Excellence for Aviation Maintenance. The award recognizes CAL FIRE’s aviation maintenance unit after all maintenance technicians pass a rigorous and specialized aircraft safety training program.

"CAL FIRE’s aerial firefighting fleet is an important part of our ability to meet our mission to protect the people, property, and natural resources of California," said Chief Ken Pimlott, director of CAL FIRE. "This award is a testament to the hard work our aviation staff and the DynCorp International mechanics devote every single day to keep our aircraft flying safely."

CAL FIRE maintains 23 airtankers, 14 airtactical aircraft, 11 helicopters, and numerous other fixed-wing training and administrative aircraft. All the aircraft are maintained at the department’s maintenance base at McClellan Air Park in Sacramento County. Since the beginning of CAL FIRE’s air program in the 1970s, safety and superior maintenance has been a top priority. Along with CAL FIRE’s seasonal aviation experts, DynCorp International mechanics ensure that the state’s firefighting air fleet is kept in pristine condition.

"I am very proud of the effort and dedication of our team to achieve the third consecutive FAA Diamond Award, said Jeff Cavarra, DynCorp International. "The CAL FIRE Aviation Program is a great example of a Public/Private Partnership and DynCorp International is proud to be part of the team"

This year’s drought has required CAL FIRE to keep nearly half of its airbases open during the time when the aircraft would typically be brought in for maintenance. CAL FIRE and DynCorps’ maintenance team have worked tirelessly to get CAL FIRE’s fleet operational in a timely manner. CAL FIRE’s airtankers and helicopters have kept busy across the state as the department has responded to over 500 wildfires that have charred over 1,130 acres. In a normal year the department would responded to fewer than 130 small wildfires.

For more information on CAL FIRE’s firefighting air program visit www.fire.ca.gov.

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