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Route To: (5100), (6300)

Date: April 2, 2003

Subject: EERA Procurement of Engines

To: Forest Supervisors and Staff Directors

In the past, engine services have traditionally been obtained through Joint Power Agreements (JPAs) between the States of Arizona and New Mexico and the Forest Service. Effective immediately, the Regional policy for acquiring engine services will change to allow the procurement of services through the Emergency Equipment Rental Agreement (EERA) process. This will include Engines to be used in preparedness activities, initial attack, suppression, mop-up, and aircraft fire/crash and rescue at incident airports and helibases. This is not expected to affect our current relationship with the State Foresters for requesting services of Volunteer Fire Departments.

We realize that this is a significant departure from where we have been in the past, but the increased expressed need for these services from the field indicates the need for change inevitable. We see this as an interim step as the preferred procurement method in the long-term is to move to the National Engine Contract for these services for a number of reasons: 1) Better pricing; 2) Develop local sources of contractors; 3) Develop local sources of training and certification; and 4) Develop and maintain a high standard of contract equipment and personnel.

In order to protect both the contractor and the Government, it is necessary to ensure that standards are met for both equipment and personnel working in the hazardous wildland fire environment where public safety may be involved. The major impact will be for Fire Management and Acquisition Management to partner to provide initial equipment inspection, certification review, final equipment inspection, and final documentation on performance. In order to provide the technical expertise necessary for inspections, partnerships may be needed with Engineering or Fleet. This also is a way to encourage use of our federal, tribal, and state partners, such as DOI (BLM and BIA) as well as individual tribes (Mescalero, White Mountain, etc.) that may have the expertise and knowledge to assist us. State Forestry Divisions and Departments of Transportation also have this expertise and knowledge.

Attachment 1 contains requirements to be incorporated into the EERA as well as classification and certification criteria. Standard rates for the Region have not been established; a team will be created to address and compile this information in the near future.

It is our intent that local, small businesses will be utilized to the extent possible. We are going to have to ensure that these entities fully understand the training and certification criteria required in accordance with National Wildfire Coordinating Group, PMS 310-1 – National Interagency



Incident Management System, Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualifications System Guide, January 2000. ([www.nwccg.gov](http://www.nwccg.gov))

Perhaps the most difficult issue for fire management personnel would be to determine if contractors' documentation of wildland firefighter training and physical fitness testing meets PMS-310-1 requirements. Documentation of training and experience for contractors is the responsibility of the contractor. Agencies shall not certify private contractors; rather, Attachment 1 includes stipulations specific to meeting standards found in PMS-310-1 and self certification.

As we move into this new area of EERA use, there are and will be many questions that will be addressed. We will work collaboratively in the Regional Office to ensure the answers/solutions are sound from a fiscal, contracting, and fire management perspective, and then provide a venue to share questions and answers.

If you have questions or issues, the main contact for the Engine EERA's will be Peggy Toya, (505) 842-3122 who will either redirect questions or work with the other partners in the committee in the Regional Office to resolve issues.

/s/ Lucia M. Turner (for)  
HARV FORSGREN  
Regional Forester

cc: Wm C Waterbury, Peggy A Toya, Rufus Cole, Brian D Ingalls, Billy M Zamora, Edy Rhodes, James P Acree