



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: May 6, 2008

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY LEASE OF AERIAL ASSETS FOR FIRE FIGHTING
(DISTRICT: ALL)

SUMMARY:

Overview:

Over the last three months, the Regional Fire Protection Committee has been evaluating our region's many fire prevention and protection needs. As the committee continues to study this information and formulate a long term plan, our region has an immediate and time sensitive need to prepare for the upcoming Santa Ana wind period of our fire season. This period historically begins in August and can extend into the winter months.

Today's action, which will authorize the leasing of two Bombardier CL-415 Superscooper™ fixed-wing amphibious aircraft for a 90-day period and one Aero Commander 690 aerial supervision platform aircraft with a qualified Air Tactical Group Supervisor (ATGS) for a 150-day period. This is an important step in the preparation of our region for the next Santa Ana wind period of the fire season.

Recommendation(s):

SUPERVISOR ROBERTS AND SUPERVISOR HORN

1. In accordance with Board Policy A-87, Exemption 2C "Services Acquired From Other Governmental Agencies" Competitive Procurement, approve and authorize the Director, Purchasing and Contracting to acquire directly from the Government of Quebec, for the leasing of services and supplies for two Bombardier CL-415 Superscooper™ fixed-wing amphibious aircraft for a period of up to 90-days beginning September, 2008, FY 2008-2009, and to amend the contracts as needed to reflect changes to services and funding.
2. In accordance with Section 401 et sec, of the County Administrative Code authorize

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the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting, to issue a Competitive Solicitation for one Aero Commander 690 aerial supervision platform aircraft with qualified Air Tactical Group Supervisor (ATGS) or equal for a 150-day period beginning in August 2008, and upon successful negotiations and determination of a fair and reasonable price, award a contract for a term of five months and to amend the contract as needed to reflect changes to services and funding. In the event it is determined the service qualifies for sole source acquisition pursuant to Board Policy A-87, the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting, is authorized and approved to enter into and amend as needed a sole source agreement in excess of \$100,000.

3. Approve the inclusion of these lease costs in the County's FY 2008-09 Budget and direct the Chief Administrative Officer to identify funding for the two Bombardier CL-415 Superscooper™ fixed-wing amphibious aircraft and one Aero Commander 690 aerial supervision platform aircraft with qualified Air Tactical Group Supervisor (ATGS).

Fiscal Impact:

The estimated cost to lease two Bombardier CL-415 Superscooper™ fixed-wing amphibious aircraft for a 90-day period and one Aero Commander 690 aerial supervision platform aircraft and qualified Air Tactical Group Supervisor (ATGS) for a 150-day period is \$3,031,660. Actual cost will depend on flight time and federal and state reimbursements.

The funding source for the two Bombardier CL-415 Superscooper™ fixed-wing amphibious aircraft and the Aero Commander 690 aerial supervision platform aircraft is anticipated to be FY 2007-08 fund balance in the General Fund.

Business Impact Statement:

N/A

Advisory Board Statement:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

As we all know, in October 2007 our region was devastated by its second major firestorm in four years. Approximately 368,000 acres were blackened, 1,700 homes were destroyed and, most tragically, 10 lives were lost. While similar in size to the October 2003 firestorm, our region witnessed major improvements to its fire response. Fewer homes were destroyed and, though still awful, fewer lives were lost.

Since 2003, our board has worked unilaterally to further improve our region's readiness. Following the October 2003 firestorm, we have allocated nearly \$130 million for fire preparedness and response, which, for example, was used to purchase two firefighting helicopters, clear more than 417,000 dead, dying or diseased trees, purchase a Reverse 9-1-1

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system, purchase a new Mass Notification System known as Alert San Diego, upgrade our communications system, as well as for brush clearing and management.

On December 11, 2007 (2), through recommendations made by Supervisor Horn and Supervisor Roberts, our Board asked the Chief Administrative Officer to explore the feasibility to purchase up to 50 fire apparatus with the goal of expanding our region's surge capacity. On January 29, 2008 (23), our Board established a Regional Fire Protection Committee, co-chaired by San Diego City Mayor Jerry Sanders and Supervisor Roberts, to assess the regional needs for fire apparatus, including helicopters and other firefighting aircraft, the regional communications system and surveillance technology. The committee was also charged with evaluating possible funding sources as well as exam the initial and ongoing costs of various alternatives, such as leasing versus buying equipment. On March 25, 2008 (1), through a recommendation by Supervisor Horn, our Board decided to investigate three potential improvements to our current system. These recommendations included the creation of a risk assessment of vegetative fuels in the unincorporated areas of San Diego County, exploring ways to bring the insurance and workers compensation costs and policies for all of the volunteer firefighting agencies in San Diego County under one umbrella and actively support grant writing on behalf of volunteer firefighting agencies in the County of San Diego.

Since its creation in January 2008, the Regional Fire Protection Committee has been evaluating our region's many fire prevention and protection needs. As the committee continues to study this information and formulate a long term game plan, our region has an immediate need to prepare for the upcoming Santa Ana wind period of the fire season.

As we enter what will inevitably be another severe Santa Ana wind season, it is important for our Board to act quickly and decisively to bolster our ability to combat wildfires from the air. Today's action, which will authorize the leasing of two Bombardier CL-415 Superscooper™ fixed-wing amphibious aircraft for a three-month period and one Aero Commander 690 aerial supervision platform aircraft for a five-month period, is an important step in preparing our region for the upcoming Santa Ana wind period of the fire season.

The Aero Commander 690 twin-engine fixed-wing aerial supervision platform is capable of being airborne for four hours. The aircraft will have a contract provided qualified Air Tactical Group Supervisor (ATGS) on board at all times. The ATGS assigned to the aerial supervision platform manages incident airspace and controls incident air traffic. The ATGS is an airborne firefighter who coordinates, assigns and evaluates the use of aerial resources in support of incident objectives while collaborating with ground personnel to develop and implement tactical and logistical missions on an incident. The ATGS must also work with dispatch staff to coordinate the ordering, assignment and release of incident aircraft in accordance with the needs of fire management and incident command staff.

The Bombardier CL-415, also known as the Superscooper™ aircraft, is a high-wing, all-metal amphibious aircraft designed specifically for aerial firefighting. Skimming across the water at high speed, it requires only 12 seconds to pickup 1,620 gallons of water from rivers, lakes, reservoirs or the ocean. While speeding to fires, an on-board system injects foam concentrate into the water. This provides enough foam for up to 16 drops. Foam is three to five times more

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effective than water. It coats like a blanket, doubles the drop area, absorbs heat, extends evaporation time and is environmentally safe. The 1,620 gallons of foam is dropped from a special 4 door system and will cover areas from 400 to 1000 feet. In one hour a single CL - 415 can drop over 14,000 gallons when operating within eight miles of a water source. The CL - 415 can remain in a fire attack mode for about three hours without returning to base for fuel. This aircraft is known for its ability to continue flight operations during high wind conditions (50 mph +)

Administration of this program should be assigned to a body of fire professionals. Options include; the Unified Disaster Council, the San Diego County Fire Chiefs Association or the Regional Helicopter Advisory Committee (RHAC) that was formed in 2002 and currently provides SAFE funding administration that is based on operational criteria identified by regional fire professionals. If this action is approved, we recommend that the decision as to which body is made by the Regional Fire Protection Committee.

Due to the fact that there is a limited number of Superscooper™ aircraft available and a high demand for these aircraft by other out-of-county fire service agencies, it is imperative that we act on this immediately. Otherwise, these aircraft may not be available to serve the San Diego County region during the upcoming Santa Ana wind period of our fire season.

Given the potentially-dangerous fire season ahead, it is important that we act accordingly to expand existing firefighting resources in San Diego County.

We urge your support.

Respectfully submitted,

RON ROBERTS
Supervisor, Fourth District

BILL HORN
Supervisor, Fifth District

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

CONCURRENCE(S)

COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Written Disclosure per County Charter Section 1000.1 Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY FINANCE DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Requires Four Votes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
COUNTY TECHNOLOGY OFFICE	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

Other Concurrence(s): N/A

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Ron Robert and Bill Horn

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