

**Department of Public Safety**  
**HSEM Disaster Response**  
**Minnesota Air Operation Plan**

1. **Purpose.** The Minnesota Air Operations Plan (MAOP) ensures coordination and prioritization of all air operations in response to a disaster within the State of Minnesota. Effective coordination will help improve safety for aircrews, other responders and the public. It will also promote operational effectiveness by ensuring the correct air resources are assigned to meet the needs of each mission. Finally, it will boost efficiency and save critical resources by ensuring that air response requests are fully assessed for cost-effectiveness.
2. **Applicability.** This plan applies to;
  - a. The operations of all state agencies, or agencies operating under the authority, command and/control of the Governor of the State of Minnesota.
  - b. The operations of all commercial or contractor entities operating under the regulation of, or under the employ of the State of Minnesota.
  - c. While this plan does not apply to federal agencies, surrounding states or some private entities, timely and ongoing coordination of disaster operations with the Minnesota Air Operations Branch (MN AOB) is requested in the interest of assuring aviation safety and enhancing response effectiveness.
3. **Authority.**
  - a. Minnesota Executive Order 10-06 Dated April 26, 2010.
  - b. 2011 Minnesota Emergency Operations Plan
4. **Responsibilities:**

- a. Department of Public Safety HSEM (Homeland Security and Emergency Management) is responsible for coordinating all air operation requests.
- b. The MN State Patrol Flight section will ensure adequate staffing of the AOB (Air Operations Branch) desk in the State EOC (Emergency Operation Center.)
- c. Agencies that are participating in Minnesota air disaster response operations will be prepared to assist in staffing the AOB at the state EOC with liaison officer (LNO) knowledgeable in flight operations.

**5. Information Management:**

- a. Requests for air operations will be directed to the State EOC and be entered into the DLAN system. The DLAN system is the standard information management system for Minnesota Air Operations.

**6. Requests for aviation resources:**

- a. Non- Emergency flight requests will be routed through the local EOC and directed to the State EOC, AOB for approval and dissemination to the agency best suited to perform the requested mission. Such missions could include, but are not limited to: general patrol, reconnaissance, imagery/photography, transportation, sandbag / fortification of levees via rotary wing sling loads.
- b. **Emergency flights that are life saving missions will be initiated through the local 911 center or a local EOC. The best suited air operations agency will be dispatched directly from the local 911 center or the local EOC. Once life savings missions are underway, the local EOC will contact the State EOC and advise the AOB of the life saving mission as soon as possible.**

**7. Pilot / Agency responsibility:**

- a. Communication:
  - i. All mission active times will be reported to the AOB via assigned 800 MHz talk group or by phone: The pilot / agency will notify the AOB when the aircraft is airborne and for what mission they are responding to. The pilot / Agency will be

responsible to notify the AOB when the mission is complete and on the ground.

- ii. The AOB will remain in contact with the mission active aircraft via 800 MHz talk group and notify all aircraft of other known aircraft operating within the AOR (Area of Operations).

## **8. Costs and Prioritization**

- a. All missions will be conducted with efficiency and with the cost to the tax payer in mind. All missions will be evaluated for necessity and prioritized by the MN AOB based on state incident objectives developed and approved by the SEOC.
- b. Non-critical missions may be flown in conjunction with other higher-priority missions when possible.
- c. Requests not meeting mission objectives and/or cost-benefit criteria, and that are unable to be tied to other higher-priority missions will not be flown.

## **9. Risk Management and Safety**

- a. The MN AOB will conduct a general risk assessment of aviation operations as part of each disaster contingency when the SEOC is activated. These assessments will be updated daily or sooner if conditions change.
- b. MN AOB will help coordinate general aviation safety with the Site Safety Plan at the incident scene as required.
- c. Individual aircrews will conduct risk assessments and apply safety controls in accordance with their agency's normal policies and directives.

## **10. Initial Response:**

- a. Communication:
  - i. Any responding Aircraft will use, if equipped with 800 MHz, the 800 talk group MNCALL to obtain the correct assigned talk group for the event.
    - 1. MNCALL will be answered by the MN State Patrol TOCC (Transportation Operation Communications Center). Talk group assignment will be given as requested.

2. Tell the MN State Patrol that you are an **aircraft** and seeking the aviation talk group for the event you are responding to.
- ii. Any aircraft responding to any emergent situation will continuously monitor **VHF AM aviation frequency 123.025 and the assigned 800 MHz Talk Group if capable**. The pilot will announce the aircraft's N-number or call sign, altitude, and direction of entry into the incident when 5 minutes out from the scene. Any other aircraft working at the scene will inform incoming aircraft of their presence, position, and mission. **All aircraft will continuously monitor 123.025 and assigned 800 MHz Talk group if capable unless directed to use an alternate frequency while operating within 5 minutes of an incident.**
- b. Prior to and Entering AOR (Area of Operations):
  - i. 10 Nautical miles from the AOR
    1. Change to standard or assigned 800 talk group and standard or assigned VHF AM aviation frequency
    2. Announce position and intentions
      - a. Position and expected location of entrance to the AOR
      - b. Altitude
      - c. Where in the AOR you will be operating.
      - d. Mission / reason to be there.
  - ii. Be familiar with the **State of Minnesota De-Confliction Plan** and associated MSL altitude as it compares to the AGL altitude De-Confliction plan.
  - iii. When 2 or more aircraft are operating within close proximity of each other make visual contact with other aircraft.
  - iv. Coordinate a flight pattern to be used. Example: aircraft will fly in a clockwise rotation.
  - v. Helicopters will announce any landings and take offs within the AOR.
- c. Departing the AOR:

- i. All aircraft will announce when departing the AOR.

**11. Advanced Phase:**

- a. Communications:
  - i. All communication frequencies will be as in the initial response phase unless otherwise directed.
  - ii. All responding aircraft will contact the State EOC via assigned 800 talk group to announce being active within the AOR.
    - 1. If aircraft does not have 800 MHz capabilities, the pilot or his designee will be required to contact the state EOC and inform them of the departure and their conclusion of the mission.
  - iii. All Aircraft will contact the State EOC via assigned 800 MHz Talk Group when the assigned mission is complete and the aircraft is on the ground or has departed the AOR
- b. Indicators of Advanced Phase:
  - i. Multiple agencies are involved
  - ii. State EOC (Emergency Operations Center) becomes active.
    - 1. AOB (Air Operations Branch) is active at EOC
  - iii. Media attention becomes extensive
- c. AOB should consider requesting a TFR (Temporary Flight Restriction) for the AOR from Minneapolis Center. 651-463-5580.
  - i. All requests for entrance into an active TFR will be directed to the State EOC Duty Officer. 651-649-5451 or 1-800-422-0798.
- d. Minneapolis Center will be notified when the State EOC goes active.
  - i. Minneapolis Center will direct all local TFR requests to the State EOC-AOB.
- e. AOB will determine the logistical support needed.
  - i. Request other agencies.
  - ii. Request agency LNO's (liaison Officers)

**12. Border Region Coordination:**

- a. Neighboring states
- b. Canada

**13. Federal Agency Coordination:**

- a. Military (DOD). All military aircraft conducting domestic support operations at the request of state or local authorities in Minnesota must contact Joint Force Headquarters – Minnesota, Joint Operations Center at (651) 268 8860, or 8861, or 8862. Military aircraft conducting domestic support operations in Minnesota at the request of federal agencies should also contact the JFHQ-MN JOC.
  - b. Non-Military. Aircraft operated by or for federal agencies engaged in domestic operations in Minnesota are requested to coordinate their operations with the MN AOB at the MN SEOC.
14. **Review and revision.** This document will be reviewed annually to determine if changes and improvement should be made.
15. **Improvement:** Suggestions for improvement of this plan and operational procedures used at disaster incidents in Minnesota should contact....