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Retardant Specifications and Distribution 2013/14

PURPOSE

This Briefing Note provides summary information for Airbase Managers, Aircraft Officers and Air Attack Supervisors as to the mixing / quality control specifications and base locations of the three retardant types which will be in use for the 2013/14 fire season in Victoria.

This Briefing Note should be read in conjunction with Briefing Notes #30, 41 & 42.

Retardant Type	Phos-check® D75R	Phos-check® MVP-F	Phos-check® P100-F
Salt base	Sulphate	Phosphate	Phosphate
Thickener	Gum	Gum	Gum
Ratio	14.4 kg / 100lt water 1 bin x 6360 lt water	11.38kg/100lt water 1 bin x 7972 lt water	11.98kg/100lt water 1 bin x 7573 lt water
Yield of mixed retardant	6700 lt	8423 lt	8140 lt
Colouring	Iron Oxide	Fugitive	Fugitive
Expansion	Approx 7.5%	Approx 5.66%	Approx 7.49%
Specific gravity	1.07 kg/lt	1.05 kg/lt	1.05kg/lt
Viscosity	23-26 mfs	19-24 mfs	30 mfs
Refractometer	11.5 - 13	9.3	9.5
Other Information	Not approved fixed tank helicopters	Not approved fixed tank helicopters	Not approved fixed tank helicopters
Airbase/Retardant distribution	Altona Avondale - 10 bins Benambra - 16 bins Mansfield - 12 bins Mt Beauty - 10 bins	Altona (Laverton) Bairnsdale Casterton Delegate Linga LTV Mallacoota Marlo Mt Beauty Snowy Range Victoria Valley	Altona Stawell

Victoria has for many years used Phos-chek® D75R retardant for its firebombing operations. D75R is a sulphate based retardant and the company has ceased production of this product. Stocks in Australia were rapidly diminishing and DEPI elected to introduce a phosphate based product called Phos-chek® MVP-F (SAU Briefing Note 41).

Due to higher than expected consumption of D75R stocks during the 2012/13 fire season and late arrival of replacement MVP-F retardant from the USA, DEPI obtained stock of Phos-chek® P100-F (SAU Briefing Note 42) from the RFS NSW.

There are currently three retardant products spread across the State all with differing specifications and requiring different mixing rates (see table).

A distribution strategy was implemented to ensure only one product is held within each of the bases to minimise the flushing of equipment and the alterations in mixing rates.

There are additional issues associated with the introduction of the MPV and P100 product. Increased expansion resulting from the mixing of these products requires mixing tanks to be upgraded to 12,000 lt tanks. This process has commenced.

Further Information

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