

AIR-CRANE FACT SHEET 2003



- Erickson S-64 Air-crane helitankers are heavy vertical lift helicopters fitted with high capacity belly tanks. The microprocessor controlled tank system is capable of delivering multiple drops. The belly tank doors offer a range of options for controlling coverage levels of the suppressant delivered to the ground. On both models, the tank is fitted with a fast self-fill snorkel that allows it to hover-fill from a variety of water sources. The Helitankers are also fitted with a snorkel device that allows the helitanker to fill from salt-water sources during forward flight.
- Once off loaded, the Aircranes can be operationally deployed within 24 hours.
- The re-build process involves re-fitting the rotor hub, blades, under carriage and belly tank.
- Once re-built, flight time to Bankstown is seven minutes.
- The Air-cranes will be based at the rear of the Aviation Museum at Bankstown Airport.
- Several “forward deployment” bases have been identified around the Sydney basin and near environs, and, based on risk analysis, these can be activated on days of Very High to Extreme fire danger.
- QANTAS have provided hard stand and hanger facilities to facilitate the Aircranes deployment.
- Sydney Airport Corporation have agreed to waive the usual aeronautical charges

Registrations and Call signs.

Type	Registration	Tank Number	Callsign	Contracted to	Known as
Air-Crane S64E	N154AC	733	“Erick 33”	NSW RFS	Georgia Peach
Air-Crane S64E	N164AC	748	“Erick 48”	NSW RFS	The Incredible Hulk
Air-Crane S64F	N179AC	730	“Erick 30”	NRE Victoria	Elvis

Quick Facts

Max speed (knots)	115
Water tank capacity (litres)	7,500
Foam concentrate (litres)	290
Hover fill (seconds)	45
Sea snorkel fill (seconds)	30
Fuel burn (litres/hr)	1,900
Fuel capacity (litres)	4,900
Length (metres)	27.23
Main Rotor (metres)	22.0
Height (metres)	7.82

Questions and Answers

- **Can the Air-crane be used with salt water?**
Yes. The sea snorkel, fitted to all machines, allows salt water to be “scooped” into the tanks in forward flight.
- **What sort of water source is necessary if hover filling from fresh water?**
At least 1 meter deep and 70 metres clear of obstacles around.
- **Can we use Class A (Bush Fire Fighting) foam?**
Yes, preferably Phoschek WD881 but 3M BFFF may be used. The aircraft has a foam tank, and foam is mixed into the water load. Concentration may be varied from 0.1% to 0.5%
- **Can we use long term retardant?**
Yes, it is technically feasible but may not be cost effective. Consult with Aviation Section, State Operations
- **Can the Air-cranes make multiple drops from one pickup?**
Yes. Air Attack Supervisors have detailed information on this capability.
- **Can the Air-cranes vary the concentration of drops on the ground?**
Yes. Air Attack Supervisors have detailed information.
- **Will the Air-cranes integrate with other air operations?**
No problem. The Air-crane is a fire bombing aircraft and will operate with other fire bombing aircraft. Air-cranes have operated successfully with both rotary-wing and fixed-wing fire bombers .

Any special airbase requirements?

For each machine, a clear area of at least 150m x 150m. Access for a heavy fuel tanker. Well clear of loose objects. Security, marshalling and ability to control public access.

What is the best use of the Air-crane?

Normally direct attack, in support of ground crews or in asset protection. Mopping-up with an Air-crane is rarely economical and would be limited to special circumstances.



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