



National Wildfire Coordinating Group
National Interagency Aviation Committee

NIAC-21-05

Date: 14 May 2021
To: Nicholas Strohmeier, Chair, Interagency Helicopter Operations Subcommittee
From: John Buehler, Chair, National Interagency Aviation Committee
Subject: Interim Approval of the SEI Industries Sling Dragon for Interagency Use

JOHN
BUEHLER

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Purpose: The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Interagency Helicopter Operations Subcommittee (IHOpS) with the authority to procure and operate SEI Industries Sling Dragon for interagency operations.

Background: In August 2019, the Interagency Aerial Ignition Unit (IAIU) sent a request to the Interagency Helicopter Operations Subcommittee (IHOpS) asking for approval of the SEI Industries Sling Dragon for interagency use. At the time, approval was not given because the Sling Dragon operations guide, as put together by the IAIU, did not include a Firing Boss (FIRB) requirement. This meant that the pilot would be tasked with additional firing responsibilities in a pilot-only configuration which brought up a safety concern and the recommendation was made by Interagency Helicopter Inspection Pilots to change the operations guide to include the requirement of a Firing Boss (FIRB), who is also qualified as a Plastic Sphere Dispenser Operator (PLDO), to be on board the helicopter to operate the controls of the device. Once IHOpS received the modification to the operations guide, it was presented to NIAC for approval.

Interim Approval: Credentialed interagency personnel are authorized to purchase and use the SEI Sling Dragon within the constraints outlined in the USFS National Technology Development Program (NTDP) *SEI Sling Dragon Continuing Flight Evaluation Plan*. The interim approval is in effect until March 1, 2022.

Contact Information: John Buehler, Chair, National Interagency Aviation Committee, john_buehler@nps.gov or 208-387-5227

Attachments: SEI Sling Dragon Evaluation Plan 2021 and Sling Dragon Timeline.