



## NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

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NIAC Memorandum 22-02

**04/28/2022**

**TO:** Pete Lannan, Chair of Smokejumper Aircraft Screening and Evaluation Subcommittee (SASES)

**FROM:** John Buhler, Chair, National Interagency Aviation Committee **JOHN BUEHLER** Digitally signed by JOHN BUEHLER  
Date: 2022.09.20 10:11:27 -06'00'

**SUBJECT:** Approval from NIAC to add the SD3-60 Sherpa aircraft to the SASES approved aircraft list.

**Background:** The USDA Forest Service (FS), the USDI Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the USDI Office of Aviation Services (OAS) maintain a List of Approved Smokejumper Aircraft. For an aircraft to be placed on the approved list, it must successfully demonstrate suitability for smokejumping. Complete information necessary to determine an aircraft's suitability for smokejumping is obtained by conducting an aircraft evaluation. The criteria for an approved smokejumper aircraft were developed and are maintained by the Smokejumper Aircraft Screening and Evaluation Subcommittee (SASES). SASES membership includes smokejumping and aviation representatives from the FS, BLM, and OAS.

**Key Points:** In September of 2019, the SASES completed the Field Evaluation of the SD3-60

1. 4 SD3-60 Sherpas were completed and operational in 2019, and operated out of 3 bases: Missoula, Redmond, and Redding. Redding had the least amount of time with the aircraft due to software issues. The SD3-60 Sherpa also operated in McCall for one week during smokejumper refresher.
2. 154 smokejumper training missions for 1,410 jumps (includes both round & ram-air jumpers).
3. 43 smokejumper fire missions for 195 jumps (round & ram-air jumpers).
4. 13 paracargo training missions, and 5 fire paracargo missions for a total of 18 missions. A total of 38,882 pounds of paracargo was dropped (includes palletized up to 1,000lbs, JPAD, and bundles).
5. In March of 2020 interim approval was granted to continue to operate the SD3-60 Sherpa as an approved aircraft pending the completion of the final report.
6. The smokejumper program has successfully operated the SD3-60 Sherpa with this interim approval since that time.

The Static Line Engineering Report was received by the Forest Service Airworthiness Branch Director. At the December Annual SASES Meeting the engineering report was accepted. It was voted unanimously to recommend NIAC approve adding the SD3-60 Sherpa to the Smokejumper approved aircraft list. The final evaluation report has been submitted to NIAC.

**Recommendation:** SASES recommends NIAC approve adding the SD3-60 Sherpa to the SASES Smokejumper approved aircraft list.

NWCG standards are interagency by design; however, the decision to adopt and utilize them is made independently by the individual member agencies and communicated through their respective directives systems.

Chair, Pete Lannan, Smokejumper Aircraft Screening and Evaluation Subcommittee  
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