

K-MAX Helicopters Battle Blazes in 2003

Bloomfield, Conn., Dec. 5, 2003 -- K-MAX® helicopters distinguished themselves across North America this summer and early fall, successfully battling devastating wildfires and earning high praise from operators.

Nine K-MAXs flew over 3,000 hours in four months dropping over 30 million gallons of water attacking fires across the Western United States and Canada in 2003. “We are very proud of our K-MAX operators in their outstanding efforts supporting the U.S. Forest Service and other agencies saving lives, homes and forests,” according to Roger Wassmuth, director of K-MAX marketing and sales for Kaman Aerospace Corp.

Operators consistently praise the hard-working K-MAX for its ability to outperform other helicopters at high altitudes, its efficient, cost-effective operation, and the accuracy of its water drops.

“We worked for 230 days and flew 1,100 hours fighting fires all over the Western United States,” said Andrew Mills, director of marketing for Superior Helicopter. “We got a lot of positive feedback from the U.S. Forest Service about how useful and cost effective the K-MAX was compared to some other aircraft they had been using, particularly in rugged terrain,” Mills said. “There is a growing awareness about the cost effectiveness and accuracy of the K-MAX, especially its abilities at altitudes above 5,000 feet.” Superior is the largest commercial operator of K-MAX with four aircraft.

Steve Wright, vice president, Rainier Heli-Lift agreed. “On hotter days, at higher altitudes, the K-MAX out-performed and out-dropped other helicopters. It has become very cost effective for firefighting.” Rainier fought fires in eight states, flying 500 hours over 95 days.

A third K-MAX operator, Bryan Burr, president, Mountain West Helicopters, said, “the K-MAX is, “ the best aircraft for the firefighting mission.” Burr said his K-MAX flew 590 flight hours over 100 days at elevations of more than 9,000 feet with only two lost days for minor maintenance. “We are really counted on when extreme temperatures and high altitudes challenge the firefighting efforts.”

K-MAX is specifically designed for vertical reference flight, an important feature for external load work. It has a 5,000-pound (2268 kg) on-the-hook lift capacity at 8,000 feet of altitude (2446 meters) and 6,000 pounds (2722 kg) on-the-hook at lower altitudes. A K-MAX equipped with a Bambi Bucket can carry 660 gallons (2500 liters) of water per drop.

Kaman Aerospace Corp. is a subsidiary of Kaman Corp. (NASDAQ:KAMNA) of Bloomfield, Conn. In addition to K-MAX, the company also manufactures the SH-2G Super Seasprite

maritime helicopter, and is a subcontractor for aircraft structures and components, including applications on all current Boeing commercial airliners and the C-17 transport, as well as various models of the MD Helicopter family. The company also is a leading manufacturer of safe, arm and fuzing devices for missiles and bombs, rugged environment mass memory systems, precision measuring devices and electro-optic systems.

Kaman Corporation conducts business in the aerospace, industrial distribution and music distribution markets.

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