



ANTHONY C. MARRONE
FIRE CHIEF
FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN
*"Proud Protectors of Life,
the Environment, and Property"*

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

1320 NORTH EASTERN AVENUE
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-3294
(323) 881-2401
www.fire.lacounty.gov



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November 04, 2025

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

APPROVAL OF SOLE SOURCE AMENDMENT TO EXTEND CONTRACT NUMBER FR10569 WITH COULSON AVIATION INC. FOR THE LEASE OF A HELITANKER (ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS) (3-VOTES)

SUBJECT

The Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County (District) is requesting Board of Supervisors (Board) approval of a Sole Source Amendment (Amendment) to contract number FR10569 with Coulson Aviation Inc. (Coulson), which will extend the term of the contract for a one-year period from January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026. The Amendment will allow for the continuation of the lease of a Coulson Helitanker through the calendar year of 2026.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD ACTING AS THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CONSOLIDATED FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY:

1. Delegate authority to the Fire Chief, or his designee, to execute an Amendment to contract number FR10569 between the District and Coulson, substantially similar to the Enclosure, for the continuation of the lease of a Coulson Helitanker through December 31, 2026, at a cost not to exceed \$15,000,000. This sum represents the total operational cost including stand-by time, flight hours, portable retardant, gel, and any associated operational costs. The Amendment has been approved as to form by County Counsel.
2. Delegate authority to the Fire Chief, or his designee, consistent with prior delegation of authority to execute amendments, suspensions or effectuate the termination of the contract if deemed necessary, and in accordance with the terms and conditions specified in the contract, provided such documents are reviewed and approved as to form by County Counsel.

3. Find that this contract is still exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as previously determined on June 28, 2022.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Southern California Edison (SCE) and the District have determined that the use of a Helitanker during day and nighttime operations offers significant benefits for wildfire suppression, protection of lives and property, and increases firefighter safety. SCE has funded the District for fixed lease costs of stand-by time for a Helitanker since 2021. SCE has agreed to fund the District for 365 days of these costs for the calendar year of 2026; however, the District’s current contract with Coulson is set to expire on December 31, 2025. The proposed one-year extension would take effect January 1, 2026, allowing for no interruption in the Helitanker’s service availability and will allow for funding from SCE to continue through December 31, 2026. Coulson currently also has Helitanker lease agreements in place with the Ventura County Fire Department and the Orange County Fire Authority in which SCE also contributes funding for the fixed lease costs relating to stand-by time for their Helitankers and is used as part of the interagency Quick Reaction Force program, an aerial firefighting program funded by SCE to rapidly respond to wildfires in Southern California.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

Approval of the recommended actions is consistent with the County’s Strategic Plan North Star 3.G. Internal Controls and Processes, by continually maximizing revenue, managing, and maximizing County assets, measuring impact and effectiveness of our collective efforts, and enhancing County’s fiscal strength through long-term planning.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The District, as a Special District, is funded independently from the County’s General Fund, and relies primarily on property tax revenue to provide essential fire protection and life safety services.

The not-to-exceed cost of the extension is \$15,000,000 and represents the total operational cost including stand-by time, flight hours, portable retardant, gel, and any associated operational costs. SCE has agreed to provide funding to the District for the fixed lease costs relating to stand-by time for up to 365 days for 2026. Sufficient funding is available in the District’s Fiscal Year 2025-26 Final Adopted Budget and the District will continue to allocate the necessary funds through the requested contract extension for the remaining costs.

There is no impact to net County cost.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

On June 28, 2022, your Board approved and authorized the contract with Coulson for a helitanker lease with an initial term from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2025. On January 7, 2025, your Board approved a six-month extension from July 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025, in order for the District to negotiate a new sole source contract. During this time, it was discovered that other vendors may qualify to bid on the contract with technical revisions to the mandatory requirements. Therefore, the District has decided to develop a solicitation to solicit bids from other Helitanker service providers. This will ensure that the District gets the best value for its money and can choose the most qualified and suitable provider for these services.

Board policy 5.100 – Sole Source Contracts establishes guidelines for amendments to existing contracts when departments do not have delegated authority to extend the term of a current contract beyond its original term, if the extension was not previously solicited for; therefore, the District is requesting approval of this sole source Amendment. A Sole Source Checklist was approved by the Chief Executive Office and is attached (Enclosure).

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

The services provided through this contract do not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, the contract is still exempt from CEQA, pursuant to Section 15061 (b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Approval of the recommended actions will greatly enhance the District's ability to protect lives, the environment, and property in a safe, more efficient, and cost-effective manner.

CONCLUSION

Upon approval by your Honorable Board, please instruct the Executive Officer of the Board to return the adopted stamped Board Letter to the following:

Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County
Executive Office - Business Operations
Attention: Jasmine Anderson, Administrative Services Manager II
1320 North Eastern Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90063
Jasmine.Anderson@fire.lacounty.gov

The District's contact can be reached at (323) 881-6173.

The Honorable Board of Supervisors

11/4/2025

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anthony C. Marrone". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and a long, sweeping underline.

ANTHONY C. MARRONE

FIRE CHIEF

ACM:cs

Enclosures

c: Chief Executive Officer
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel

SOLE SOURCE CHECKLIST

Department Name: _____

- New Sole Source Contract
- Sole Source Amendment to Existing Contract

Date Existing Contract First Approved: _____

Check (✓)	<p align="center">JUSTIFICATION FOR SOLE SOURCE CONTRACTS</p> <p align="center">Identify applicable justification and provide documentation for each checked item.</p>
	➤ Only one bona fide source (monopoly) for the service exists; performance and price competition are not available. A monopoly is an “ <i>Exclusive control of the supply of any service in a given market. If more than one source in a given market exists, a monopoly does not exist.</i> ”
	➤ Compliance with applicable statutory and/or regulatory provisions.
	➤ Compliance with State and/or federal programmatic requirements.
	➤ Services provided by other public or County-related entities.
	➤ Services are needed to address an emergent or related time-sensitive need.
	➤ The service provider(s) is required under the provisions of a grant or regulatory requirement.
	➤ Additional services are needed to complete an ongoing task and it would be prohibitively costly in time and money to seek a new service provider.
	➤ Services are needed during the time period required to complete a solicitation for replacement services; provided services are needed for no more than 12 months from the expiration of an existing contract which has no available option periods.
	➤ Maintenance and support services are needed for an existing solution/system during the time to complete a solicitation for a new replacement solution/ system; provided the services are needed for no more than 24 months from the expiration of an existing maintenance and support contract which has no available option periods.
	➤ Maintenance service agreements exist on equipment which must be serviced by the original equipment manufacturer or an authorized service representative.
	➤ It is more cost-effective to obtain services by exercising an option under an existing contract.
	➤ It is in the best economic interest of the County (e.g., significant costs to replace an existing system or infrastructure, administrative cost savings and excessive learning curve for a new service provider, etc.) In such cases, departments must demonstrate due diligence in qualifying the cost-savings or cost-avoidance associated with the best economic interest of the County.

Rene' Phillips

Chief Executive Office

Date