

Sikorsky Water Bomber

Stopover at Bunbury for a Sikorsky S-61N Water Bomber helicopter



This Sikorsky S-61N water bomber helicopter stopped over in Bunbury after helping to control the serious Bridgetown-Balingup fires in late January.

We are quite used to seeing the Air Tractor AT 602s and 802s which operate from Bunbury but we don't often see one of these machines.

For comparison, the AT 602s carry 2,000 Litres and have to return to Bunbury for refill. The turn-around time to the Bridgetown/Balingup fire was about 25 minutes.

On the other hand, the Sikorsky with its twin turbine engines holds 3,800 Litres and refills with its snorkel from rivers and dams near the fire. To refill the entire 3,800 litres takes 40 seconds and its turn-



around time to the face of the fire was an incredible 4 minutes. That means that it was able to dump 5 or 6 loads in the time it took the Air Tractors to dump 1 load. So, on its own, it was dumping more than the total volume of the four Air Tractors which were also working. That's a pretty impressive, performance, eh?

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