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(S.D.)- Air Tanker Stands By In Hot Springs

By: Jeremy Anderson Posted at: 07/03/2013 03:35 PM

HOT SPRING, S.D. (AP) - A single-engine air tanker is ready to take off from Hot Springs if forest fires break out in the Black Hills.

The aircraft arrived on July 1, which is later than normal. The crew was out fighting fires last year by June 23.

South Dakota Aviation Operations Officer Winston Cadotte says firefighters inspect the aircraft and equipment to make sure everything is ready in case they get a call. The crew consists of a pilot, a manager and loaders. When a fire call goes out, the crew can be up in the air within six minutes.

Pilot Jim Fournier says it's a team effort.

The crew members mostly cover South Dakota, but they sometimes fight fires in Wyoming and Nebraska.