

The Hawaii Mars

Incident: La Brea Wildfire

Released: 10 hrs. ago



Aug 16, 2009 Photo courtesy of William H. Boyer/ County of Santa Barbara

Martin Mars Quick Facts

About the Martin Mars Flying Tanker:

Permanently based on Vancouver Island, British Columbia Canada, the Martin Mars, Hawaii, is now stationed at Cachuma Lake in support of aerial operations on the La Brea Fire

It was originally intended for the U.S. Navy as a bomber for long-range missions. It was redesigned for general transport.

The Navy took delivery of five of the flying boats between 1945 and 1947. Only two remain today. Stationed at NAS Alameda, the Mars carried troops and equipment between California and Hawaii.

Flying Tankers, Inc. bought the planes when the Navy retired them, and converted them to water tankers. Coulson Airplane, Ltd. (Coulson Flying Tankers) now owns and operates the company.

The Martin Mars provides an additional firefighting tool in wildland fires. Because of the large amount of water it drops and the area it covers, it is most effective in open areas, away from housing.

Martin Mars Aircraft Details:

Name: *Hawaii Mars*

4 person flight crew

4 Wright Cyclone R3350-24WA engines @ 2500 h.p. each

4-blade propellers with a blade diameter of 15 ft. 2 in.

Overall Length: 120 ft. (Compare to: Boeing 737 at 137 feet)

Wing Span: 200 ft. (Compare to: Boeing 747 wingspan at 195 feet)

Wing area: 3,686 square feet

Height: 48 ft.

Gross Weight: 162,000 lbs.

Water/Foam Load: 7,200 US gallons (60,000 lbs.)

Carries water and suppressant (polymer with freshwater or foam with sea water)

22 Water doors (covering an area the size of four football fields with water or foam)

Cruising Speed to Fire: 190 mph

Drop Speed: 138 mph

<http://www.inciweb.org/incident/article/9079/>