



# TAKE FIVE...

**for safety**  
Five minutes reading  
could save your life!

## ***Forest Fire Airspace Restrictions***

The area around a forest fire is usually a hive of aviation activity that is there for one purpose—to snuff it out. It is definitely not the place for sight-seeing aircraft and those that venture near the fire do so at considerable risk. Air tankers and helicopters working the fire can be anywhere in the area, transiting to and from the fire, or picking up water from lakes and rivers. Often they are hidden by smoke and are monitoring discrete, unpublished radio frequencies. Besides contributing to the risk of collision, the presence of unauthorized aircraft can seriously disrupt the work of the fire suppression crews.

Section 601.15 of Canadian Aviation Regulations (CARs) provides that no unauthorized person shall operate an aircraft over a forest fire area, or over any area that is located within 5 NM of one, at an altitude of less than 3000 ft. AGL. A NOTAM does not need to be issued for this airspace restriction to be in effect. In accordance with CAR 601.16, however, Transport Canada may issue a NOTAM to restrict the airspace further around a forest fire. Pilots are reminded to check NOTAMs before flying near forest fires.

Pilots are valuable assets for reporting fires in remote areas and provincial fire control offices encourage help from the public in spotting and reporting them. Please keep the airspace restrictions in mind should you investigate a forest fire. Even small fires may be the centre of intense air activity.

