

**Question for written answer E-004487/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Sérgio Gonçalves (S&D)

Subject: Distribution of rescEU aerial firefighting fleet

The EU is acquiring 12 new amphibious firefighting aircraft under the rescEU fleet, with a total investment of EUR 600 million, to reinforce Europe's capacity to respond to wildfires. These new planes will be hosted by six Member States, including Portugal, as part of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

However, the region of Madeira, as an outermost region, faces specific challenges that differ from mainland territories. Its steep, mountainous terrain, isolation and lack of adequate refilling bases make the use of large aircraft operationally unsuitable for the effective tackling of the recurrent wildfires. The region's needs are better met through the permanent stationing of firefighting helicopters, which are more adapted to the region's geography, rapid response requirements and freshwater basins.

Given this context, would the Commission consider, when deploying the new rescEU aircraft, the distribution of the existing firefighting helicopters within the mechanism, to ensure that they are stationed in areas where they are most needed and most effective, including in regions such as Madeira?

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