DOI Standard PD
PD# DX05200

Classification: Wildland Firefighter (Aviation), GS-0456-11

INTRODUCTION

This is an agency Standardized Position Description (SPD) and serves as a Wildland Firefighter (Aviation) organizationally located within a wildland fire management program within one of the four bureaus of the Department of the Interior within a state/regional or unit setting.

The primary purpose of the position is to manage incident airspace and control incident air traffic. The Wildland Firefighter (Aviation), executing an Air Attack role, directs air tactical operations by providing aerial command and establishing priorities for initial attack, extended attack and other aviation duties as required.

This position requires a high level of coordination at the state and regional level with other federal agencies and departmental bureaus including staff from the US Forest Service (FS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Tribal governments, and coordination with state agencies (including state fire and other natural resources agencies), local governments, and non-governmental organizations (NGO).

MAJOR DUTIES

Aviation Program Management (50%)

Manages the interagency Air Attack program within the assigned Geographic Area (GA) boundaries by ensuring only qualified Air Attack are working in the GA; coordinates movement of Air Attack and trainees within the GA; monitors Aviation Safety Communique (SAFECOM) submittal within the GA for aerial supervision related concerns; collaborates with local, state/regional, and national aviation managers to review and develop aerial supervision policy and program direction.

Analyzes costs and capabilities of aerial supervision and other firefighting aircraft (air tankers and helicopters) to provide recommendations on most efficient use of resources for the GA.

May serve as a voting member on the Air Attack Committee and as the point of contact to the Air Attack Committee Chair for the Air Attack program within the designated GA.

Serves as a technical authority, providing program and technical assistance, as required, to inter/intragency groups and partners as well as disseminate Air Attack related program and technical information to user groups at the geographic area level.

Collaborates with local, state/regional, and GA aviation managers to ensure adequate aerial supervision is present within the GA for current/expected needs.

Provides oversight to the GA aerial supervision program by monitoring the quality/adequacy of

aerial supervision within the GA. Makes recommendations to the appropriate supervisor to correct issues or deficiencies.

Collaborates with local, state/regional, and national aviation managers to review and develop Air Attack aircraft contract specifications. Prepares and submits required payment documentation for the aircraft during the exclusive use period.

Serves as Alternate Contracting Officers Representative (ACOR) or Project Inspector (PI) for the contract period. May serve as a Contracting Officers Representative (COR). May serve on the Source Selection Evaluation Board (SSEB). May provide input for contract specifications.

May serve as a lead for other Aviation Management Specialists depending on the magnitude and complexity of aviation operations conducted within any given area or the current qualification level of the incumbent.

Aviation Operations (20%)

During wildland fire or other emergency response, serve as an Air Attack Evaluator or Final Evaluator (ATGS E/FE), Air Attack Instructor, or Air Attack who manages incident airspace and coordinates incident air traffic. As a flight crewmember member of an exclusive use Air Attack aircraft, the incumbent provides oversight, supervision, and direction. The incumbent is responsible for all aerial resources assigned to incidents when they are in the incident Fire Traffic Area (FTA). The Air Attack works in a team concept with the contract pilot and applies Crew Resource Management (CRM) principles to all aerial assignments.

Performs flight crewmember duties including mission/flight checklists, navigation, hazard identification, risk mitigation, and other duties as required.

Provides leadership and promotes teamwork with the contract pilot, fire managers, and ground-based personnel regarding incident tactical aircraft operations, performance and safety. Coordinates with unit fire managers identifying priorities, values at risk, ground and aerial restrictions on incident assignments.

Develops strategies, applies tactics, and makes recommendations in support of management/incident objectives. Coordinates strategy and tactics with unit fire managers or Incident Commanders.

Coordinates incident airspace, manages incident air traffic, and is the link between ground personnel and incident aircraft. Coordinates, assigns, and evaluates the use of aerial resources in support of incident objectives.

Determines and recommends resource needs while over incidents and provides risk assessment and mitigates unacceptable safety risks for aerial and ground personnel.

Develops and coordinates recommendations for air-to-air and air-to-ground communication plans and maintains communication with ground forces, assigned aircraft, and dispatching organizations. Coordinates with dispatch staff to order, assign, and release incident aircraft in accordance with the needs of fire management and incident command

personnel.

The incumbent may perform other collateral duties with the local, state/regional, or national fire, fuels, and aviation management programs.

Air Attack Training and Safety (30%)

Develops training plans, courses, course aids and coordinate a training and currency program for qualified Air Attack and trainees on an interagency basis at the unit, state/regional or national level. Serves as a primary ATGS E/FE. Coordinate unit, state/regional or national level mentoring for Air Attack trainees and conduct proficiency evaluations.

Makes recommendations concerning training priorities to the Air Attack Cadre Chair, interagency aviation managers and geographic area coordination centers.

Gathers Air Attack annual mission summaries and refresher training attendance for Air Attack within the designated GA. Forward annual documentation to agency program managers, and fire qualifications managers, as necessary. Ensures trainee and qualified compliance with currency standards and reports those to the agency program manager.

Participates as an instructor or coach for the National Aerial Supervision Academy (S-378). Coordinate/teach agency approved Crew Resource Management (CRM) training/refresher training. Assist in the coordination or lead the annual GA Air Attack refresher training (RT-378). May coordinate, lead, and instruct other aviation courses and curriculum such as Aircraft Dispatcher (D-312), Basic Air Operations (S- 270), Air Support Group Supervisor (S-375), Air Operations Branch Director (S-470), etc.

Routinely mentors Air Attack trainees and performs Air Attack Mission Evaluations to conduct and coordinate Air Attack training within the assigned GA.

Develops or provides input and guidance to safety related plans including the unit aviation and state/regional aviation plans, Interagency Aerial Supervision Guide (IASG), or the National System Safety (SMS) assessment.

Performs Other Duties as Assigned.

FACTORS

Guidelines

Guidelines are in the form of Department, bureau, and other agency aviation regulations, policies and manuals, instruction memoranda as well as published regulations of the FAA, NTSB and OMB. Guidelines provide a general outline of the program goals and objectives and procedures to be used but are not always directly applicable to specific assignments or projects such as in emergency situations confronted in aerial supervision and in program management.
For example, in training and incident situations the incumbent will be required to make judgment calls in areas such as standard retardant application procedures to meet incident objectives.

The incumbent uses judgment in selecting precedents and in interpreting or adapting available

guidelines to issues or problems arising in the work, analyzes results and makes recommendations to ensure consistency within the Air Attack program. Assists in developing aviation guidance and policy development, management, administration, process and procedure standardization, safety, Air Attack training development and proficiency evaluations for Air Attack trainees.

Complexity

Assignments consist of a variety of unrelated duties and projects involving varying types of resources with unique capabilities, unique use constraints, differing mission objectives, limited availability and contracting complexities as they apply to the aviation and Air Attack program. The incumbent evaluates the selection and application of different methods and procedures to provide recommendations on program development.

During incidents and training, duties involve directing aerial suppression aircraft and coordinating with ground personnel, dispatch organizations, and managers. Such direction often requires quick decision-making and the ability to clearly enunciate decisions, orders, recommendations and warnings, serve in a variety of aviation roles at any given time and operate in a highly dynamic environment where every incident is unique and there is a high potential for serious accidents and/or incidents.

Factors included in decisions include incident strategy and tactics, multiple numbers and types of tactical aircraft in the fire area in coordination with numerous ground resources from various agencies, multiple incidents within a geographic area, accidents or incidents occurring during operations, weather, cost containment, mission feasibility and firefighter safety.

Personal Contacts

Frequent personal contacts are varied within the bureau and on an interagency level. Intra- and inter-agency contacts include Fire Management Officers, Aviation Managers, Geographic Area Training Representatives (GATR), Incident Commanders, Supervisory Dispatchers, Coordinators, Air Base Managers, Airtanker Pilots, Helicopter Pilots, Contractors, Contractor's Representatives, Office of Aviation Services (OAS) personnel, Public Information Officers, Air Tactical Pilots, and National Office Fire and Aviation staff. Other significant contacts may include news media and local community leaders.

Purpose of Contacts

Purpose of contacts is to provide tactical information, guidance, assistance, and applying a course of action for tactical aircraft flight crews; a basis to collaborate on program management aviation safety, and training; coordinate work efforts; providing fire and aviation managers with aircraft, suppression and aerial supervision suggestions, strategies and updates on a national scope. The incumbent must exercise skill and judgment in overcoming resistance to recommendations due to competing resources and objectives and to influence or persuade Incident Commanders or Fire Management Officers to adopt a particular course of action or to change direction in a particular resource activity due to a fire or aviation management consideration that may conflict with a proposed resource objective.

Supervisory Controls

The supervisor sets the overall local, state/regional, or national objectives, goals and priorities. Together, the supervisor and incumbent, with the pertinent state/regional /national Air Attack program manager define project schedules, deadlines, and work to be accomplished. The incumbent is responsible for planning and carrying out the work of the position especially when physically removed from the supervisor on incidents or training assignments. The incumbent is responsible for resolving most conflicts, interpreting policy and regulations, and coordinating the work with others within the GA and on a national level. The incumbent informs the supervisor of progress in meeting deadlines and work accomplishments as well as potentially controversial situations which may affect aerial supervision and the interagency Air Attack program. Completed work is reviewed from an overall standpoint for compatibility with other projects, and attainment of goals and objectives in supporting the mission and programs of the aviation program.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

This is an administrative position in an organization having a firefighting mission and is clearly in an established career path. Prior firefighting experience, as gained by substantial service in a primary firefighter position or equivalent experience outside the Federal government is a MANDATORY PREREQUISITE.

Physical Demands: Air Attack work has significant physical demands with the requirement for a high degree of focus during tactical flight operations. The work requires long, and irregular hours and frequent travel is required for training and fire assignments.

Air Attack flight assignments require considerable time spent in cramped spaces, turbulent atmospheric conditions, high noise levels while receiving or sending multiple radio transmissions and performing other aircrew tasks which require significant physical demands. Other assignments are sedentary in nature.

Work Environment: Air Attack in-flight work is performed enroute, over, and returning from fire assignments or other emergencies. Risks and discomforts involved are those of air travel compounded by required flight in dense smoke, turbulent air, over mountainous terrain, and in high-density air traffic (with and without radar control).

Considerable emergency travel on short notice is common and considerable time is spent away from home base.

Other assignments are performed in an office or classroom environment which involves minimal risk or discomfort and requires normal safety precautions.

This position may be required to be qualified or take training as Air Attack Evaluator, Air Attack Final Evaluator, ATS, 7 Skills Crew Resource Management (CRM) Instructor and COR/ACOR/PI, Private Pilot Ground School/Pinch Hitter to perform specific duties.

This is a testing designated position (TDP) under the Department of the Interior Drug-Free Workplace Program.