POSITION EVALUATION STATEMENT

Proposed Title, Series, Grade: Wildland Firefighter (Aviation), GS-0456-11

Position Number: DX05200

Background: This Standard Position Description (SPD) was developed by an Advisory Work Group made up of a team of fire subject matter expert and classification specialist and is representative of fire management work performed.

References: Position Classification Standard for Wildland Fire Management, 0456, June 2022; 5 U.S. Code § 5104, Basis for Grading Positions.

Series & Title Determination: The 0456 Wildland Fire Management series is a single-grade interval series that includes classes of position which involve technical and specialized work on the protection of forest or range lands and resources from fire. This series includes general fire management work which is preparatory to the assumption of technical or specialized assignments, and which is accomplished as a part of specialized functional fire management programs including forest, and range fire prevention, presuppession, suppression, post-suppression, fire research, and other specialized work relating to fire management programs.

The PCS is divided into three parts. Part I contains occupational information applicable to Federal work covered by the PCS without regard to pay plan or classification system. Part II provides the grading criteria for positions classified in accordance with GS grade definitions. Part II- Grading Information, is further broken down into *Part 1* (grade level criteria for Wildland Firefighting Positions), and *Part II* (grade level criteria for Fire Mangement Officer Positions). Part III includes explanatory material about the developement of the PCS.

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). The position requires knowledge of wildland firefighting fire suppression and management techniques, the Incident Command System (ICS), command and control, and the coordination of emergency response resources. As described the position meets the nature and intent of the 0456 Wildland Fire Management series.

The basic title for positions that involve technical and specialized work on the protection of forest or range lands is *Wildland Firefighter*. The prescribed a parenthetical title of *Aviation* will also be applied, which describes work involves performing wildfire related work involving operating and maintaining unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), mixing, and loading of aerial fire retardant to fixed wing aircraft, coordinating and monitoring parking of aircraft and base operations, coordinating incident airspace, managing incident air traffic while coordinating with ground resources engaged in wildland fire

suppression and prescribed fire activities. Therefore, this position is appropriately assigned to the 0456 series and titled as a ***Wildland Firefighter (Aviation).***

Grade Determination:
The 0456 PCS is written in a narrative format describing the nature of work and level of responsibility for each grade covered by the standard. The classification factors include: (1) guidelines; (2) complexity; (3) personal contacts/purpose of contacts; and (4) supervision received. Part I, Fire Management Position Illustrations of the PCS (under Part II, Grading Information) provides illustrative grade level criteria for nonsupervisory positions in grades GS-3/4/5/6/7, 9, and 11. The grade level information provides a summary of the grade level, followed by specific illustrations of duties and responsibilities characteristic of the grade described loosely in terms of the classification factors identified above. Illustrations vary by grade level and may be described in in terms of specialty areas such as Aviation, Fuels.

The 0456 PCS does not provide grading criteria outside of the grade level illustrations, and illustrations are not inclusive of all specialty areas. The grading information is incomplete making it difficult to provide a comprehensive grade level evaluation; therefore, this evaluation is supplemented with 5 U.S. Code § 5104, Basis for Grading Positions for cross comparison.

5 U.S. Code § 5104 at the GS-11
Grade GS–11 includes those classes of positions the duties of which are: (A) to perform, <u>under general administrative supervision</u> and <u>with wide latitude for the exercise of independent judgment</u>, work of <u>marked difficulty and responsibility along special technical</u>, supervisory, or administrative <u>lines</u> in office, business, or fiscal administration, requiring (i) <u>extended specialized</u>, supervisory, or administrative <u>training and experience</u> which has <u>demonstrated important attainments and marked capacity for sound independent action or decision</u>; and (ii) intimate grasp of a <u>specialized and complex subject matter</u>, or of the profession, art, or science involved, or of administrative work of marked difficulty; (B) with <u>wide latitude for the exercise of independent judgment</u>, to perform responsible work of considerable difficulty requiring somewhat extended professional, scientific, or technical training and experience which has demonstrated important attainments and marked capacity for independent work; or (C) to perform other work of equal importance, difficulty, and responsibility, and requiring comparable qualifications.

0456 PCS Illustration Wildland Firefighter GS-11
Fire Management Planning Specialist GS-11 was extrapolated to generally evaluate GS-11 level work.

1. **(Complexity)** *Provides local expertise for short and long-term strategic fire management planning, assessments, and interagency and/or unit fire management plans.*

2. Perform substantially the full range of duties set forth below. Duties performed include but are not limited to: ***(Complexity)*** *Developing local plans that reflect national, regional, and local management goals, requirements, and strategic objectives related to fire and aviation management; providing local planning analysis results for inclusion in regional and/or national forest and grasslands plans and analytical studies in fire and aviation management; using expertise to analyze and resolve unique problems relating to the development, execution, and monitoring of local fire management issues; supporting fire management plan development and analysis, utilizing expertise in Wildland Fire Decision Support System and National Fire Danger Rating System as well as through similar and/or emerging technologies;* ***(Guidelines)*** *Providing advice and guidance in adaptation of policies, standards, methods, and guidelines received from national and regional levels to local conditions; coordinating and integrating fire management topics, issues, and solutions into non-fire program plans;* ***(Contacts)*** *Providing input to the development of plans and agreements, and working closely with counterparts from other federal, state, or local partner agencies.*

*2. **(Supervision Received)** Supervisor assigns work in terms of broad areas of responsibility, program emphasis, and key management concerns for special projects. The supervisor and employee confer on priorities and deadlines. The incumbent is independently responsible for conducting fire management analysis and planning, coordinating with others, and determining the approach to take to complete specific assignments. Recommendations are usually accepted as authoritative. Policy questions dealing with controversial issues are reviewed with the supervisor to achieve agreement or solution. Completed work is reviewed for the attainment of objectives.*

Grade Analysis

While the Law does not speak directly to the nature or type of **Guidelines**, it may be assumed that the exercise of independent judgment may be extrapolated, to an extent, to the exercise of judgment in applying Guidelines. The work of the position fully meets the GS-11 for guidelines as 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, etc. that the incumbent applies independent judgment in selecting precedents and in interpreting or adapting available guidelines to issues or problems arising in the work, and analyzing results and making recommendations to ensure consistency within the Air Attack program.

The work of the position fully meets the GS-11 under the Law for **Complexity** as the incumbent performs work of marked difficulty and responsibility along specialized technical lines with wide latitude for the exercise of independent judgment. 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. Duties involve directing aerial suppression aircraft and coordinating with ground personnel, dispatch organizations, and managers requiring quick decision-making and the ability to clearly enunciate decisions, orders, recommendations, and warnings in a highly dynamic environment where every incident is unique and there is a high potential for serious accidents and/or incidents. Commensurate with the GS-11 illustration the incumbent serves as a technical authority, providing program and technical assistance 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; 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; and 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. Also like the GS-11 collaborates with local, state/regional, and national aviation managers to review and develop aerial supervision policy and program direction.

The work of the position fully meets the GS-11 for **Personal Contacts/Purpose of Contacts**. The Law does not specifically address contacts; however, the work of the position is commensurate with the GS-11 illustration as frequent personal contacts include numerous and varied entities within the bureau and on an interagency level. The purpose of contacts is to provide tactical information, guidance, assistance, and apply a course of action for tactical aircraft flight crews; a basis to collaborate on program management aviation safety, and training; coordinate work efforts; provide fire and aviation managers with aircraft, suppression and aerial supervision suggestions, strategies, and updates on a national scope.

The work of the position fully meets the GS-11 for **Supervision Received** as the law describes work of marked difficulty and responsibility performed under general administrative supervision, with wide latitude for the exercise of independent judgment. Like the GS-11 the supervisor sets the overall objectives, goals and priorities. The incumbent plans and carries out the work of the position, and resolves most conflicts, interpreting policy and regulations. Additionally commensurate with the GS-11 illustration the supervisor and incumbent, with the pertinent state/regional /national Air Attack program manager

define project schedules, deadlines, and work to be accomplished. 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.

In summary, the duties fully meet the GS-11 level for all 4 factor levels under the 0456.

FINAL CLASSIFICATION: The recommendation for this position is to be classified as ***Wildland Firefighter (Aviation), GS-0456-11.***