DOI Standard PD
PD# DX05300

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

I. 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.

The primary purpose of this position is to direct an aviation management program at the unit/tribal level. The incumbent is responsible for providing guidance for all phases of the unit's aviation program including policy development and compliance, budget management, contract inspection, safety, training program, evaluation and all aviation services provided by the aviation program. This position may exercise delegated supervisory authorities and responsibilities 15% of the time; these authorities exceed those typical of work leaders and include assigning and reviewing work daily, weekly, or monthly and assuring production and accuracy requirements are met.

This position serves as the technical expert and advisor to the Fire Management Officer and/or unit/tribal leadership on aviation management and identifies and analyzes multiple variables such as weather, fuels, topography, fire behavior, smoke impacts, employee public safety and aerially delivered fire chemicals in strategically developing and achieving aviation management objectives.

II. MAJOR DUTIES

Program Management (50%)

Responsible for the unit's aviation program management to include oversight, budget planning, development, execution, and monitoring of all aviation operations. The incumbent is responsible for airtanker bases, air attack bases, heliports, DOI fleet and call when needed (CWN)/ on call aircraft, helibase bases, unit oversight of UAS (Uncrewed Aerial Systems) operations, backcountry airstrips, or non-fire aviation support programs (e.g., law enforcement and investigations, wild horse and burro, rehabilitation, wilderness, timber, remote sensing, and all job service contracts).

Serves as liaison for the interagency coordination and use of tactical and logistical aircraft on multi-agency emergency incidents, mutual aid responses, military operations/coordination, or other emergency use of tactical aircraft. Participates on committees and working groups as required.

Determines aircraft needed to accomplish missions and recommends priority on the use of aviation assets.

Advises managers and resource program leads on aviation applications in their respective programs.

Develops unit aviation plans and contributes to revisions of regional/state/tribal and national aviation plans. Develops and reviews project aviation safety plans. Reviews and approves subordinate aviation

plans for aviation activities as determined by the line manager. Participates in the development of aviation handbooks, job aids, manuals, SOP's, and instructional materials and also conducts workshops which provide direction and guidance to field and interagency offices.

Serves as the unit's Contracting Officers Representative (COR) on Call When Needed (CWN) and or On Call aircraft. Participates in the preparation of CWN/On Call and Exclusive Use contract specifications. Coordinates with Aviation Maintenance Inspectors and contractor to ensure compliance with contract specifications. Monitors aircraft contractor performance and provides findings to appropriate personnel utilizing a contractor performance assessment. May serve as project inspector and/or a member of a selection evaluation board.

Coordinates requests to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for airspace restrictions. Reports violations to FAA. Ensures compliance with Departmental Manuals and Bureau aviation policies and procedures. Develops and updates operating agreements with local FAA and Military operations within the appropriate area.

Negotiates short and long-term agreements on the joint use of restricted or special use military airspace to meet unit's objectives. Coordinates entry into military restricted airspace as required.

Periodically inspects all Unit aviation facilities and airstrips for Department and Bureau aviation policy compliance.

Coordinates the unit's aviation frequencies with the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Interagency Fire Center.

Participates in resource need forecasting and allocation to ensure aviation priorities are represented in strategic planning and long-range objective development for the broader fire management program.

Participates in resource need forecasting and allocation to ensure aviation priorities are represented in strategic planning and long-range objective development for the broader fire management program. May facilitate negotiation of short- and long-term usage agreements with state and local governments, corporations and private landowners for the bureau and coordinates restricted airspace use with the appropriate military and Federal Aviation Authority (FAA).

Aviation Safety and Training Program (35%)

Responsible for maintaining and implementing the unit's aviation safety and training program. Conducts training needs analysis, and sponsors, conducts, or coordinates aviation training. Is an Office of Aviation Services (OAS) certified Interagency Aviation Trainer (IAT) and certified NWCG Course Instructor. Identifies and provides training to personnel working in fire and non-fire programs. Maintains the Aviation Manager position requirement as identified in the Departmental Manual 112 DM 12.

Follows up with recommended corrective actions issued in bureau safety reporting system of record.

As qualified, participates in investigations for aircraft incidents and accidents. Assists in the preparation of reports. Investigates violations of policies, procedures, and safety standards.

Collaborate with unit’s servicing dispatch center(s) to ensure operating and aviation accident response plans are current and updated.

Incumbent regularly reviews and evaluates new technologies, applications, and processes for applicability to improve safety and efficiency of aviation operations to meet wildland fire aviation management program objectives. Serves on bureau-wide, Department-wide, or industry teams and councils to develop, update, or modify standards, policies, and procedures and to propose and/or evaluate the effectiveness and efficacy of emerging technology, tools and equipment.

The incumbent must be able to identify actual and potential aircraft safety problems and take immediate corrective action to provide safe aircraft separation and operations. The incumbent has the authority to halt aviation operations, to correct unsafe conditions, or until adverse weather or visibility improves. Responsible for utilizing the of the FAA Safety Management System.

The incumbent monitors and recommends aircraft type and use during wildland fire incidents taking into account safety, operational, and continuity factors such as: flight hours, pilot fatigue, contractor performance, availability of alternative aircraft, matching aircraft to function, and evolving fire conditions.

Supervisory Duties (15%)

Exercises delegated supervisory authorities and responsibilities 15% of the time (authorities exceed those typical of a work leader and include assigning and reviewing work on a continual basis to ensure production requirements are met). The position grants initial leave approvals for subordinate staff within the organization entity in support of the official supervisory official.

The position plans work to be accomplished by subordinates; sets and adjusts short-term priorities; and prepares schedules for completion of work assignments; assigns work based on priorities, difficulty of duty assignments, and capabilities of employees; coordinates work within the unit to timeliness, work practices, procedures, accuracy, quality and quantity standards requirements are met; evaluates work performance and initiates minor disciplinary measures, i.e., verbal warnings of caution, etc., when warranted.

Provides leadership, allocates resources, and implements activities to accomplish DOI's multicultural organization direction and equal opportunity requirements, goals, policies, and objectives; ensures communication - written, oral, visual, and signed, is non-discriminatory and handled sensitive in nature for all employees; and creates a work environment which respects, appreciates, and accepts the contributions and perspectives of all employees.

III. FACTORS

Guidelines

General guidance can be found in agency and bureau published directives such as: policies and directives of DOI, BIA, U.S. Forest Service, Office of Aircraft Services, Federal Aviation Administration, and the National Transportation Safety Board.

Due to the range and complexity of the duties assigned, the available guidelines may not be completely applicable to the work and/or have gaps in specificity. Many varying guidelines require the incumbent to provide technical interpretation and adaptation of these guidelines in diverse and complex field environments, such as UAS deployment in high traffic airspace and allocating resources during simultaneous multi-incident occurrences.

This requires the incumbent to exercise initiative and judgment to independently analyze and evaluate the available guidelines and recommend modifications, alterations, and/or adjustments, and make immediate decisions to provide guidance on conflicting policies to meet aviation management and planning needs in real time. Since guidelines are issued at multiple levels by multiple organizations, interpretation and adaptation issues must be resolved by the incumbent, and the resolution incorporated into the aviation management and aviation planning processes.

Complexity

The position requires completion of various unrelated duties that include budget preparation, contract administration, contract oversight as a COR on all unit aircraft, aviation safety and training administration, instruction, management of multiple types of fixed and rotary wing aircraft, UAS, and multiple aviation bases. The aircraft are acquired through a variety of methods (e.g., exclusive use, call when needed (CWN), on-call, and rental agreement, cooperator aircraft).

Decisions regarding what needs to be done include the assessment of unusual circumstances, variations in approach, and incomplete or conflicting data such as mission priorities, weather conditions and pilot duty limitations. Considerable discretion and flexibility are required in effectively identifying and dealing with field conditions, in rapidly changing flight situations and fire and aviation priorities. The work requires that the incumbent coordinate multiple tasks and projects utilizing internal and external communications.

The managed aircraft may be engaged in a large volume of fire and/or non-fire aviation support to emergency response and/or resource programs and have a variety of specialized functions and operating characteristics.

Personal Contacts

Personal contacts are wide and varied (personal and via radio). These include personnel in other state/regional Offices, Tribal fire programs, the National Interagency Fire Center, aviation/fire and resource personnel, other Federal, State and Local agency cooperators, utility companies, local fire departments, retardant manufacturers and various research organizations that test equipment related to aircrafts use in resource management.

Personal contacts include contractors, contracting officers, state/regional and national aviation offices, fire management officers, aviation and base managers and officers.

Regularly communicates and coordinates with the state/regional and national aviation personnel.

May also communicate with personnel in military units, state/regional and local airport authorities and the FAA regarding aviation and safety matters.

Purpose of Contacts

Contacts with national level fire and aviation management personnel are primarily for the coordination and promotion of a safe and efficient aviation program. Contacts with the FAA and military personnel are primarily for airspace coordination and deconfliction. In addition, numerous contacts are made to assist in the coordination and facilitation of aircraft use contracts.

Other contacts are typically for the purpose of informing, education, advising, recommending, and sharing information. Many of the contacts are with cooperative individuals, stakeholders, and groups; however, there are occasions when conflicting viewpoints are encountered. The incumbent is required to use skillful and tactful collaboration in gaining support for the government and tribal goals and objectives. The work requires extensive contact with the affected interests to gather information, explain findings, and build consensus. The purpose of contacts is to discuss and negotiate controversial issues with various parties in a way that will achieve agency objectives and result in retention of good will; to influence and persuade various organizations or individuals who have conflicting interests and viewpoints on the use of various public resources so as to reach an agreement that is consistent with technical as well as practical goals and objectives; to justify the feasibility of significant resource plans and proposed activities; and to influence other experts to adopt techniques or methods about which there may be conflicting opinions.

Supervisory Controls

This position works under the supervision of a fire management officer. The supervisor assigns work in terms of very broad areas of responsibility, program emphasis, and key management concerns for special projects. The supervisor and employee confer on priorities and deadlines. Recommendations and decisions made are usually accepted as authoritative. Policy questions dealing with controversial issues are reviewed with the supervisor to achieve mutually agreed upon solutions. Completed work is reviewed only from an overall standpoint in terms of feasibility, compatibility with other work, or effectiveness in meeting requirements or expected results.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

This is an administrative position in an organization having a firefighting mission and is 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 for incumbents of this position.

This position may involve performing strenuous activities under rigorous fieldwork conditions during emergency situations requiring above average physical performance, endurance, and superior conditioning.

Physical Demands: The work is primarily sedentary, although a level of physical fitness is required which will allow for work during periods of extended stress and in the field when wildland fire

situations arise. During the fire season, extended fire assignments away from the unit may be required under very stressful conditions.

Work Environment: Although work is generally performed in an office setting. Field work involves exposure to temperature extremes, both from weather and fire conditions where falling trees and the presence of smoke and/or dust conditions create hazardous conditions. The nature of fire investigation work requires that protective clothing (boots, hard hats, etc.) be worn. The incumbent must exercise a variety of safety practices and precautions for the well-being of self and of others.

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

Incumbent is subject to medical examination and must pass the appropriate work capacity test.

Position requires a valid state driver's license to operate light vehicles and 4x4 vehicles. May require additional specialized training and certification to operate specialized vehicles and equipment.