DOI Standard PD
PD# DX05800

Classification: Wildland Firefighter (Aviation), GS-0456-07

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 the position is to perform limited assignments to assist with management of the air base in support of wildland fire suppression activities. The incumbent supports management and administration of various contracts; provides support of various types of aircraft utilizing the base; and assists with management of the Airtanker/SEAT base, building and facilities.

MAJOR DUTIES

Airbase Operations (60%)

Monitors and assesses aviation operations and base activities for compliance with established policy, guidelines, and regulations to ensure safe, efficient, and cost-effective aviation operations.

Provides airtanker/SEAT base support of wildland fire activities. Applies multi-agency policy, agreements and protocols to ensure effective interagency aviation operations. Applies direction and advice to maintain overall efficiency, safety and security of ground and aviation operations.

In the absence of the air base manager, serves as a point of contact with airport management, contractor's representatives, public affairs, and various federal, state, and local entities, pertaining to aviation operations at the base.

Participates in planning, scheduling and monitoring of all flights and resources utilizing the air base. Receive and confirm flight information such as location, heading, radio contacts, frequencies, Temporary Flight Restrictions, Notice to Airmen, and possible hazards. Disseminate information to tactical aircraft. Provide local aircraft traffic conditions that may affect operations and safety.

Identifies and coordinates logistical needs for base support, a variety of incoming aircraft types and transient air crews. Provides for logistical requirements of the contract crews, meets contract specifications, and maintains supplies and maintenance requirements of the base in support of operations.

Oversees the mixing and loading of fire chemicals to ensure that individual aircraft weight limitations are not exceeded, and effective product is delivered. This may include full-service retardant contract crew, vendor operator, or agency personnel. Applies retardant quality assurance standards, testing, policy and standards.

Coordinates with airport management and agency hazardous materials specialists to meet environmental requirements for retardant storage, containment, spills, wash down, and hazardous materials remediation.

Coordinates with other air bases to identify needs, and to administer contract requirements.

Coordinates with local dispatch center to identify priorities and logistical needs.

Assists and advises manager in day-to-day administration of contracts, contract obligations are a significant amount of department programmed funds. Conveys compliance and non-compliance of contract specifications to the COR or PI.

Performs and oversees maintenance activities to assure that base buildings, grounds, and equipment are maintained in an orderly condition and to ensure a safe work environment. Prepares purchase requisitions and recommend purchases, repairs, and servicing of equipment at the facility. Assists with base and facilities compliance with local environmental protocols in support of aviation operations, including compliance with Clean Water Act and involvement on a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.

Provides support to other Fire program areas as knowledge or qualifications allow.

Safety, Training, Administration & Record Keeping (30%)

Ensures safe operations of aviation and ground support activities including radio and hand signal communication, aircraft movement, fueling, retardant mixing and loading, and vehicle movement on the ramp. Utilizes Job Hazard Analysis, Risk Management Assessments, and Safety Management System practices. Provides input and recommendations to the manager in developing comprehensive airbase operations plan and supplements, safety and security plans, local aviation plans, mishap response, and storm water pollution and control plans (SWPCP/SWPPP).

Participates in daily informational briefings to aviation resources assigned to the base and providing daily risk assessments for planned and anticipated operations. Provides safety training and briefings for support staff assigned to each operation. Implements training and practice to ensure all positions are filled with trained, qualified personnel.

Participates as NWCG or IAT course instructor and provides on-the-job training in proper safety techniques and procedures pertaining to airbase operations.

Completes and maintains reports and records of aircraft flight times and costs, retardant use and costs; completes daily flight invoices and contract daily diaries. Monitors retardant consumption, ordering and delivery.

Completes payment documents, reconciles, and ensures invoices for contracted aviation and retardant services, and airport fees and services for contracted aviation and retardant services, and airport fees and services. Provides cost summaries and use reports as requested.

Maintain training records and documentation for required base operations.

Administers data collection relating to aircraft use and payment, scheduling, incident and accident reports and information necessary to obtain desired results of aviation program requests, annual statistics, and reporting.

Leadership (10%)

Leads aviation firefighting personnel by directing their activities when supporting suppression actions associated with wildland fires or by serving as a situational leader on an airbase by directing the work of a small crew of aviation firefighters or vendors. During wildland fire aviation assignments directs and provides on-the-job training opportunities to lower graded firefighters on the use of aviation tools and equipment. Accounts for crewmembers' location, health, safety, and welfare. Briefs situational assessments to higher level airbase leadership. Performs administrative leadership responsibilities to include maintaining records such as receipts for supplies; training firefighters; ensuring that work is carried out safely; reporting on work accomplishments of the crews being led; and reporting on employee performance concerns.

Performs Other Duties as Assigned.

FACTORS

Guidelines

Guidelines are in the form of department, bureau, and other agency, interagency or cooperator regulations, policies, and manuals; handbooks and guides; instruction memoranda; applicable aviation and retardant contracts; as well as published regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), local airport authority.

The incumbent uses judgment in selecting the appropriate guideline as there can be multiple guidelines that cover the same issue(s). Under the guidance of the supervisor, the incumbent may determine which of the several established alternatives to use as needed.

Complexity

The incumbent performs work associated with a variety of duties related to air base management. Management of the base involves the use of a variety of aircraft, cooperators, and contractors. MAFFS activation will incorporate a military operational presence, and International Agreements may incorporate aircraft operations from Canada and other countries. Annual costs may exceed millions of dollars depending upon the aircraft types and fire demand.

The employee is responsible for selecting from a variety of alternatives when making decisions. These decisions can affect the fire situation and outcomes. All decisions are made with safety as the primary factor of accomplishment. Decisions are based upon assessment of a variety of factors which include type of activity, expected size and duration of the operation(s), fire and flight considerations, application of policies and regulations, political implications, knowledge of aircraft, and quality control. Interactions

among units, agencies, and contractors are extensive and must be handled diplomatically in an interagency fire environment.

The incumbent applies conventional technical and administrative solutions and practices to a variety of problems that are encountered in air base operations, and at the air base facility. The incumbent must be familiar with a variety of aircraft types (capabilities) and systems, aircraft retardant tanks and capabilities, retardant mixing systems, mass flow meters, storage tanks, high volume pumps, related electrical circuitry, as well as safety and efficiency of the operations in order to modify or troubleshoot system failures. The work is complicated by the fact that the costs of fire suppression activities are politically sensitive and closely scrutinized by the general public. Tight fiscal control and accurate record keeping are essential.

Personal Contacts

Contacts are initiated and maintained at the local, State/Regional, and National level with multiagency aviation managers and officers, contractor's representatives, multiagency dispatchers, fire management personnel, other federal, state, and local officials, cooperators, airport authorities, media, vendors, and the general public.

Purpose of Contacts

The purpose of personal contacts is to plan and coordinate work efforts and operations; to provide aviation services and support; to administer contracts and agreements; to provide and direct training; and to obtain or provide technical assistance and direction.

Supervisory Controls

The supervisor assigns project work in terms of overall objectives and priorities with instructions on new projects or major changes. The incumbent independently facilitates the air base and retardant program for the unit. Plans, schedules, and completes inspections and reports, and works independently, relying on expertise and judgment. Resolves work problems, without reference to the supervisor, in accordance with standard policy and regulations, applicable precedents, and previous training. Informs supervisor of progress or situations which may affect the aviation program, or the end users.

The emergency nature of the work requires the incumbent to make immediate and safe decisions based on personal judgment and previous experience. The decisions are often irrevocable, and actions are initiated without review by the supervisor.

Completed work is reviewed for adequacy in meeting objectives and priorities, with conformance to overall requirements, technical adequacy, and adherence to policy guidelines 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: Long irregular hours are required, much of it occurring during periods of fire operations. Frequent standing, walking and long periods outside in high temperatures and direct sunlight may be required while working around multiple arriving and departing aircraft. Activities in and around moving aircraft and other equipment require constant monitoring and alertness for hazardous conditions and safety of personnel. Work in an office environment and long periods of sedentary work occurs when reports and flight records are prepared. Lifting and carrying heavy equipment/materials and operating a variety of hand and power tools is required for base set-up, tear down, and maintenance/repair.

Work Environment: Majority of activities are performed in an airbase environment, both inside and outdoors. Extreme variations in temperature and climactic conditions are common. Work requires use of safety equipment including hearing and eye protection and high visibility clothing. Exposed to irritant chemicals is possible. The work involves exposure to operating aircraft that result in high noise levels and exposure to turning propellers, prop wash, jet intake areas and jet-blast, and flying dust and debris. Concurrent movement of multiple mixed aircraft types and service vehicles in the ramp area creates potential for serious accident, injury, or property damage. Fatigue and mental stress could be present due to extensive work periods and emergency nature of work.

Performance in an NWCG position is required.

Incumbent may be subject to medical evaluation and may be required to participate in hearing conservation program at local unit.

Driving duties require the incumbent possess and maintain a valid state driver's license.

This is a Testing Designated Position (TDP) under the Department of Interior Drug-Free Workplace Program.