POSITION EVALUATION STATEMENT

OPM Official Title, Series, and Grade: Wildland Firefighter, GS-0456-05

Organizational Title, Series, Grade: Wildland Firefighter Apprentice, GS-0456-05

Position Number: DX04100

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 prevention work performed. The major duties listed in the SPD were identified through a thorough analysis of the 0456 Wildland Firefighter standard. The position description is only to be used for positions enrolled as a Department of Labor registered apprentice in the Wildland Fire Apprenticeship Program (WFAP). The purpose of the position is to serve in a more skilled developmental trainee capacity as a wildland fire apprentice.

References: Position Classification Standard for Wildland Fire Management, June 2022

Series Determination:
The GS-0456 Fire Management series includes one-grade interval positions that supervise or perform work to manage and extinguish fires and involves technical and specialized work in the planning and the execution of Wildfire management programs in fire adapted ecosystems while dealing with problems of smoke dispersion, and hazard reduction near urban areas. This includes, but is not limited to, fire prevention, pre-attack planning, wildfire suppression, post suppression, fire research, and other specialized work relating to fire management programs. Knowledge required by positions in this series vary by specialty area, however positions may require knowledge of: Wildland Firefighting and fire prevention theory and techniques; wildland Firefighting fire suppression and management techniques; fire behavior, fuels management, fire hazard and risk analysis, fuel volume and flammability assessment; skills in planning, direction, or carrying out fire protection and prevention programs and operations; the types and capabilities of fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters used in suppressing and managing wildland fires; and incident Command System (ICS), command and control, and the coordination of emergency response resources, provided for within the common hierarchy of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The primary purpose of this position is to serve in a more skilled developmental trainee capacity as a wildland fire apprentice. The position serves as a firefighter on one or more of the following module types: dispatch, engine, handcrew (suppression, fuels, or wildland fire module) or helitack. Other developmental wildland fire related duties performed under the guidance and direction of a journey level firefighter, will involve fire prevention, dispatch, planning, and fuels management. The incumbent will also be instructed on the proper maintenance and repair of firefighting tools, equipment, and facilities. As such, the 0456 has been determined to be the appropriate series for the position.

Title Determination:
The basic title for positions that involve wildland firefighting operations is *Wildland Firefighter*.

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, and Planning.

Nature of Work

At the GS-05 wildland firefighters have substantial full-time assignments as operators of fire tankers used to suppress and manage forest and range fires and are responsible for driving, operating, and servicing large tankers equipped with extensive and complicated plumbing systems and pumps capable of drafting large volumes of water, select routes or follow designated routes and drive tank-trucks in heavy traffic rind on narrow, steep, and hazardous mountainous roads, which requires a high degree of driving judgment and skill and a thorough understanding of safety techniques to deliver staff and equipment safely to destinations. Maneuver trucks into position near fire, taking into consideration parking limitations, terrain, wind conditions, and escape routes. Determine pressures required, regulate valves, and operate pumps and auxiliary equipment during suppression operations.

At the GS-06 wildland firefighters may serves as a skilled member of a helitack crew. Respond to incident(s) via helicopter, may be inserted to incident via rappel from a hovering helicopter. Ensure load manifests, aircraft weight and balance calculations are accurate and within helicopter limitations and safety guidelines. Direct suppression operations, make work assignments, solve work problems, review work, and make fire reports. Assume responsibility for directing the operation and use of special tools and equipment such as, but not limited to power saws, portable pumpers, flame throwers, and communication equipment, and make decisions as to when, where, and how equipment can be utilized to the greatest advantage. Determine the strategy to be used in suppressing fires, assume responsibility for the proper care and maintenance of tools, equipment.

Like the GS-05, the position may drive and operate a wildland fire engine, positioning the engine for proper use and operation based on an understanding of engine capabilities and weight limitations. As directed, starts pump engine, primes pump, adjusts engine speed and pump valves, lays hose, and uses appropriate nozzles and makes nozzle adjustments for effective use of water and additives. May have specialized duties such as water handling specialist or maintenance of specialized equipment used to respond to wildland urban interface/intermix situations.

Unlike the GS-06, the position is not yet tasked with ensuring load manifests, aircraft weight and balance calculations are accurate and within helicopter limitations and safety guidelines, instead, they work with higher-graded firefighters and receive on-the-job training, instruction, and orientation in helicopter operations to include accompanying the pilot on flights, providing radio communications to dispatch and/or ground firefighters, navigating with use of maps, and applying aviation safety regulations.

Unlike the GS-06, the position endeavors to recommend and implement tactical directions on attacking, controlling, or mopping up fires, building or patrolling firelines, cleaning up burned areas within firelines, suppressing spot fires, felling snags or trees, and cutting brush, rather than making the final strategy determinations or assuming responsibility for the fire line equipment as reflected in the GS-06.

This position meets, but does not exceed, the GS-05 for Nature of Work.

Level of Responsibility

At the GS-05 wildland firefighters work under the general supervision of Fire Management Officers who periodically check the readiness of equipment, review their work performance on fires, and ensure that fire plans, safety rules, and equipment maintenance procedures are being followed.

At the GS-06 wildland firefighters work under general supervision. Incumbents of positions at this level

follow standard procedures and practices und perform their work assignments with limited supervision or guidance. Plans and carries out recurring work without detailed instructions and plans, schedules, and completes inspections and reports. Incumbent often functions independently in the field, relying on his/her own experience, expertise, and judgment. The supervisor reviews reports, and checks work on the basis of meeting program objectives and on the effectiveness of overall operations. Completed work is reviewed for adherence to guidelines and established policy and safety objectives.

Like the GS-05, the position work under a supervisor who provides general work assignments, instructions, and work schedules. The supervisor periodically checks the readiness of equipment, reviews work performance on fires, and ensures that fire plans, safety rules, and equipment maintenance procedures are being followed. Supervisors furnish advice, assistance, and help in determining action to take on hazardous conditions encountered or unusual work problems that occur.

Unlike the GS-06, the position does not perform independent assignment planning, operates under considerable supervision, and work is periodically reviewed in depth.

This position meets, but does not exceed, the GS-05 for Level of Responsibility.

FINAL CLASSIFICATION: The position is properly classified as ***Wildland Firefighter, GS-0456-05.***

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Determination: This position does not meet exemption criteria found in 5 CFR 551 and is determined to be Non-Exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Act.