DOI Standard PD
PD# DX06000

Classification: Wildland Firefighter (Aviation), GS-0456-09

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 serve as the manager of the air base in support of wildland fire suppression activities; support management and administration of various contracts; provide oversight and support of various types of aircraft utilizing the base; and manage the Airtanker/SEAT base, building and facilities. In addition, the incumbent coordinates air attack, smoke jumper, aerial supervision, and other fixed wing aircraft at the base.

This position may exercise delegated supervisory authorities and responsibilities up to 20% of the time. These authorities exceed those typical of work leaders and include assigning and reviewing work daily, weekly, or monthly; assuring that production and accuracy requirements are met. Supervises all aspects of airtanker/SEAT base operations, retardant mixing and loading operations; ensures safety and agency policy guidelines are met; and oversees contract obligations including cost tracking and annual reports.

MAJOR DUTIES

Air Base Operations (40%)

Provides technical oversight necessary for accomplishing the work of the base. 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.

Directs and oversees the activities of an air base in support of wildland fire suppression. Serves as a subject matter expert in aviation safety and retardant aircraft limitations. Applies multi-agency policy, agreements, and protocols to ensure effective interagency aviation operations. Responsible for the overall efficiency, safety and security of ground and aviation operations.

Serves as the primary 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.

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, meet contract specifications, and maintain supplies and maintenance requirements of the base in support of operations. Coordinates with other air bases, local dispatch centers, and geographic area coordination centers to identify priorities, logistics and contract administration.

Coordinates and directs the planning, scheduling, and monitoring of all flights and resources utilizing the air base. Determines flight information such as location, heading, radio contacts, frequencies, Temporary Flight Restrictions, Notice to Airmen, and possible hazards. Disseminates information to tactical aircraft. Provides local aircraft traffic conditions that may affect operations and safety. Manages 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. Responsible for coordinating with airport management and agency hazardous materials specialists to meet environmental requirements for retardant storage, containment, spills, wash down, and hazmat remediation.

Serves as an authority on the on-site administration of numerous aviation and retardant contracts to ensure conformance to contract specifications. May be designated as a Contracting Officer's Representative (COR), alternate COR and/or Project Inspector on large airtanker, single engine airtanker, scoopers and retardant contracts. Performs day to day administration of contracts, contract obligations are a significant amount of department programmed funds.

Coordinates, plans, and directs maintenance activities to assure base buildings, grounds, and equipment are maintained in an orderly condition and to ensure a safe work environment. Reviews and approves requisitions, purchases, repairs, and servicing of equipment at the facility. Assures air base and facilities comply with local environmental protocols in support of aviation operations, including compliance with Clean Water Act and involvement on a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan.

Coordinates and plans maintenance and or calibration and repair of scientific equipment such as Micro-motion meters, and other wildland fire chemical mixing and loading equipment essential to operations.

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

Participates on interagency work groups, committees, and source evaluation boards

Safety, Training, Administration, and Record Keeping (40%)

Ensures safe operations of aviation and ground support activities including site security, radio and hand signal communication, aircraft movement, fueling, retardant mixing and loading, and vehicle movement on the ramp. Promotes safety culture to flight crews and base personnel in risk assessments, Safety Managements Systems, and human factors.

Develops, implements, and monitors Job Hazard Analysis', risk management assessments, and Safety Management System practices. Works with local unit aviation manager, state aviation manager and national aviation office to provide corrective actions and to develop procedures for air base operations.

Serves as subject matter expert for elements of air base management and fixed wing aviation operations for the unit, state, geographic area, or national aviation programs. Provides input or guidance in training, education or program development, and base design features.

Participates on aviation reviews, aviation safety assistance teams, and other state, geographic, or national level projects related to fixed wing and/or airtanker/SEAT base operations.

Provides feedback to local unit aviation officer, state aviation officer, and national level aviation office on operational or identified safety issues, provides corrective actions or processes.

Ensures base and facilities maintenance and procedures conform to OSHA, Transportation Security Administration (TSA), agency policies and guidelines, and environmental regulations.

Coordinates with unit safety officer on site safety inspections and cache audits to ensure corrective actions on facility and/or safety corrective actions are resolved.

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

Presents formal training; National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), Interagency Aviation Training (IAT) or other agency classes; required refresher training for local, state, geographic area, and/or national aviation programs. Ensures trained and qualified personnel are available to perform duties at the air base. Develops comprehensive air base operations plan and supplements, safety & security plans, provide input to local aviation plans, responsible for oversight, coordination, implementation, and training of the storm water pollution and control plan (SWPCP/SWPPP) at the air base.

Coordinates with unit or state/regional hazardous materials coordinators or specialists, airport authority, and outside agency regulators to ensure proper procedures, mitigations, disposals, and remediation's are outlined in the air base SWPCP/SWPPP and followed.

Ensures completion of 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. Signs for receipt of products and services, recommends payment approval/disapproval, and provides documentation of contractor claims.

Ensures the completion of payment documents or invoicing for contracted aviation and retardant services, and airport fees and services. Creates a variety of cost summary and accounting reports as requested by local, state, geographic area, and national level aviation managers, incident management teams, fire managers, military liaisons, COR's and program managers.

Ensures data input into computerized records 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, and computer programs is completed.

Responsible for inventory and tracking of accountable property, machinery, equipment and supplies at the base. Maintain updated regulatory references including policy, guides, and operating plans; Safety Data Sheets, right-to-know, placards, inspections, and other material and safety communications.

Responsible for purchase of and tracking of accountable property and maintaining inventory tracking of base owned or managed machinery, equipment, and supplies.

Supervisory Duties (20%)

This position may supervise personnel assigned to the air base, and all air base operations on the ramp and office operations area. This includes agency support personnel, contract, or vendor personnel, may include full-service retardant contract crew, and numerous other government employees including administratively determined (AD) employees or non-local employees on assignment or detail to the base.

Exercises delegated supervisory authorities and responsibilities. These authorities exceed those typical of work leaders and include assigning and reviewing work continual basis to assure production and accuracy requirements are met; also approves initial leave requests of subordinate staff.

Plans work to be accomplished by subordinates; sets and adjusts short-term priorities; and prepares schedules for completion of work. Assigns work based on priorities, selective consideration of the difficulty and requirements of assignments, and the capabilities of employees. Coordinates within the unit to ensure that timeliness, (format), procedures, accuracy, quality and quantity standards are met. Evaluates work performance and, if required, initiates minor disciplinary measures, i.e., verbal warnings of caution.

Provides leadership, allocates resources, and implements activities to accomplish DOI's multicultural organization direction and Equal Opportunity requirements, goals, policies, and objectives. Ensures all communication - written, oral, visual, signed, is non-discriminatory and is sensitive to all employees and the public. Creates a work environment which respects, appreciates, and accepts the contributions and perspectives of all employees.
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.

Incumbent develops base wide operating standards for the air base tailored to the specific base requirements consistent with Federal Interagency and Bureau standards. The incumbent uses judgment in selecting precedents and in interpreting or adapting available guidelines to issues or problems arising in the work. The incumbent selects, interprets, and applies these guides frequently using initiative, judgment, and resourcefulness in solving problems and conflicts, and meeting the needs and intent of the aviation program.

Complexity

The incumbent independently performs work associated with the full range 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.

Due to the nature of, and the critical time frames involved during fire operations, the employee has extensive latitude and significant responsibility for selecting from a variety of alternatives when making decisions. Decisions may be costly and irrevocable once made. 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. These decisions can affect the fire situation and outcomes.

The incumbent exercise initiative in developing solutions to common technical and procedural 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 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 supervisor provides assistance in matters pertaining to overall policy, expenditures of funds, or methods to follow in handling difficult or unusual problems.

During emergency or fire situations, incumbents have limited opportunity to contact their supervisors for help, assistance, or guidance, requiring 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.

Work is periodically reviewed for effective program accomplishment and review and approval of recommendations for special studies, major changes in operating policies, or special projects to be undertaken. 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. This is a Testing Designated Position (TDP) under the Department of Interior Drug-Free Workplace Program.

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

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