Department of the Interior Standard Position Description
PD Number: DX00800

Classification: Supervisory Wildland Firefighter, GS-0456-09

INTRODUCTION

This position is a first-level supervisor of a wildland fire module or crew within one of four fire bureaus within the Department of the Interior (Department); however, this position may be assigned work on interagency crews where the crew leadership is from a different bureau or agency.

The Supervisory Wildland Firefighter (Supervisor) is an experienced leader within a wildland fire module or crew, or a contingent of wildland fire resources, exercising supervision and leadership for and executing fire management activities in fire preparedness, fuels management and prevention, and fire suppression, monitoring, and post-fire. Work may also include all hazard and emergency response activities. Fire modules or crews include Hand Crews, Engine Crews, and Helitack Crews. Specific specialty areas of work within fire modules or crews include aviation, fire engine operation, fire management planning, fuels management, helitack, and prevention.

MAJOR DUTIES

Supervision and Program Management (25%)

Supervises regularly assigned firefighters a minimum of 25% of the work time and may provide situational leadership and supervision for additional firefighters based on the fire assignment. The Supervisor exercises supervisory authority as described under "Supervision Exercised." The Supervisor performs administrative program management functions such as planning; budget formulation and execution; stewardship of physical facilities, equipment, vehicles, and accountable property; development and implementation of training and development programs; and implementation of cooperative agreements.

Fire Suppression, Monitoring, and Post-Fire Activities (40%)

Applies an experienced understanding of firefighter safety, fire behavior, topography of the area, weather, fuels, and training in fire management work to: 1) supervise, mentor, and instruct employees on crewmember duties; 2) plan action and direct utilization of fireline resources on less complex fires; and 3) for more complex fires, direct assigned suppression operations and recommend and implement tactical strategy 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. Adjusts actions based on changing information and evolving situational awareness. Uses firing devices on a firing operation according to the ignition/firing plan (verbal or written). Coordinates with aircraft for aviation support missions. Coordinates module or crew logistics and places caches of equipment and supplies at strategic points.

On natural caused fires when applying a strategy other than full suppression will observe, collect, and record fire-related data with regards to fuels, topography, weather, fire behavior, fire effects, smoke, and fire location. If human caused, gathers and preserves evidence for possible actions in prosecuting offenders.

Operates, moves, inspects, and performs preventative maintenance on vehicles and equipment to include crew carriers, fire engines, command vehicles, pickups, and other specialized equipment. Uses judgment to safely operate, maneuver, and set up vehicles and equipment in a variety of environments including urban, grassland, and mountainous terrain. Ensures adherence to vehicle safety procedures when transporting personnel, fuel, and equipment, considering bridge and road limits, equipment weight and length, and weather effects.

In addition, performs the following duties specific to the crew or module assigned:

- **Fire Operations Specialist (FOS)**: Provides oversight during initial and extended attack fires and directs fireline activities and tactics of dispersed firefighters, resources, equipment, and aircraft. Provides for follow-up actions to safely and effectively manage wildland fires. Assigns missions to ground and aviation wildland fire suppression resources. Makes efficient and effective use of multiple types of interagency wildland fire suppression resources with varying capabilities. Ensures common communications for interagency resources. Monitors weather and fire behavior and communicates changes to strategy and tactics. Transfers command to an upper-level Incident Management Team as necessary. Provides protection for life, property and resources. Selects strategies and tactics to ensure safe operations for assigned resources. Recognizes potential hazardous situations and provides operational briefings. Initiates contacts with Federal, state, and/or local law enforcement personnel as necessary to close roads, evacuate structures, and deal with the public. Coordinates with dispatch office regarding current fire behavior and fire conditions, release of resources, and other logistical considerations. Participates in development of: incident objectives and strategies and tactics to provide for safe operations and cost effective incident management. Conducts After Action Reviews and offers suggestions for improvement. Responsible for ensuring that required documentation is completed and submitted.
- **Crews**: Ensures compliance with interagency standards and safe operation. Establishes and communicates performance expectations and gives clear leaders-intent to meet objectives. Accounts for location, health, safety, and welfare of crew or module. Bases actions on evolving situational awareness and communicate changes. Determines appropriate fireline tactics and properly locates fireline and determines appropriate construction methods. Supervises felling operations and prepares control lines for burn out operations. Plans, directs, and supervises firing operations. Facilitates the use of fire, and other management techniques, involving planned and unplanned wildland fire events. May provide technical and ecological based expertise such as long-term planning, ignitions, holding, suppression, hazard fuel reduction, and may have the ability to plan for fire effects monitoring.
- **Helitack:** Plans, coordinates, and directs helicopter operations in support of mission requests. Directs helicopter crewmember duties. Directs aviation mission planning including briefings of pilots, contract personnel and crews on mission requirements. Participates in and may direct helicopter operations to include accompanying pilot on flights, provides radio

communications to dispatch and/or ground firefighter and navigates with use of maps. Directs aviation safety processes in coordination with pilot. Ensures aircraft tracking procedures are in place and followed. Conducts post flight briefings with pilots and crews to improve mission safety and effectiveness. May serve in other aviation management positions. May serve as a rappeller, short hauler, or spotter.

Fire Preparedness (20%)

Provides leadership and direction to subordinates to achieve fire response readiness. Models leadership values and principles; provides positive influence and teamwork. Coordinates with dispatch office regarding availability, expected weather conditions, resource status, and other considerations. Maintains working relationships and pre-incident coordination with applicable cooperators and wildland fire responders. Directs and ensures proper assembly of equipment and supplies needed for fire assignments or daily work assignments. May serve as a subject matter expert on regional, state, and/or national interagency committees.

Ensures crew members and equipment for the specific fire assignments or daily work assignments are in a state of readiness for the assignment or initial attack. Develops and implements a physical training program to enhance the ability of crewmembers to perform the required arduous firefighting duties.

May serve as an alternate in other fire program areas such as logistical dispatch, cache warehouse, incident business, and administrative support.

In addition, performs the following duties specific to the crew or module assigned:

- **FOS**: Ensures preparedness of wildland fire suppression equipment and staff. Serves on preparedness review teams. Manages inventory and accountable property; positions equipment and personnel for the most efficient response; evaluates equipment and staffing needs; and develops and prioritizes equipment and personnel funding requests.
- **Crews:** Plans and executes a variety of resource management objectives while maintaining availability for incident mobilization. Some objectives may include fuels management planning and implementation; monitoring production, quality, and safety procedures; building team cohesion by monitoring personnel performance and providing feedback. Ensures equipment and individuals are kept in a full state of readiness for emergency fire dispatch. Assembles and validates readiness of crew or module and ensures personnel have adequate rest for assignment.
- **Helitack:** Performs and supervises employees in helicopter operation and support activities. Ensures preparedness of aviation equipment, wildland fire suppression equipment and personnel. Directs helicopter operations in coordination with pilot in accordance with helicopter contract. Enforces helicopter contract provisions, proposes contract language changes to the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) and/or Contracting Officer or may serve as a COR. Completes or ensures completion of contract documentation. Signs for receipt of services and recommends payment approvals to the Contracting Officer. Serves on aviation review teams, including preparedness, aviation safety and special use missions. Maintains inventory and accountable property of aviation equipment.

Fuels Management and Prevention (15%)

Supervises and directs moderately complex fuels management projects or participates in more complex projects by conducting project assessments and gathering data (e.g., fuel quantity and conditions), planning (e.g., drafting or reviewing fuels management plans, assessing and recommending fuel treatment alternatives), preparing (e.g., ensuring proper training, placement, and instruction of crews), and implementing (e.g., ignition, holding, mop-up, and rehabilitation). Fuels management projects include prescribed fire, and mechanical and biological treatments; inventorying fuel beds; and piling vegetation debris. May be required to use/operate specialized firing equipment.

Conducts fire reconnaissance of proposed prescribed fire units and drafts prescribed fire plans.

Supervises and/or participates in fire prevention promotional activities such as conducting educational field trips; attending and presenting for public education and special events; explaining fire prevention measures to visitors, youth groups, schools, and other public education activities; and distributing and explaining fire prevention literature to cooperators, visitors, and the general public.

Performs other related duties as assigned.

FACTORS

Guidelines

A large body of specialized technical firefighting, safety, fire prevention, and fire organization guides exist and must be thoroughly understood and applied. These guides include manuals, handbooks, training aids, maps and charts, and special instructions and practices pertaining to the use of mechanized equipment, aerial techniques, and other procedures related to fire management work. Incumbent will learn and be aware of the guidance, as well as the constantly changing nature of guidelines as new or modified techniques emerge.

Carries out functions completely and independently according to established procedures, referring only emergency or unusual problems to their supervisors via the most appropriate communication method/device. The Supervisor must use experienced judgment when applying procedures and safety protocols to the specific conditions of the assignment. They also apply experienced judgement to independently supervise crews on fire activities that require judgement to safely prepare for and implement strategy; this may involve developing incident action plans and directing fireline resources. They are also using experienced judgment to draft fuels management plans and to direct moderately complex hazard fuel reduction projects.

Complexity

Supervises and performs wildland firefighting in a variety of assignments. The approach may vary based upon terrain, fire intensity, fuels availability, wind velocity, and resource values.

Specific tasks, use of tools and methods, and the sequence in which tasks are to be done are determined by evaluation of the situation and issues involved. Consideration must also be given to slope, weather conditions, fuels, smoke, and other fire behavior factors while performing wildland fire suppression. A myriad of considerations must be weighed and evaluated when drafting and reviewing plans for and preparing and executing hazard fuel reduction projects. The Supervisor must identify, evaluate, and consider the interrelationships of fire and the physical environment in order to select the most appropriate methods from among varied alternatives.

Personal Contacts/Purpose of Contacts

Contacts include members of the module and crew, including leaders, supervisors, fire management officers, and dispatch, as well as cooperating fire and law enforcement personnel; these contacts are to receive and provide instruction, information, and mentorship and to plan, direct, and communicate details related to the assignment. Contacts also include visitors, private landowners, tribal representatives, utility industry, or local residents. Contacts with the general public during incident operations may be with landowners to resolve operational tactics, encourage and/or require evacuation, or to ensure the safety of others including the public. Contacts may also include travelers, campers, visitors, and residents of the area to provide information regarding fire prevention, fire hazards, restricted areas and routes of travel and to secure cooperation and participation in the fire prevention program. Contacts are to ensure that safety rules, protocols, and procedures are followed. Contacts include supervising, leading, and training firefighters in the operation and maintenance of tools and equipment and in fire management activities.

Supervision Received

Works under general supervision, following standard procedures and practices and performing work assignments with limited supervision or guidance. Plans and carries out program objectives without detailed instructions. Functions independently in the field, relying on their own experience, expertise, and judgment; supervisors provide assistance on difficult or unusual problems only. The supervisor checks work for overall adequacy, compliance with policies and procedures, accomplishment of program objectives, and the effectiveness of overall implementation.

Supervision Exercised

Carries out the following responsibilities and authorities as first-level supervisor over work with a base level of GS-07: 1) Plan work to be accomplished by subordinates, set and adjust short-term priorities, and prepare schedules for completion of work; 2) Assign work to subordinates based on priorities, selective consideration of the difficulty and requirements of assignments, and the capabilities of employees; 3) Evaluate work performance of subordinates; 4) Give advice, counsel, or instruction to employees on both work and administrative matters; 5) Interview candidates for positions in the unit; recommend appointment, promotion, or reassignment to such positions; 6) Hear and resolve complaints from employees, referring group grievances and more serious unresolved complaints to a higher level supervisor or manager; 7) Effect minor disciplinary measures, such as warnings and reprimands, recommending other action in more

serious cases; 8) Identify developmental and training needs of employees, providing or arranging for needed development and training; 9) Find ways to improve production or increase the quality of the work directed; 10) Develop performance standards; and 11) Provide administrative approvals such as travel, credit card actions, time and attendance.

Ensures equal opportunity for employees in the selection of participants for training, awards and recognition, and other career development opportunities. Ensures fair and unprejudiced employment practices in the recruitment and selection of candidates for vacant positions. Supports education and training programs designed to provide a maximum opportunity for employees to advance and perform at their highest potential. Creates an inclusive, equitable and accessible work environment that respects the contribution and perspective of the employees. Supports the EEO program actively in day-to-day activities.

Supervises and conducts a safety and health program for employees that includes the following: (1) instruction in safe operating procedures and policies; (2) investigation of all accidents/incidents including preparation of reports and forms, evaluation of the causes and effects, and determination of corrective action required; (3) supervisory safety meetings and enforcement of safety rules and regulations; and (4) follow-up action on specific safety and health problems within the staff.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT FACTS

The duties of this position are so rigorous that employment is limited to physically vigorous individuals who must meet established maximum age and physical qualification requirements.

Physical Demands: Arduous exertion for protracted periods of time such as, but not limited to, extensive running, walking, climbing, kneeling, stooping, pulling hoses, jumping and twisting, prolonged standing, walking over uneven ground, and recurring bending, reaching, lifting and carrying of items weighing over 50 pounds and shared lifting and carrying of heavier items, and similar activities requiring at least average agility and dexterity.

Work Environment: Forest, range, and desert environments in steep terrain where surfaces may be extremely uneven, rocky, covered with thick tangled vegetation, smoky conditions, etc. Temperatures commonly exceed 100 degrees F and may fall below freezing. Risks include smoke inhalation, fire entrapment, snake or insect bites and stings, exposure to excessive machinery noise, and falling and rolling material. Employee must adjust and cope with exposure to weather elements, dust and smoke, poor bivouac and eating situations under an unpredictable set of circumstances. Firefighters may be required to live in backcountry camps for extended periods of time. The hazardous nature of the work requires that personal protective equipment be worn (e.g., boots, hard hat, gloves, flame resistant clothing). Work may require travel by fixed-wing or rotor-wing aircraft.

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 work capacity test for arduous positions.

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.

Position may require the incumbent to obtain and maintain a commercial driver's license (CDL).

Position may require certification to serve as a Federal Acquisition Certification (FAC) COR as articulated in Department and/or Bureau policies.

When this position description is used in helitack, wildland fire modules, or hotshot operations specific qualification requirements apply (e.g., Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations, Standards for Interagency Hotshot Crew Operations, National Wildfire Coordinating Group Guidance).

Qualifications and additional required training specified in the Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) Qualifications Standards and Guide may apply.

SUPERVISORY DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

Factor	**Factor Description**	**Factor Level**	**Points**
1. Program Scope and Effect	Exercises first-level supervision and leadership for an operational crew or module within a bureau and executes fire management activities in fire preparedness, fuels management and prevention, and fire suppression, monitoring, and post-fire.	1-2	350
2. Organizational Setting	This is a first level operational supervisor that is two or more levels below the first Senior Executive.	2-1	100
3. Supervisory Authority Exercised	See "Supervision Exercised" for full description.	3-2c	450
4a. Personal Contacts – Nature	Regular and recurring supervisory contacts include: representatives from mission support in Human Resources, Training and Development, Acquisition, Public Affairs/Public Information, as well as Resource Management Specialists/Advisers and Cooperators	4A-1	25
4b. Personal Contacts – Purpose	Supervisory contacts are typically incident-specific contacts to facilitate day-to-day information exchange with cooperators, to ensure continuity of operations, to ensure information provided and received is accurate and consistent with operations, and to exchange information with resource managers. Contacts are to get advice from mission support professionals and to provide information to mission support.	4B-2	75

5. Difficult of Typical Work Directed	Base Level of work directed is GS-07	5-4	505
6. Other Conditions	Base Level is GS-07. Level of supervision requires coordination within the work unit to ensure that standards are met. Also requires regular coordination with other work units to deal with requirements and problems affecting others outside of the immediate organization.	6-2	575
Total Points			2080
Point Range and Conversion	1855-2100 = GS-09		GS-09
Standards Used to Evaluate the Position	Position Classification Standard for Wildland Fire Management, 0456, June 2022; General Schedule Supervisory Guide, HRCD-5, June 1998, April 1998		

Technical Work is primarily based on the Department SPD for Wildland Firefighter, GS-0456-07.

Final Title, Series, and Grade based on application of the General Schedule Supervisory Guide: **Supervisory Wildland Firefighter, GS-0456-09**