DOI Standard PD
PD# DX05100

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 within a state/regional or unit setting.

The Wildland Firefighter (Aviation), executing an Air Attack role, directs air tactical operations by providing aerial command and establishing priorities for initial attack, extended attack and other aviation duties as required. The primary purpose of the position is to perform specific segments of the interagency Air Attack program within the assigned Geographic Area (GA) boundaries, and/or well-defined incident airspace and air traffic related projects of lesser scope.

This position requires a high level of coordination at the state and regional level with other federal agencies and departmental bureaus including staff from the US Forest Service (FS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Tribal governments, and coordination with state agencies (including state fire and other natural resources agencies), local governments, and non-governmental organizations (NGO).

MAJOR DUTIES

Aviation Program Management (50%)

Performs specific segments of the interagency Air Attack program within the assigned Geographic Area (GA) boundaries, or well-defined aviation related projects of lesser scope. Ensures only qualified Air Attack are working in the GA; coordinates movement of Air Attack and trainees within the GA; monitors Aviation Safety Communique (SAFECOM) submittal within the GA for aerial supervision related concerns; collaborates with local, state/regional, and national aviation managers to resolve conflicts according to established aerial supervision policy and program direction.

May serve as a voting member on the Air Attack Committee and as the point of contact to the Air Attack Committee Chair for the Air Attack program within the designated GA.

Provides program and technical assistance, as required, to inter/intragency groups and partners as well as disseminates Air Attack related program and technical information to user groups at the geographic area level.

Reviews aviation regulations, policies, and manuals and collaborates with local, state/regional, and GA aviation managers to ensure adequate aerial supervision is present within the GA for current/expected needs.

Monitors the quality/adequacy of aerial supervision within the GA Provides input to the GA aerial supervision program. Makes recommendations to the appropriate supervisor to correct issues or deficiencies.

Provides input to local, state/regional, and national aviation managers in reviewing Air Attack aircraft contract specifications. Prepares and submits required payment documentation for the aircraft during the exclusive use period.

Serves as the Project Inspector (PI) for the contract period.

Aviation Operations (20%)

As a flight crewmember member of an exclusive use Air Attack aircraft, the incumbent is responsible for aerial resources assigned to incidents when they are in the incident Fire Traffic Area (FTA). The Air Attack works in a team concept with the contract pilot and applies Crew Resource Management (CRM) principles to all aerial assignments.

Performs flight crewmember duties including mission/flight checklists, navigation, hazard identification, risk mitigation, and other duties as required.

Provides leadership and promotes teamwork with the contract pilot, fire managers, and ground-based personnel regarding incident tactical aircraft operations, performance, and safety. Coordinates with unit fire managers identifying priorities, values at risk, ground, and aerial restrictions on incident assignments.

Applies tactics and makes recommendations in support of management/incident objectives based on application of well-established guidelines. Coordinates strategy and tactics with unit fire managers or Incident Commanders.

Determines and recommends resource needs while over incidents and provides risk assessment and identifies unacceptable safety risks for aerial and ground personnel.

Coordinates air-to-air and air-to-ground communication plans and maintains communication with ground forces, assigned aircraft, and dispatching organizations. Coordinates with dispatch staff to order, assign, and release incident aircraft in accordance with the needs of fire management and incident command personnel.

The incumbent may perform other collateral duties with the local, state/regional, or national fire, fuels, and aviation management programs.

Air Attack Training and Safety (30%)

Assists in the development of training plans, courses, course aids. Coordinates a training and currency program for qualified Air Attack and trainees on an interagency basis at the unit, state/regional or national level.

Coordinates unit, state/regional level mentoring for Air Attack trainees and conducts proficiency evaluations.

Collects Air Attack annual mission summaries and refresher training attendance for Air Attack within the designated GA. Forwards annual documentation to agency program managers, and fire qualifications managers, as necessary.

May participate as an instructor or coach for the National Aerial Supervision Academy (S-378). Coordinates/teaches agency approved Crew Resource Management (CRM) training/refresher training. Assists in the coordination of the annual GA Air Attack refresher training (RT-378). May coordinate, or instruct other aviation courses and curriculum such as Aircraft Dispatcher (D-312), Basic Air Operations (S- 270), Air Support Group Supervisor (S-375), Air Operations Branch Director (S-470), etc.

Mentors Air Attack trainees and performs Air Attack Mission Evaluations to conduct and coordinate Air Attack training within the assigned GA.

Revies and provides input to safety related plans including the unit aviation and state/regional aviation plans, Standards for Aerial Supervision (SA), or the National System Safety (SMS) assessment.

FACTORS

Guidelines

Guidelines are in the form of Department, bureau, and other agency aviation regulations, policies and manuals, instruction memoranda as well as published regulations of the FAA, NTSB and OMB. Guidelines provide a general outline of the program goals and objectives and procedures to be used but are not always directly applicable to specific assignments or projects such as in emergency situations confronted in aerial supervision and in program management.
For example, in training and incident situations the incumbent will be required to make judgment calls in areas such as standard retardant application procedures to meet incident objectives.

The incumbent uses judgment in selecting precedents and in interpreting or adapting available guidelines to issues or problems arising in the work, analyzes results and makes recommendations to ensure consistency within the Air Attack program.

Complexity

Assignments consist of a variety of unrelated duties and projects involving varying types of resources with unique capabilities, unique use constraints, differing mission objectives, limited availability, and contracting complexities as they apply to the aviation and Air Attack program. The incumbent evaluates the selection and application of different methods and procedures to provide recommendations on aerial supervision quality/adequacy and program direction. During incidents and training, duties involve directing aerial suppression aircraft and

coordinating with ground personnel, dispatch organizations, and managers. Findings and recommendations resulting from studies or other assignments are based on the application of well-established aviation guidelines, regulations, and techniques; on analysis of work observations.

Factors included in decisions include incident strategy and tactics, multiple numbers and types of tactical aircraft in the fire area in coordination with numerous ground resources from various agencies, multiple incidents within a geographic area, accidents or incidents occurring during operations, weather, cost containment, mission feasibility and firefighter safety.

Personal Contacts

Frequent personal contacts are varied within the bureau and on an interagency level. Intra- and inter-agency contacts include Fire Management Officers, Aviation Managers, Geographic Area Training Representatives (GATR), Incident Commanders, Supervisory Dispatchers, Coordinators, Air Base Managers, Airtanker Pilots, Helicopter Pilots, Contractors, Contractor's Representatives, Office of Aviation Services (OAS) personnel, Public Information Officers, Air Tactical Pilots, and National Office Fire and Aviation staff. Other significant contacts may include news media and local community leaders.

Purpose of Contacts

Purpose of contacts is to provide tactical information, guidance, assistance, and applying a course of action for tactical aircraft flight crews; a basis to collaborate on program management aviation safety, and training; coordinate work efforts; providing fire and aviation managers with aircraft, suppression and aerial supervision suggestions, strategies and updates on a national scope. The incumbent must exercise skill and judgment in overcoming resistance to recommendations due to competing resources and objectives and to influence or persuade Incident Commanders or Fire Management Officers to adopt a particular course of action or to change direction in a particular resource activity due to a fire or aviation management consideration that may conflict with a proposed resource objective.

Supervisory Controls

The supervisor establishes broad program objectives, goals, or priorities and provides assistance with significant technical or procedural problems, or with situations that do not have clear precedents.

The incumbent plans and carries out the work and resolve problems in accordance with standard policy and regulations, applicable precedents, and previous training. The incumbent informs the supervisor of progress and situations which may affect Air Attack and the interagency Air Attack program within the assigned Geographic Area (GA).

Review of work is usually in the form of an assessment of the methods and judgment used by the incumbent to resolve technical and operational problems encountered. Completed work is reviewed for conformance with 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: Air Attack work has significant physical demands with the requirement for a high degree of focus during tactical flight operations. The work requires long, and irregular hours and frequent travel is required for training and fire assignments.

Air Attack flight assignments require considerable time spent in cramped spaces, turbulent atmospheric conditions, high noise levels while receiving or sending multiple radio transmissions and performing other aircrew tasks which require significant physical demands. Other assignments are sedentary in nature.

Work Environment: Ground fire assignment work is often performed at remote locations in mountainous or difficult terrain. Very high temperatures, smoke, and steep slopes are common environmental factors. Air Attack in-flight work is performed enroute, over, and returning from fire assignments or other emergencies. Risks and discomforts involved are those of air travel compounded by required flight in dense smoke, turbulent air, over mountainous terrain, and in high-density air traffic (with and without radar control).

Considerable emergency travel on short notice is common and considerable time is spent away from home base.

Other assignments are performed in an office or classroom environment which involves minimal risk or discomfort and requires normal safety precautions.

This position may be required to be qualified or take training as Air Attack Evaluator, Air Attack Final Evaluator, ATS, 7 Skills Crew Resource Management (CRM) Instructor and COR/ACOR/PI, Private Pilot Ground School/Pinch Hitter to perform specific duties.

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