DOI Standard Position Description
PD# DX06400

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

INTRODUCTION

This position is organizationally located within a wildland fire smokejumper program for 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 leader is from a different bureau or agency.

The Wildland Firefighter (Smokejumper) at this level is a trained and experienced member of a wildland fire smokejumper program 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. The primary mission is to provide users with highly qualified firefighter whom quickly and effectively respond to initial attack, extended attack, and point protection missions via specialized aircraft and parachutes. Secondary missions include the delivery of equipment and supplies via paracargo, providing qualified individuals to incident management teams, remote area fire monitoring, prescribed fire/fuels management and other fire management support.

MAJOR DUTIES

Fire Suppression, Monitoring, and Post-Fire Activities (60%)

As an experienced member of and/or leader within a smokejumper program, parachutes into mountainous, remote, and/or rugged terrain and performs as a wildland firefighter (smokejumper) making tactical and strategic decisions based on firefighter safety, fire behavior, topography of the area, weather, fuels, and training in fire management work. Directs fireline activities in attacking, controlling, or mopping up fires, building or patrolling firelines, cleaning up burned areas within firelines, performing burnouts, suppressing spot fires, felling snags or trees, and cutting brush. Coordinates actions activities with aerial resources, to include helicopter bucket and sling operations, air tanker retardant drops, and air cargo operations. 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 (i.e., chainsaws, portable pumps). 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.

While frequently working in remote areas utilize maps, global positioning system (GPS), and other associated technology to establish, map, and track fire perimeters, and coordinate fire resources.

Develops and implements protection measures for structures, sites, and/or areas of value.

Plans for and ensures safety and welfare of personnel. Provides for logistical needs such as food, water, and additional supplies through the dispatch system. Provides medical assistance as needed to firefighting personnel.

Recognizes potential hazards, implements a risk assessment process, and develops and implements mitigations.

Ensures common communications with interagency resources.

Prepares and completes time and attendance, accident reviews, incident status summaries, unit logs, evaluations, and other required reports.

Smokejumper - Preparedness (30%)

Serves as a parachute rigger to pack, repair, and maintain parachutes and related smokejumper parachute equipment adhering to agency smokejumper rigger policies and guidelines.

Maintains smokejumper and firefighting equipment, tools, and supplies. Completes all administrative requirements in a timely and accurate manner.

Maintains an active state of readiness to rapidly respond to initial attack fire calls.

Completes Safety Management Reporting Documents including: Safecom, Safenet, Malfunction and Abnormality Reporting System (MARS), and Safety Management and Information Systems (SMIS).

Conducts a wide variety of training related to fire suppression, aviation, parachute training, prescribed fire, and fire monitoring.

Leadership (10%)

Leads firefighting personnel by directing their activities when suppressing wildland fires or by serving as a situational leader on wildland fires by directing the work of a small crew of firefighters in building fire lines, burning out, mopping up, and patrolling fire lines. During wildland fire and hazard fuels assignments, provides on-the-job training and mentorship opportunities to newer firefighters on the use of tools and equipment. Distributes and balances workload among crew members in accordance with complexity of work and experience level. Relays information and situational assessments to higher level leadership. Performs administrative leadership responsibilities to include maintaining records such as receipts for supplies; ensuring that work is carried out safely; reporting on work accomplishments of the crews being led; and reporting on employee performance concerns.

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.

At this level, the Wildland Firefighter (smokejumper) carries out their functions completely and independently according to established procedures, referring only emergency or unusual problems to their supervisors via the most appropriate communication method/device. Firefighters at this level must use experienced judgment when applying procedures and safety protocols to the specific conditions of the assignment. At this level they are also applying experienced judgement to independently lead crews on fire suppression activities that require judgement to safely prepare for and implement suppression 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.

The wildland firefighter (smokejumper) possesses knowledge of pertinent policy and regulations relating to safety and operating standards; including basic knowledge of CFR Title 14 Chapter I subchapter D part 65, subpart A and F as it pertains to FAA guidance for parachute rigger certification is required to rig parachutes is accordance with guidelines.

Complexity

As an experienced smokejumper, performs wildland firefighting in a variety of assignments either individually or as a leader of a module or crew. 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 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. Smokejumpers at this level 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.

Solutions to problems require judgment in applying conventional approaches to general situations.

Personal Contacts/Purpose of Contacts

Specific contacts include smokejumper crew members, supervisors, managers, and support staff, agency and contract pilots and flight crews, interagency duty officers, Fire Management Officers, land managers, aviation managers, fire dispatch centers, fire suppression cooperators, the full spectrum of agency management personnel through radio, telephone,

government email, and in person. Essential and routine contacts also a wide variety of federal personnel and the public 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.

The purpose of personal contacts with agency land and fire management officials or cooperators is to provide technical guidance, respond to questions, assist in problem resolution, and facilitate mission objectives. Contacts are to lead and train other firefighters in the operation and maintenance of tools and equipment and in fire management activities.

Outreach to prospective employees is to promote the DOI fire program and to facilitate recruitment of a diverse and highly qualified workforce and to provide and maintain a candidate list for the smokejumper hiring process. Contacts are to ensure that safety rules, protocols, and procedures are followed. Contacts include leading and training lower graded firefighters in the operation and maintenance of tools and equipment and in fire management activities.

Supervision Received

Smokejumpers at this level work under general supervision. Smokejumpers at this level follow standard procedures and practices and perform their work assignments with limited supervision or guidance. They plan and carry out program objectives without detailed instructions. They function 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.

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 include 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 120 pounds for 5 miles or more through rugged terrain, and shared lifting and carrying of heavier items, and similar activities requiring at least average agility and dexterity. The smokejumper is expected to parachute into this remote terrain under hazardous conditions.

Work environments include 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 will require travel by fixed-wing or rotor-wing aircraft. The majority of the work is performed outdoors in a wide variety of weather and terrain conditions

or in a crowded airplane.

Incumbent risks death or serious injury during parachute jumps, cargo dropping, or firefighting.

The duties of this position are so rigorous that physical examination and fitness tests are required to ensure that the employee assigned can perform the duties without physical injury to self or others.

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

Position requires a valid state driver's license. May require additional specialized training and certification to operate specialized vehicles and equipment.