



## 2008 NEW MEXICO STATE AVIATION PLAN

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## **I. OBJECTIVE.**

The State Aviation Plan is both a Statewide Aviation Safety Plan and an Aviation Operations Plan for Bureau of Land Management (BLM) New Mexico/Oklahoma/Texas/Kansas. This Plan is required by BLM Manual 9400.33E and by the BLM National Aviation Plan.

This Plan provides guidance in the implementation of National policy and establishes Statewide policies and procedures. It clarifies some Department of the Interior (DOI) and BLM policies that may have been the source of misunderstandings in the past. However, it avoids repeating information or policies that are readily available in manuals, handbooks, guides, and the BLM National Aviation Plan. This Plan will be reviewed and updated annually.

## **II. POLICY.**

All BLM aviation operations within the States of New Mexico/Oklahoma/Texas/Kansas will be conducted efficiently and safely. This will be achieved through utilization of sound aviation management practices. Key components of aviation safety include proactive hazard identification, application of risk management techniques, and an active accident prevention program.

The New Mexico State Office (NMSO), Districts and Field Offices will not supplement National aviation policy with more restrictive local policies.

## **III. GUIDANCE.**

Each Field Office has a Unit Aviation Manager who is knowledgeable in the field of aviation management and is available to Field Office employees to provide guidance and assistance in all aviation matters. A Field Office may share a "zoned" Unit Aviation Manager position with neighboring Field Offices or within a District. For aviation operations in Oklahoma, the State Aviation Manager (SAM) will assume the duties of the Unit Aviation Manager.

The SAM is available to provide guidance for all aspects of aviation management. The NMSO employees and Unit Aviation Managers should contact the SAM with any aviation questions.

The following is a list of documents containing guidance and regulations needed to conduct safe and efficient aviation operations. While this is not a comprehensive list, these publications are directly applicable to the New Mexico BLM aviation program. District and Field Offices are encouraged to maintain a library of these documents for use by their employees. Most of these documents are also available on the Internet, at either [www.nbc.gov/amd](http://www.nbc.gov/amd) or [www.fire.blm.gov](http://www.fire.blm.gov).

- A. Departmental Manual 350-354, "Aviation Policy" (1996, with updates)
- B. BLM Manual 9400 Series "Aviation Management" (1999)
- C. BLM National Aviation Plan (updated annually)
- D. DOI-AM Operational Procedures Memoranda (OPMs) (updated annually)

- E. Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide (2006)
- F. Interagency Airspace Coordination Guide (2003)
- G. Interagency Airtanker Base Operations Guide (2007)
- H. Interagency Helicopter Rappel Guide (2006)
- I. Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide (2004)
- J. Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Operations Guide (updated annually)
- K. Southwest Area Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Operating Plan
- L. Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR)
- M. BLM Safety & Health for Field Operations Handbook 1112-2
- N. Aviation Life Support Equipment Handbook (2008)
- O. Interagency Aviation Transport of Hazardous Materials Handbook/Guide (2005)
- P. DOI Field Reference Guide for Aviation Users (2006)
- Q. Interagency Aviation Training Guide (2006)
- R. Interagency Aerial Supervision Guide (2009)
- S. Interagency Smoke Jumper Pilots Operations Guide (2008)
- T. 2008 System Safety Aviation Guide
- U. Current BLM Instruction Memoranda and Information Bulletins relating to aviation

#### **IV. RESPONSIBILITY.**

A. The State Director is responsible for all aviation activities within the jurisdiction of BLM New Mexico/Oklahoma/Texas/Kansas. The State Director has appointed a SAM in the Fire Management Team, Division of Lands and Resources, NMSO, to provide professional staff support on all aviation matters. The incumbent is John Selkirk; phone number 505-438-7431.

The State Director is responsible for approving all Project Aviation Safety Plans for Special Use Activities conducted by the NMSO.

B. District and Field Office Managers are responsible for the overall aviation management program in their respective offices. Each appoints a Unit Aviation Manager who coordinates the aviation program and provides staff assistance on all aviation matters for the local office. The Unit Aviation Manager position can be shared among District or Field Offices, if the managers determine that efficiency and safety will not be reduced. District and Field Offices are required to maintain unit aviation plans, as per BLM Manual 9400.33. F.

District and Field Office Managers are responsible for approving Project Aviation Safety Plans for Special Use Activities conducted by their offices.

C. All Employees are responsible for ensuring aviation activities are conducted safely, according to policy, and within the scope of their employment. Every employee should take steps to halt any aviation operations that are unsafe. Every employee observing an unsafe aviation activity is required to report it.

All employees have the option of not participating as an aircraft passenger if they feel the flight would be unsafe or if flying makes them uncomfortable.

Some private life insurance policies are invalid when the insured is a passenger on nonairline flights. An employee is not required to fly on Government aircraft if this applies to his/her life insurance policy.

## **V. AVIATION ORGANIZATION.**

### **A. SAM.**

- . Is the senior staff expert for aviation activities within the BLM New Mexico/Oklahoma/Texas/Kansas organization.
- . Provides liaison with the National Aviation Office, the Department of the Interior Aviation Management Directorate (AMD), cooperators, Districts/Field Offices, and NMSO management.
- . Plans and organizes aviation projects at the NMSO level by coordinating with aircraft operators and ensures compliance with aviation policies and regulations governing aircraft operations.
- . Compiles and disseminates aviation safety information.
- . Coordinates aviation user training for NMSO personnel and maintains records of aviation training received by BLM New Mexico personnel.
- . Provides guidance for the development and maintenance of Aircraft Mishap Response Guides and Known Aerial Hazard Maps for the State.
- . Provides guidance for the implementation of National aviation program directives in support of the BLM mission.
- . Clarifies regulations and provides guidance for District and Field Offices as needed.
- . Forwards documentation of executive travel to the National Aviation Office, as required by OMB Circular A-126. Coordinates approvals for senior executive travel on aircraft.
- . Serves as Contracting Officer's Representative for all exclusive use aircraft contracts.
- . Collaborates with the NMSO Fire Management Officer (FMO), NMSO Fire Operations Specialist, and FMOs to facilitate the ordering and movement of National shared aviation resources within New Mexico. Provides updates to the Southwest Coordination Center on movement of BLM National shared aviation resources.

### B. Unit Aviation Managers.

- . Are the resident experts and sources of guidance at the field level. Should be involved in all phases of planning and conducting aircraft use.
- . Will coordinate aviation safety training for District and Field Office personnel.
- . Will maintain local office Aviation Mishap Response Guide and Known Aerial Hazard Maps, which shall be updated at least annually.
- . Should give priority to on-site monitoring and assistance to aviation operations in the field.
- . Ensure that airspace coordination and deconfliction takes place for both fire aviation operations and nonfire aviation projects.
- . Assure that vendors and cooperators are provided a thorough orientation to mission requirements, standards, and procedures. This includes meeting with pilots and aircraft users to assure proper briefings.
- . Should be aware of resource program needs, assess feasibility of aircraft use, and advise users of options available. Must recommend against the use of aircraft if risks are unacceptable, if aircraft operations would be inefficient, or if aircraft operations would violate established procedures.
- . Need to be familiar with DOI and BLM Manual guidance and policies.

### C. Supervisors and Managers.

- . Are responsible for ensuring that employees receive training commensurate with assigned aviation activities.
- . Are responsible for recognizing and eliminating or reducing aviation hazards in their programs.

### D. Aviation Dispatchers.

- . All persons used as aircraft dispatchers will be adequately trained for the duties they perform. These persons will be designated by their Unit Aviation Managers. Appendix 1 of DOI-AM OPM No. 06-04 identifies the training required for Aviation Dispatchers.

### E. Flight Manager.

- . Each flight or aviation project will have a designated Flight Manager, whether the flight is

under the operational control of the BLM or another agency. This position was previously referred to as the Aircraft Chief of Party.

. The Flight Manager is given primary responsibility to see that the flight or project is conducted safely and efficiently.

. The Flight Manager ensures that regulatory and administrative procedures are followed properly.

. Flight Managers are required to have specific training depending on the aircraft used and mission. Training requirements are found in DOI-AM OPM No. 06-04.

#### F. Passengers and Aviation Users.

. Are required to maintain currency in the training required for the aviation activities they are involved in.

. Are required to check AMD issued pilot qualifications cards, aircraft data cards, or other administrative approval documents prior to the start of a project. Failure by the pilot or vendor to produce proper documentation will result in immediate cessation of operations until qualifications are determined.

Are required to stop unsafe operations.

#### G. Fiscal and Procurement Personnel.

. Need to be familiar with procurement and payment procedures for aircraft.

### **VI. PROCUREMENT AND PAYMENT PROCEDURES.**

A. Requests for Services and Procurement. Requests for aircraft charter/rental services for NMSO projects will be coordinated by the SAM. District and Field Offices are responsible for establishing local aircraft request procedures.

B. Payment. Payment for aircraft use will normally be via the Aircraft Use Report (Form AMD-23, formerly Form OAS-23). Vendors have the option of billing via their own invoice. In this case, the Form AMD-23 should be completed and submitted with the invoice to document services received and to document flight hours for statistical purposes.

The SAM will process payment documents for aircraft used by the NMSO.

District and Field Offices are responsible for establishing procedures for processing payment documents for their aircraft use.

Form AMD-23 shall be processed within 3 working days in order to avoid late payment penalty charges.

1. Distribution of Form AMD-23 will be made as follows:

- a. White (original) Copy - DOI-Aviation Management
- b. Blue Copy - Vendor Copy (Vendor usually keeps)
- c. Yellow Copy - Ordering Office Copy

2. Billee Codes are assigned as follows:

<u>Billee Code</u>	<u>Ordering Office</u>
6360	New Mexico State Office
6910	New Mexico State Office
6880	Albuquerque District Office
6550	Las Cruces District Office
6760	Roswell District Office
61E0	Farmington District Office
61K0	Oklahoma Field Office
61N0	Taos Field Office
61P0	Socorro Field Office
61R0	Carlsbad Field Office
61H0	Amarillo Field Office

3. Detailed information on completing Form AMD-23 can be obtained from the SAM or Unit Aviation Managers or the AMD Web site: [www.nbc.gov/amd](http://www.nbc.gov/amd).

C. Nonrevenue Flights. In addition to use as a payment document, Form AMD-23 is used to document BLM use of aircraft which we do not pay for. An example is BLM Law Enforcement use of a National Guard helicopter. Form AMD-23 should be completed with the charge codes omitted. The remarks section of the form should contain the note "Nonrevenue flight--for documentation only."

This does not apply to the use of United States Forest Service (USFS) aircraft for fire suppression or for projects under the operational control of a cooperating agency.

## **VII. TRAINING.**

A. General. The SAM is responsible for providing Aviation Safety Training for NMSO personnel. Unit Aviation Managers will coordinate training for field personnel.

B. Training Courses. The DOI-AM OPM No. 06-04 outlines Departmental requirements for aviation training for non-fire aircraft use. This OPM contains a matrix outlining the minimum aviation training required for each position in the aviation program, and for supervisors and line managers. The BLM requires the initial aviation training modules for aircrew members (A-101, A-105, A-106, A-108, and A-113) to be conducted in a classroom setting. Subsequent refresher requirements for these positions can be met through computer-based training at [www.iat.gov](http://www.iat.gov).

Training and qualification requirements for aviation positions in wildland fire operations, including prescribed fires, are contained in PMS 310-1, Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualifications System Guide.

Numerous other training courses exist which are beneficial for increasing the safety and efficiency of aviation programs. The Unit Aviation Manager or the SAM can assist supervisors in developing training plans to ensure that employees are properly trained for the duties they perform.

## **VIII. LAW ENFORCEMENT.**

A. General. The BLM Law Enforcement personnel often operate/cooperate with other agencies in performing missions. This may involve the use of State, local, military and other Federal aircraft. In some cases, the nature of law enforcement activities requires aviation procedures that differ from non-law enforcement operations. However, to the extent possible, BLM Law Enforcement personnel will follow all established safety practices and procedures when involved in aviation operations. This includes mission planning, supervisory approvals, training, personal protective equipment (PPE), and flight following. The BLM Law Enforcement personnel will not ride in aircraft operated by other agencies, unless their use of the aircraft is authorized by AMD.

B. Agreements. The DOI has existing Drug Law Enforcement Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the following agencies:

Drug Enforcement Administration  
U.S. Border Patrol  
U.S. Coast Guard  
U.S. Customs Service  
Department of Defense  
National Guard in the State of New Mexico and adjacent States

The BLM Law Enforcement personnel may be passengers on aircraft operated by these agencies as long as the terms of the individual MOUs are adhered to.

C. Notifications. Confidentiality is occasionally a concern with law enforcement operations. However, the supervisors of Law Enforcement personnel, as well the NMSO Law Enforcement

Office, must be informed whenever employees will be involved in law enforcement aviation missions.

#### **IX. MILITARY AND NATIONAL GUARD AIRCRAFT.**

- A. General Use. Military and National Guard aircraft will not be used as an alternative to rental or contract aircraft in order to save BLM funds. Military aircraft can be used in emergencies. Military aircraft and National Guard aircraft can be used in special circumstances, primarily limited to projects in which BLM and the military cooperate and gain mutual benefits.
- B. DOI MOUs. The DOI has established several MOUs for DOI use of military and other agency aircraft in law enforcement missions (See section VIII.B.). These MOUs cannot be used to obtain military aircraft for non-law enforcement work or for work outside the scope of the MOU.
- C. Non-Law Enforcement Use. Use of military or National Guard aircraft and pilots outside the scope of the existing DOI MOUs will be coordinated through the SAM and approved by the State Director. Two week's time will be needed to obtain Departmental approval.
- D. Documentation of Use. All use of military aircraft will be documented on Form AMD-23 as nonrevenue flights.

#### **X. OTHER AGENCY AND NONCARDED AIRCRAFT AND PILOTS.**

- A. General Use. The use of other agency aircraft and pilots, or privately operated aircraft will be coordinated through the SAM. Local, State, and non-DOI agencies frequently have less stringent standards than DOI. Therefore, AMD must give approval prior to using these aircraft and pilots. Two week's time will be needed to check pilot and aircraft qualifications and to obtain AMD approval.
- B. Civil Air Patrol. The Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is a federally chartered corporation, and functions as a volunteer auxiliary of the United States Air Force. A previous MOU between the CAP and the DOI has been cancelled. The BLM can no longer use CAP aircraft or pilots to conduct BLM missions.
- C. USFS Carded Aircraft and Pilots. Meet DOI requirements, so that BLM employees can fly as passengers or air crew members. However, BLM cannot pay the USFS for aircraft use unless reimbursement agreements are in place. The BLM does utilize USFS contracted aircraft for wildfire suppression operations. Since wildfire suppression costs are not reimbursed among the Federal wildland fire management agencies, the USFS uses the fire code for the wildfire, and pays for the aircraft use with USFS fire suppression funds.

D. New Mexico State Forestry. The New Mexico State Forestry Division has recently entered into a Service Level Agreement with AMD which allows the State to utilize DOI's "on call" contracts and Aircraft Rental Agreements. Aircraft procured by the New Mexico State Forestry Division through AMD can be utilized by the BLM. Payment for these aircraft will be through the Form AMD-23 by using the BLM office's billee code and the appropriate charge code for the BLM's share of the aircraft costs.

E. Reimbursement. If BLM will be reimbursing other agencies for use of their aircraft, an Interagency Agreement must be completed and approved prior to the flight. Otherwise, BLM cannot pay for the services.

F. Documentation of Use. All use of non-DOI aircraft will be documented on form AMD-23, whether or not reimbursement takes place. An exception is the use of USFS aircraft for wildfire suppression.

G. End Product Contract Aircraft. An "end product contract" is a contract in which the Government requires the delivery of goods or services without specifying the delivery method. The BLM does not exercise operational control over the aircraft in these contracts and provides few, if any, specifications for the type of aircraft or aircraft performance. Two examples of end product contracts used by BLM are (1) an aerial photography contract, in which BLM pays to receive photographs, and (2) an herbicide application project, in which BLM pays for an area of land treated.

Recent court cases and National Transportation Safety Board decisions have placed increased responsibility on the Government for accidents involving end product contract aircraft. It is important that BLM clearly distinguishes which procurements are for end products and which procurements are for flight services. Information on our current requirements for end product contracts can be found in DOI-AM OPM No. 06-35.

The SAM is available to review end product contracts ensure that BLM is not assuming operational control over aircraft involved in these contracts.

Aircraft involved in end product contracts are not approved or carded by AMD. They are required to adhere to all applicable Federal Aviation Regulations pertaining to civil aircraft.

## **XI. AIRCRAFT SECURITY.**

Aircraft users and aviation managers should be proactive in protecting aircraft we use. This could include parking aircraft in secure areas of an airport, providing aircraft parking areas with adequate tie-down capabilities, and/or providing hangar space when needed. Concern for aircraft security should include potential weather damage, animal damage, and other factors. The BLM-owned, contracted, or rented aircraft are highly visible to the public and, therefore, are potential

targets of vandalism or sabotage. Aircraft users should be familiar with Chapter 10 of the BLM National Aviation Plan, which addresses aviation security.

## **XII. SPECIAL USE.**

A. General. "Special Use Activities" are aircraft missions requiring special considerations due to increased risk involved in that mission. This may require specific aircraft equipment, deviation from normal operating practices, special pilot skills and techniques, or personal protective equipment (PPE). Since Special Use Activities involve a higher level of risk, specialized training and detailed planning are required.

1. Special Use Activities must be approved by the District or Field Office Manager or the State Director.
2. A Project Aviation Safety Plan must be completed. (See Appendix B for a suggested outline of Project Aviation Safety Plan requirements.) One-time Special Use Activities may complete the one page "Hazard Analysis and Dispatch/Aviation Manager Checklist" form for this purpose. An example of this form is in the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide, page 3-24. Also, some Special Use Activities, such as aerial ignition, have established formats for Project Aviation Safety Plans (See the Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide).
3. Offices utilizing aircraft for fire suppression operations should maintain a Fire Aviation Safety Plan, which serves as the Project Aviation Safety Plan for fire suppression operations.
4. Special Use Activities have stringent flight following requirements, normally a 15 minute check-in via radio, or use of the Automated Flight Following system, if the aircraft is properly equipped.
5. Special Use Activities have PPE requirements specific to that particular mission.
6. Special Use Activities require that the pilot and aircraft are approved by AMD for that specific activity.
7. In general, BLM Volunteers shall not participate in Special Use Activities, since these missions normally entail increased risk.
8. Employees engaged in Special Use Activities must meet the training requirements outlined in 352 DM 1, and DOI-AM OPM No. 06-04.
9. Only air crew members and passengers essential to the mission may be on board Special Use Flights.

B. Examples of Special Use. A listing of Special Use Activities is contained in DOI-AM OPM No. 06-29. The following are examples of Special Use Activities that are typically conducted by New Mexico BLM:

1. Low level flights, which are defined as flights conducted within 500' of the surface.
2. Aerial application of water, retardant or other chemicals for wildland firefighting.
3. Air Tactical Group Supervisor, Helicopter Coordinator, or Airtanker Coordinator operations.
4. Aerial ignition activities for prescribed burning or wildland fire suppression. (See the Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide.)
5. Changes to the aircraft that invalidate the aircraft's standard airworthiness certificate. An example would be radio tracking of wildlife with an external antenna mounted on the aircraft.
6. Transport of external loads.
7. Takeoff or landing requiring special techniques due to hazardous terrain, obstacles, pinnacles, or surface conditions.
8. Mountain flying in helicopters.

### **XIII. AVIATION LIFE SUPPORT EQUIPMENT.**

A. BLM Employees. All BLM employees will wear the PPE required for the specific flight. (See 351 DM 1 Aviation Life Support Equipment Handbook.) This includes flights on BLM aircraft as well as aircraft owned or controlled by other agencies.

B. Non-BLM Employees. Non-BLM passengers flying on BLM aircraft will utilize all PPE required of BLM passengers on that flight.

### **XIV. UNIT AVIATION PLANS.**

Each District or Field Office is required to prepare a written Unit Aviation Plan. This Plan should be a concise document which guides field employees who will be involved in aviation activities. The Plan should be reviewed annually and updated as necessary. Contents should include as a minimum:

1. District or Field Office Aviation Organization, including names of individuals and authorities delegated to each.

2. Standard operating procedures for obtaining aircraft, processing payment documents, dispatching, and flight following.

3. Incident and accident reporting procedures.

## **APPENDIX A: EXAMPLE OF A PILOT/PASSENGER BRIEFING**

Prior to flight, the pilot-in-command shall ensure that all passengers have been briefed on:

A. Procedures.

1. Entry and exit.
2. Emergency actions.

B. Location and use of:

1. Seat belts and shoulder harnesses.
2. Emergency exits.
3. Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT).
4. Aviation Life Support Equipment (ALSE), including PPE.
5. Oxygen equipment, if applicable.
6. First aid kit.
7. Fire extinguishers.
8. Fuel shut-off.
9. Battery switch.
10. Smoking restrictions.

## **APPENDIX B: RECOMMENDED ELEMENTS OF A PROJECT AVIATION SAFETY PLAN**

Each Special Use Mission will have a Project Aviation Safety Plan completed. One-time, noncomplex Special Use Missions may utilize the “Hazard Analysis and Dispatch/Aviation Manager Checklist” Form for this purpose. A written Project Aviation Safety Plan will consist of the following:

1. Flight Manager. Identify a qualified Flight Manager to oversee the project.
2. Project Name and Objectives. Brief description of the project and its objectives.
3. Justification. Indicate why the project will require the use of aircraft in Special Use Flight conditions/environments and list any practical alternatives for completion of the project.
4. Project Dates. Dates project will begin and end. These may be approximate.
5. Location. Enter descriptive location and include a map clearly showing area where flights will be made; known aerial hazards must be clearly indicated (see 11. below).
6. Projected cost of Aviation Resources. Enter cost coding, projected flight hours and cost, projected miscellaneous expenses (overnight charges, service truck mileage, etc.), and total estimated cost of project.
7. Aircraft. Identify company that owns the aircraft to be used, registration number, aircraft type, and missions for which aircraft is approved.
8. Pilot. If known, identify pilot(s), and the missions they are qualified for.
9. Participants. List individuals involved in flights, their qualifications (Flight Manager, passenger, etc.), and include individuals' project responsibilities. Also, include names of any non-BLM passengers.
10. Flight Following and Emergency Search and Rescue. Dispatcher or Unit Aviation Manager identifies check-in procedures, including time/locations, dispatch office involved, individuals responsible for flight following, frequencies to be used, and any special circumstances (Memorandum of Agreements, Military Travel Routes, etc.). When local (on-site) flight following is approved, ground personnel must have contact with dispatch to allow timely reporting of any accidents, incidents, hazards, or problems encountered.
11. Aerial Hazard Analysis. The Flight Manager and the Unit Aviation Manager or Dispatcher will jointly develop a Known Aerial Hazard map. Flights made in confined areas, such as in canyons, require a prior ground and/or aerial survey of hazards. Other hazards to consider are listed on the “Hazard Analysis and Dispatch/Aviation Manager Checklist” form. A copy of the Known Aerial Hazard Map will be provided to the pilot prior to any project flights. Other

coordination which may be required includes establishing Temporary Flight Restrictions on wildfires and deconfliction of Special Use Airspace with military authorities.

12. Aviation Life Support Equipment/Personal Protective Equipment. Identify the equipment necessary for the particular operation.

13. Load Calculations and Weight-and-Balance. The pilot is responsible for the accurate completion of load calculations (helicopters) and weight-and-balance (all aircraft). Unit Aviation Managers shall ensure that aircrafts chosen are capable of performing the mission(s) safely. For helicopter flights, a load calculation showing expected conditions of altitude, temperature, and weight shall be included in the Plan. The Flight Manager will ensure that passenger manifests and load calculations are completed.