

Bureau of Land Management  
Pecos District

2009 Aviation Plan



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## I. Introduction

### A. Purpose

The Pecos District Aviation Plan has been developed to maintain a safe and consistent aviation management program serving the Pecos District. This plan is meant to be an operational document that has been developed with the needs and workloads specific to both Roswell and Carlsbad Field Offices. This plan builds on departmental aviation policy (D.M. 350-354) and tiers to the BLM-New Mexico State Aviation Plan.

### B. Objectives

The objective of this Aviation Plan is to provide guidelines and policies for the safe, efficient and economical use of aircraft in the performance of the BLM mission. This plan defines the responsibilities and authorities for aviation duties in the Pecos District. This plan defines local procedures and policy as they relate to aviation activities.

## II. Roles and Responsibilities

### A. District and Field Office Managers

The Pecos District Manager has the overall responsibility for the aviation program within the office. The Field Office Manager has the responsibility for the aviation program within their respective field office. This responsibility is generally delegated to an assistant, but that delegation does not absolve the Field Office Manager from providing oversight to aviation activities that do occur within the field office. The Field Office Manager will review and approve project aviation plans.

### B. New Mexico State Office Aviation Manager

The State Aviation Manager is responsible for reviewing and recommending approval to the appropriate Field Office Manager for all special use flights. This action will remain in effect until the Pecos District Aviation Officer has met all training requirements described in DOI Aviation Management Operational Procedures Memorandum (OPM) Number 06-04.

### C. Pecos District Fire Management Officer/Aviation Manager

The designation of Aviation Officer has been assigned to the Pecos District Fire Management Officer (FMO) for 2009. The FMO provides oversight, supervision and guidance for all aviation operations on the Pecos District

The FMO has functional responsibilities in the following areas:

1. Develops local aviation procedures based upon Departmental policy and Federal Aviation Regulations policies and guidelines.

2. Develops the Aviation Plan for the Pecos District. Reviews and updates annually or sooner if needed.
3. Coordinates aviation training and operations with interagency partners and cooperators.
4. Conducts periodic reviews and evaluations of the overall aviation program and for specific projects where aviation resources are used.
5. Enforces aviation regulations and safety policies.
7. Responsible for ensuring that all procedures are followed for all flights and projects requiring aviation resources.
8. Coordinates aviation activities between interagency partners, cooperators, and Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch.
9. Briefs the District and Field Office Managers on changes in policy, regulations and other aviation subjects as necessary.
10. Coordinates staffing, training and operations for the Roswell Air Tanker Base.
11. Serves as a technical advisor for BLM Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) operations at the Cavern City Air Terminal in Carlsbad and the Sierra Blanca Regional Airport in Ruidoso.
12. The Aviation Manager will maintain departmental issued Operational Procedure Memoranda (OPMs), Information Bulletins (IBs), Operational Guides (OGs) and the departmental manuals.
13. Seeks advice from and informs the State Aviation Manager on local aviation operations.
14. Reviews and approves project aviation plans.

#### D. Logistics Coordinator, Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch

The Logistic Coordinator for the Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch Office will serve as the aircraft coordinator for the Pecos District. The Logistics Coordinator will:

1. Order and schedule aircraft using an Aircraft Rental Agreement (ARA) from the Aviation Management source list for special use aircraft.
2. Process OAS-23's Aircraft Use Reports.

3. Reconcile OPAC reports with OAS-23's for final payments to vendors.
4. Reference the aircraft source list of all aircraft on ARA on the website [www.oas.gov](http://www.oas.gov) and prepare the Best Value Determination Record for all rental flights above \$2500.00.
5. Ensure that flight following is conducted on all mission specific flights. Ensure that all flights are documented and logs kept as per agency requirements.
6. Ensure that Automated Flight Following (AFF) procedures are followed on flights where AFF is installed and operational in the aircraft.
7. Maintains aviation hazard map.
8. Ensure that all personnel working in Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch are properly trained as aviation qualified dispatchers. Conduct on-the-job training or send personnel to formalized aviation dispatch training.
9. Ensures that the Aircraft Incident/Accident Response Guide for the Pecos District is complete and updated annually and posted in the Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch, the District Office and Carlsbad Field Office.
10. Initiates search and rescue procedures in the event of an overdue aircraft.
11. Is delegated the authority by the Unit Aviation Manager to stop any flight that is considered to be a threat to the safety of any personnel.

#### E. Project Supervisor/Leader

The project supervisor/leader will be responsible for planning, coordinating and safely implementing the use of aircraft on projects where aircraft use is required. This includes those employees who serve as contract inspectors on projects that utilize aviation resources. The Project Supervisor has the following responsibilities:

1. Is responsible for seeing that flight operations proceed safely, in accordance with the flight plan, and that on special use flights, the proper personal protective equipment is used by all personnel. The flight manager has the authority to cancel any flight based on safety concerns.
2. May serve as Aircraft Chief of Party (ACOP) on flights.
3. Fills out the project aviation safety plan (risk analysis or JHA) and submits to the Unit Aviation Manager within 10 days of the planned flight.
4. Provides necessary information on the **Aircraft Flight Request/Schedule** form, obtains signatures of authorizing officials, completes **Hazard Analysis and**

**Dispatch/Aviation Manager Checklist** for all special use flights, completes a passenger manifest and flight hazard map and forwards to Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch.

5. Provides for and ensures that personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn for all flights requiring it.
6. Plan and discuss the proposed flight routes with Dispatch, supervisor and unit aviation manager including stops and fuel needs.
7. Coordinates flight following between aircraft and Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch.
8. Check Pilot Qualification Card and Aircraft Data Card prior to initial use.
9. Ensures that pilot and passengers receive a proper briefing before the flight. Ensures that the pilot gives all passengers a pre-flight briefing. Ensures all safety equipment is available and serviceable.
10. Ensures that all logistical support for the flight is prepared and ready. This includes trained personnel (i.e. helitack qualified), supplies and equipment.
11. On conclusion of the flight, completes the Aircraft Use Report, OAS-23. Ensures that all signatures are obtained and that all forms are completely filled out. Sends with vendor or sends one copy to the National Business Center-Aviation Management (AM) for vendor payment.

### III. General Policy

Aviation related needs, request, procedural matters, training, safety and questions for the Pecos District should be routed through the Aviation Manager for review and action.

All special use flights will have a flight plan. For projects, a project aviation safety plan must be completed and approved. For point to point charter flights, an FAA flight plan will be filed with the nearest Flight Service Station.

All special use activities must be flight followed either by Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch or other approved means (i.e. AFF).

All personnel must be properly trained and qualified for the position that they are to serve in. The minimum qualification for most agency personnel on a special use flight is currency in the AM sponsored B-3 course, *Combination Helicopter/Airplane Safety*. Refresher training in aviation safety is required every 3 years. This training is now available on-line on the interagency aviation training web site ([www.iat.gov](http://www.iat.gov)). Helicopter qualifications are found in the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide (IHOG). See OPM No. 06-04 for more information on specific information for the

aviation users training program.

All flights with passengers will complete a passenger manifest. This copy of this manifest will be kept on the ground during all flights.

AM or Forest Service carded aircraft and pilots will be predominately used for flights. Exceptions to the normal carded aircraft may include military and State pilots/aircraft which may operate under drug/law enforcement MOU's. All vendor aircraft and pilots will be certified by the FAA under 14 CFR, Part 121, 125, 127, 133, 135 or 137 as appropriate.

Smoking is not permitted on any aircraft.

Employees are not permitted to fly on restricted use aircraft (i.e. cargo only) unless authorized by their employing agency.

All emergencies, aviation incidents, near misses or accidents will be immediately reported to the Aviation Manager and documented on OAS-34, *SafeCom*.

All passengers on a flight will cooperate with the pilot at all times and not interfere with his duties especially during take-offs and landings. All passengers should always be on the lookout for flight hazards and make them known to the pilot.

#### IV. Procurement of Vendor Aircraft.

##### A. Contracts

All aircraft use which is identified in the Annual Work Plan (AWP) which will accomplish a project within a specific time frame (i.e. aerial spraying) and which cost in excess of \$25,000 will require a formal contract through the National Business Center-Aviation Management, Procurement Office. A procurement action will need to be started as soon as possible in order that AM can secure qualified vendors for the project.

All project work that includes the significant and reoccurring use of aircraft will be identified in the Annual Work Plan. At least 120 days of lead time is required by AM contracting before the start of the project. This applies to contracts that are estimated to exceed \$25,000, and that are planned to utilize an exclusive use contract.

All contract work will adhere to the same standards and guidelines as outlined in the AM manuals and regulations.

##### B. Aircraft Rental Agreement

AM maintains a list of carded aircraft and pilots that can be rented for short periods of time for special use activities and point to point travel. The source list is found on the National Business Center Aviation Management home page [www.amd.nbc.gov](http://www.amd.nbc.gov).

Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch has this list available.

The Aviation Manager or Logistics Coordinator can assist in ordering any aircraft located on this list. If an employee wishes, they can fill out an Aircraft Flight Request/Schedule (9400-1) form and send it to Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch for processing. A 5 to 7 day lead time is preferred to order and schedule the aircraft and pilot.

V. Pilots and Aircraft Requirements

A. Pilots

AM and/or Forest Service approved and carded pilots will be used on BLM flights. Pilots must be qualified and carded to fly the specific mission or project requested. Cooperator pilots are issued letters of authorization and are not carded but can carry BLM passengers. Under some agreements (Drug/Law enforcement MOUs), the cooperating agencies are given a blanket authorization for all their pilots who meet BLM standards.

Military pilots cannot be used without prior approval from the AM (refer to IB 94-1). In certain circumstances Air National Guard pilots may be used for certain special use activities. Prior approval from AM is always required. Contact the State Aviation Manager for more information.

No Department of Interior (DOI) employees with a private pilot license will be authorized to fly any government mission as a pilot. All DOI missions require pilots to have, at a minimum, a commercial pilot certificate. See OPM No. 06-34 for more information on this regulation.

B. Aircraft

AM and/or Forest Service approved and carded aircraft will be used on BLM projects and missions.

Aircraft will have an AM or Forest Service Aircraft Data Card with the aircraft before it can be used on a BLM flight. This certificate must be checked prior to any use. Aircraft must be certified by the FAA, Federal Aviation Regulations, Part 135 or 137.

Military aircraft cannot be used without prior approval from the AM. Contact the Aviation Manager for more information on using military aircraft.

All aircraft must have the following equipment, as a minimum, on the aircraft:

- Fire extinguisher
- VHF-AM radio (victor)
- Seat belts: including shoulder harness type for front seat passengers
- Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT)
- First Aid Kit and survival gear

The location of this required equipment should be given to all passengers during the pilots safety briefing.

## VI. Operating Standards

### A. Point to point flights-non special use (direct from airport to airport)

All point to point aircraft flight requests will be made using the Aircraft Flight Request/Schedule form (9400-1).

All point to point flights will not be required to have in-flight, flight following. The procedure is for the pilot to file a FAA flight plan with the nearest Flight Service Station (FSS). Any deviation from the flight plan must be immediately reported to that FSS. On long distance flights requiring multiple stops within the Southwest Area, the pilot/chief of party will call the Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch Center Aviation Dispatcher at each stop to inform them of the flights status. In flights crossing geographical area boundaries, the pilot/chief of party will call the 24 hour phone (see National Mob Guide) at the National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC).

Upon terminating the flight the pilot will notify the FSS and terminate the flight plan. The pilot/chief of party for the flight will call Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch Center Aviation Dispatcher to verify that the aircraft has made its destination. Flights that require an overnight stop, the pilot/chief of party will notify Lincoln Zone Aviation Dispatcher that the flight has been terminated for the night.

All point to point aircraft flight requested will be done using the Aircraft Flight Request/Schedule form (9400-1).

### B. Special Use Activities

All fire related flights will require a fire resource order be done as the requesting form for the flight. Any other activities which are considered special use (game counts, movement of material, etc.) will require a written aviation plan. This aviation plan will need prior approval of the Unit Aviation Manager and the appropriate Field Office Manager.

Special use activities are the utilization of airplanes and helicopters in support of programs which are not point-to-point flight activities and which require special considerations due to their functional use. Aircraft and pilots shall be approved for each special use activity prior to use.

Employees engaged in special use activities must meet the training requirements outlined in the Aviation User Training Program (OPM No. 06-04).

Personal protective equipment may be required for special use activities. Policy and

detailed information are outlined in the Aviation Life Support Equipment (ALSE) Handbook.

All special use activities in the Pecos District will be flight followed by Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch or by other means as approved by the Aviation Manager.

### C. Flight Following

Flight following on special use flights is required and the procedure should be documented on Form 9400-1. Flight following on special use activities flights shall be required at a minimum of radio check-ins every 15 minutes. This check in is normally done with the Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch. However, there may be cases in which this check-in may be done with a helibase or other approved method in the field. Prior approval of the Aviation Manager is required for this alternative.

Information required at the check-in is:

Current location: latitude/longitude and a geographic location is desirable.

Aircraft heading (use magnetic compass on the aircraft)

Destination or what the aircraft is doing (i.e. circling, recon, etc.)

There may be areas in southeast New Mexico where there are dead spots of radio coverage. Prior to entering these areas, the pilot (or observer) will notify Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch that the aircraft will be entering into a radio dead spot. The pilot will give the current location, heading and altitude. The pilot should provide the dispatcher of his intentions while in the dead spot (i.e. will be circling, turning, etc.). The pilot should also give an approximately time that the aircraft will be out of radio contact. Once back in contact, the pilot will immediately notify the dispatcher that they are back into radio contact.

Aircraft working on fires may be exempt from flight following. Contact is usually maintained with an air attack supervisor who tracks the aircraft as they come and go. Periodically the air attack supervisor will notify the dispatcher of the status of various fire fighting aircraft on the incident.

All computers in the Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch will have access to the Automated Flight Following System. Each dispatcher will be able to access and use this system to flight follow aircraft. The use of the AFF system will not supersede normal check-in procedures.

### D. Helicopter Load Calculation

A load calculation will be done on all helicopter flights. Load calculations will be done at every fuel stop, when passengers are dropped off or loaded on the helicopter, or when density altitude exceeds that which was last computed.

See the Interagency Helicopter Operating Guide for more information on doing load calculations.

## VII Overdue Aircraft

Any aircraft which has not been accounted for within 30 minutes of the last scheduled check-in will be considered overdue. The following procedures will be initiated by the Aviation Dispatcher in Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch.

### A. Phase I

Any aircraft which has not been accounted for 15 minutes after the last scheduled check-in will be considered overdue. The following procedures will be initiated by the Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch:

1. Follow procedures in the Interagency Aviation Mishap Response Plan.
2. Conduct a telephone search of all known airports, potential destinations, and the vendors home office.
3. Notify the Aviation Manager (575.361.5960)
4. Continue to try and make radio and cell phone contact with overdue aircraft.
6. Contact originating air base.
7. Contact Roswell FAA Control Tower to determine if they can contact the aircraft.

### B. Phase II

Phase II begins when the aircraft has been overdue for 1 hour after the last scheduled check-in. The following procedures will be implemented by Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch:

1. Notify the New Mexico State Police of the overdue aircraft.
2. Notify the FAA Flight Service Station of the overdue aircraft.
3. Continue to try to contact the aircraft via radio or cell phone.
4. Contact the appropriate the Field Office Manager (Carlsbad 575.234.5981 or Roswell 575.0224) and the State Aviation Manager (505.438.7431).

5. Notify AM Aviation Safety Manager (1.888.464.7427)

For further information see the Interagency Aviation Mishap Response Plan for details, names and phone numbers. A copy of this plan is available in the Fire Management Office, the District Manager's office, and both Field Offices.

VIII Aircraft Mishap Notification and Reporting

All aircraft mishaps, mechanical problems, incidents, near misses and accidents will be reported to the proper personnel as soon after they occur as possible. These should be reported to the Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch who will in turn notify the Aviation Manager and start the necessary follow-up. The Aviation Manager will notify the proper authorities and will assist in the filing reports and the *SafeCom*. If an investigation is needed the Aviation Manager will work with the State Aviation Manager in requesting that.

IX Aircraft Use Reports- OAS-23's, FS-122's

The OAS-23 document is a three part form used for recording aircraft use and as a record for payment to the aircraft vendor. All flights activities are paid for out of the Finance Center in Denver, Colorado. Accurate and prompt completion of this form is important if the vendor is to be paid in a timely manner.

The form is used for both fixed wing and rotor wing aircraft use.

Training in filling out the OAS-23 is available through the Interagency Aviation Training website. All personnel who record aircraft time are required to complete this 2 hour course.

The white copy must be sent to AM, the yellow copy to Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch and the vendor retains the blue copy. The Logistic Coordinator will retain the yellow copy to reconcile the payment with the OPAC billing statement.

X Flight Hazards, Military Training Routes, Restricted Airspace

A. Procedures

The Pecos District has several Military Training Routes (MTRs) and Military Operating Areas (MOAs). Military aircraft **do not** have radio contact and **are not** under radar surveillance: **IT IS A SEE AND BE SEEN SITUATION**. The following procedures will be followed to help reduce the potential conflicts between military aircraft and BLM flights.

1. All aircraft operations must refer to current Aeronautical Sectional Charts for New Mexico prior to operating, to insure that operations will not be in restricted or high hazard areas. It will be the pilot's responsibility to check these charts

during pre-mission planning. The aircraft chief of party will not allow the mission to proceed if there appears to be an unmitigated airspace conflict on the intended route.

2. The Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch will keep an up-to-date flight hazard map showing communications towers, transmission lines and other flight hazards. This map also shows Military Operating Areas (MOAs), Military Training Routes (MTRs), restricted and closed airspace. Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch also has the latest copy of the AP-1B, Military Training Routes book and map. All these maps and books need to be consulted during the pre-mission planning stage of your flight. Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch will provide assistance to this phase of mission planning.

3. If your flight plan does take you into a MOA or MTR, contact Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch. The dispatcher will contact the military to determine if the route or area is “active” and at what elevations and legs of the route need to be avoided. This procedure is called “de-confliction”.

It is important to realize that in some instances, a MOA or MTR may be inactive, (according to the military), but in fact, still may have military aircraft training occurring. Be vigilant while flying in these areas.

4. Flight hazard maps will be printed from GIS and posted at the Roswell Air Tanker Base, the Carlsbad Seat Base, and at Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch.

5. Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs) will be requested through Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch. It is important to follow established procedures and policy on implementing and terminating any TFR on any incident. These can be found in the Interagency Airspace Coordination Guide.

6. Any sightings of low-flying jets must be reported to the Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch. They will notify other agency aircraft operating in the area. Reports should include approximate altitude above the terrain, location, direction of travel and type of aircraft.

## XI Aviation Training

Employees who regularly participate in special use activities are required to take the AM sponsored B-3 course. This course has a currency requirement of 3 years. This currency training is now offered on-line at the Interagency Aviation Training web site. Exceptions to the training requirement include employees that rarely utilize aviation resources and are supervised by an employee with the above mentioned training.

Employees who participate regularly in aviation activities will need to take additional training. These training modules are available during AM sponsored Aviation Conference & Education (ACE) sessions or are available on the training link on the

Internet.

The DOI's Aviation User's Training Program is a "non-fire" system, distinct from the National Wildland Coordinating Group's (NWCG) Wildland Fire Qualification System (PMS 310-1). Personnel serving in NWCG positions need only meet the qualification and currency requirements required in 310-1. In all other instances BLM personnel shall meet the training and currency requirements listed within OPM -04 and the Interagency Aviation Use and Management Qualifications Guide. Course equivalencies can also be found in the Interagency Aviation Use and Management Qualifications Guide.

All fire or NWCG sponsored training will be documented in the employees Red Card file and in the Incident Qualifications & Certification System (IQCS).

## XII Violation of Policy and/or Regulations

Violation of national, state or local aviation policy and procedures will not be tolerated. Management may take disciplinary action against any employee who willfully disregards or knowingly violates aviation policy.

Any employee ordering an aircraft outside of normal ordering procedures and not within the scope of their authority may be held financially liable for any cost incurred by the government for that aircraft.

An employee who flagrantly ignores safety policy and procedures may be reprimanded and barred from working in future aviation activities by the agency.