

Bureau of Land Management  
Pecos District  
2014 Aviation Plan



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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the Pecos District Aviation Plan is to detail the policy, organization, responsibilities, and procedures for the Pecos District aviation program. This plan is supplemental to and does not replace policy as described in Departmental Manual, Bureau Manual 9400, BLM National Aviation Plan, and BLM New Mexico State Aviation Plan. This Plan is required by Bureau Manual 9400.33F and the National Aviation Plan.

### **1.2 Objective**

The objective of the Pecos District Aviation Plan is to provide comprehensive guidelines and policies for the safe, efficient, and economical use of aviation resources.

### **1.3 Policy**

Pecos District aviation management and operations will be conducted within policies contained in the Federal Aviation Regulations, Departmental Manual Parts 350-354, Operational Procedures Memorandums (OPM) and Handbooks, and Bureau Manual 9400.

In addition, the current version of the following Handbooks, Plans, and Guides constitute policy as specified in Bureau Manual 9400.

### **1.4 Handbooks, Plans, and Guides**

The following is a list of documents containing guidance and regulations needed to conduct safe and efficient aviation operations. Pecos District maintains a library of these documents on USB flash drives at the Carlsbad and Roswell Field Offices and at the Roswell Air Tanker Base. Most of these documents are available on the Internet at either <http://amd.nbc.gov/library/index.htm> or <http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/Aviation.html>.

- Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations (Red Book)
- BLM Manual Handbook 1112-2 – Safety and Health for Field Operations
- BLM National Aviation Plan
- BLM New Mexico State Aviation Plan
- Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide
- Interagency Airspace Coordination Guide
- Interagency Air Tanker Base Operations Guide
- Interagency Helicopter Rappel Guide
- Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide
- Law Enforcement Short Haul Policy
- Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Operations Guide
- Southwest Area Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Operating Plan

- Aviation Life Support Equipment Handbook
- Interagency Aviation Transport of Hazardous Materials Handbook
- DOI Field Reference Guide for Aviation Users
- Interagency Aviation Training Guide – Education Qualification Currency
- Interagency Aerial Supervision Guide
- Interagency Smoke Jumper Pilots Operations Guide
- System Safety Aviation Guide
- Fixed Wing Standard Operations Procedures
- National and Southwest Mob Guides
- Aerial Capture, Eradication and Tagging of Animals Handbook
- Aviation Fuel Handling Handbook
- Military Use Handbook
- USFS/BLM Aviation Risk Management Workbook
- Current BLM Instruction Memoranda and Information Bulletins

## **2.0 AVIATION MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION**

### **2.1 Department of the Interior**

#### **2.1.1 Aviation Management Directorate (AMD)**

AMD is responsible for all Department of the Interior (DOI) functions related to aircraft services. Reference 350 DM 1 for a complete list of functions and responsibilities or <http://amd.nbc.gov/index.htm>.

#### **2.1.2 National Business Center: Boise Aviation Acquisition Branch**

The Boise Aviation Acquisition Branch is responsible for the centralized contracting for aircraft and related services for all Department of the Interior agencies and other federal and State agencies upon request. <http://amd.nbc.gov/apmd/index.htm>.

### **2.2 Bureau of Land Management**

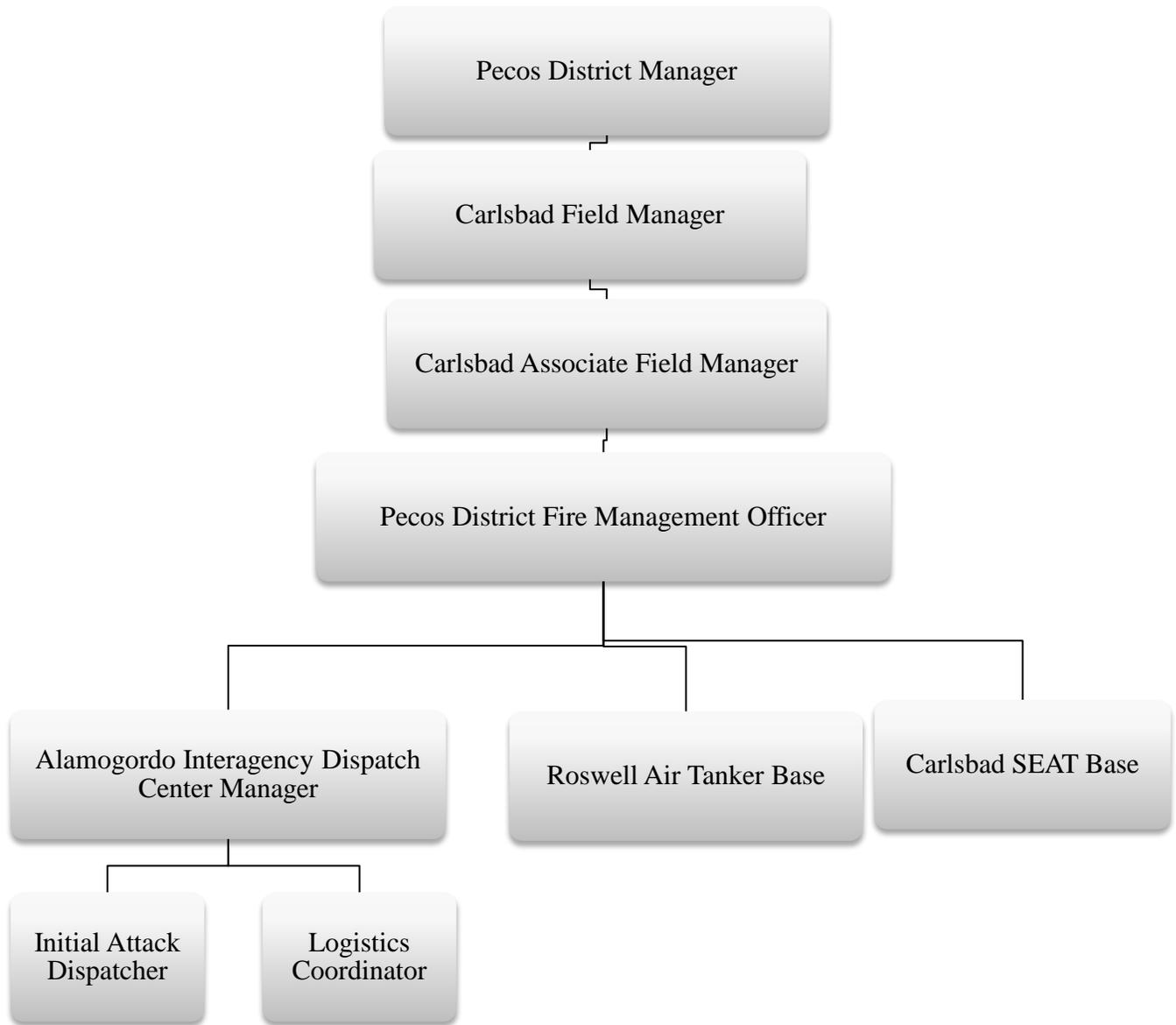
#### **2.2.1 New Mexico State Director**

The State Director is responsible for all aviation activities within the jurisdiction of BLM New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas.

#### **2.2.2 New Mexico State Office Aviation Manager (SAM)**

The SAM is responsible for providing aviation program management, oversight and support. The SAM will review all Pecos District Project Aviation Safety Plans (PASP) regardless of the Final Risk Rating. The SAM will review all Pecos District End Product contracts that could utilize aircraft.

**2.2.3 Pecos District Aviation Management Organization**



**2.2.4 Pecos District Manager (DM), Carlsbad and Roswell Field Office Managers (FOM)**

The aviation responsibilities for these positions are outlined in 350 DM 1 Appendix 3. The FOM will review and approve PASPs for projects utilizing aviation resources within their respective field office. These managers are responsible for enforcing mandatory DOI standards, ensuring adequate aviation management staff, ensuring personnel have appropriate aviation safety

training, and requesting technical assistance for specialized aviation problems.

The Pecos District Manager has delegated supervision of the Pecos District fire program, including the aviation program, to the Carlsbad Field Office Manager who delegated to the Carlsbad Associate Field Manager.

### **2.2.5 Pecos District Fire Management Officer (FMO)**

The FMO is responsible for developing aviation procedures based upon DOI policies and guidelines and developing the Pecos District Aviation Plan. The FMO is responsible for hosting, supporting, providing daily management, and dispatching all fire aircraft assigned to the Pecos District. The FMO is responsible for coordinating staffing, training, and operations for the Roswell Air Tanker Base. The FMO has been authorized to request additional fire aircraft, establish priorities, and allocate fire aircraft assigned to the Pecos District.

### **2.2.6 Pecos District Assistant Fire Management Officer (AFMO)**

The AFMO will assume the aviation responsibilities during the absence of the FMO.

### **2.2.7 Unit Aviation Manager (UAM)**

The UAM manages the Pecos District aviation program by providing technical and management direction of aviation resources. The designation of UAM has been assigned to the Pecos District FMO. The UAM will:

1. Ensure all aviation activities are in compliance with DOI, BLM, New Mexico State Office, and Pecos District policies and regulations.
2. Develop and implement the Pecos District Aviation Plan as well as specific plans for other aviation operations (i.e. helicopter operations, air tanker base, resource management).
3. Track and coordinate required aviation training for Pecos District personnel with the SAM.
4. Ensure that the Aircraft Incident/Accident Response Guide, Known Aerial Hazard Map, and AP1B charts are complete and updated by April 15 and posted in the Alamogordo Interagency Dispatch Center (NM-ADC), the Roswell Field Office, Carlsbad Field Office, Roswell Air Tanker Base, and Carlsbad SEAT Base.
5. Ensure that all off district personnel receive a briefing and orientation guide.
6. Confirm a qualified Flight Manager is assigned to all resource and project flights.
7. May perform as an Alternate COR on rental contracts.
8. Serve as a technical advisor for BLM Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) operations within the Pecos District.
9. Assess resource program needs, feasibility of aircraft use, and advising users of other options. The UAM 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.
10. Ensure that airspace coordination with military airspace schedulers is completed prior to

commencing project flights.

11. Ensure completion of PASPs and provides a copy to the SAM for review prior to implementation.
12. Responsible for reporting aircraft use reports under their operational control to the SAM.
13. Order approved aircraft utilizing agency procurement documents and processes.
14. Review Pecos District SAFECOM reports and facilitate corrective actions.
15. Conduct reviews and inspections of aviation facilities, aircrews, and field operations.
16. Coordinate land use agreements/leases of aviation operations facilities.
17. Coordinate with the SAM all use of cooperator aircraft.
18. Coordinate with the SAM any aircraft flight service contracting needs.
19. Coordinate with the SAM on all potential End Product contracts that utilize aircraft.
20. Submit the BLM Law Enforcement Aviation Statistics form to the SAM.

## **2.3 Pecos District Aviation Positions**

### **2.3.1 Logistics Coordinator, NM-ADC**

The Logistic Coordinator will serve as the aircraft coordinator for the Pecos District. The Logistics Coordinator will:

1. Confirm that any Special-Use flight has an attached PASP approved by the appropriate authority. Fire flights are exempt from the mission-by-mission approval requirement.
2. Ensure that flight following is conducted on all mission specific flights and all flights are documented and logs kept per agency requirements.
3. Ensure that personnel working in NM-ADC as aviation dispatchers are properly qualified and trained. Conduct on-the-job training or nominate personnel for formalized aviation dispatch training as needed.
4. Responsible for procuring rental aircraft (ARA/CWN) for Pecos District administrative, fire, and resource flights while ensuring that DOI/BLM/OMB requirements are met.
5. Maintain a current Aviation Mishap Response Guide and Checklist which is available at <http://amd.nbc.gov/safety/library/iamrp.html>. The plan will be tested at least annually through a simulation exercise.

### **2.3.2 Aircraft Dispatcher**

NM-ADC dispatchers trained in aviation mission operations, policies, and procedures will fulfill aircraft dispatching duties. Appendix 1 of OPM No. 09-04 identifies the training required for Aircraft Dispatchers.

Aircraft Dispatchers are responsible for:

1. Knowledge of aviation dispatch programs, primarily AFF, NOTAM, and ROSS.
2. Dispatching aircraft, providing flight following, and initiating emergency and Search and Rescue (SAR) procedures when necessary.

3. Following the procedures and guidelines established in the Southwest and National Mobilization Guides when flights are incident related.
4. Providing flight following and coordinating with other agencies when air operations cross jurisdictional boundaries.
5. Providing appropriate notification to assist in airspace coordination and deconfliction (FAA, Bordering Dispatches, and military).

### **2.3.3 Aircraft Manager**

Aircraft Managers within Pecos District include resource and fire helicopter managers (HEMG), Roswell Air Tanker Base Manager (ATBM), Single Engine Air Tanker Managers (SEMG), and Air Tactical Group Supervisors (ATGS). Each manager will comply with the appropriate Interagency Operations Guide. Aircraft Managers will consult with UAM or SAM when in doubt over any aviation issue.

### **2.3.4 Flight Manager (FM)**

A FM will be designated for point-to-point flights transporting personnel. The FM is responsible for coordinating, managing, and supervising flight operations. The FM is not required to be on board for most flights. Training requirements are found in DOI-AM OPM No. 09-04. This position was previously referred to as the Aircraft Chief of Party.

## **2.4 Passengers**

Only essential and official passengers are authorized on DOI owned or procured aircraft. Official passengers include:

1. Employees of the Federal Government traveling on official business.
2. Members of Congress and employees of Congressional Committee staffs whose work relates to DOI programs.
3. Non-federal personnel engaged in missions which enhance accomplishment of a departmental program.

Passengers are responsible for ensuring aviation activities are conducted in a safe manner, according to policy, and within the scope of their employment. Every passenger will take steps to halt any aviation operations that are unsafe. Every passenger observing an unsafe aviation activity is required to report it. All passengers have the option of not participating as an aircraft passenger if they feel the flight would be unsafe.

Some private life insurance policies are invalid when the insured is a passenger on a non-airline flight. A passenger is not required to fly on Government aircraft if this applies to their life insurance policy.

Volunteers, when traveling on official business, are official passengers, within the terms of 350

DM 1.8A. Volunteers are not permitted to serve as an air crewmember. Volunteers performing Special Use Missions must be pre-approved by the appropriate line manager.

## **2.5 Pilot**

The Pilot is in command of the aircraft and has ultimate responsibility under FAA and DOI regulations and requirements specified in the contract for the safety of the aircraft and passengers. The pilot may terminate a flight at any time for safety reasons. The pilot will not deviate from the flight plan or mission profiles unless agency authorization is received or as directed by air traffic control.

No DOI employees with a private pilot license will be authorized to fly any government mission as a pilot. All DOI missions require pilots to be approved by AMD. See OPM No. 06-34 for more information on this regulation.

All vendor pilots shall conform to the procurement document requirements they are operating under.

## **3.0 ADMINISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **3.1 General**

Except for ticketed commercial airline flights, all aircraft acquisition and procurement will be accomplished by the UAM and Logistics Coordinator. Flights on scheduled commercial airlines will be initiated through the appropriate field office administrative staff or travel agency (e.g. Concur).

### **3.2 Documentation Requirements**

General administration policy is found in 350 DM 1.

Documentation requirements for aviation activities shall follow requirements in BLM Manual 1220 Records and Information Management Appendix 2, Combined Records Schedules, Schedule 10/8 and 9.

Documents will be retained for at least three years. The UAM is responsible for maintaining and updating all aviation related references, files and records.

### **3.3 Aircrew Orientation Briefing Package**

The UAM will create an Aircrew Orientation Briefing Package and will ensure visiting pilots, aircrews and Incident Management Teams are provided with a briefing and package.

### 3.4 Land Use Policy for Aviation Activities

The UAM will coordinate with the appropriate resource staff to identify areas of restriction when developing operating plans, updating the Pecos District aviation plan, and preparing a PASP.

### 3.5 Aircraft Requirements

Pecos District will only utilize aircraft approved by AMD. AMD accepts Forest Service approved and carded aircraft. BLM is unable to pay for use of aircraft that are only carded through the Forest Service. Military aircraft cannot be used without prior approval from AMD.

Cooperator aircraft will generally have a letter of authorization or another form of documentation of approval for BLM to use the 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 (survival gear is not required for point-to point flights)

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

Employees are not permitted to fly on restricted use aircraft.

### 3.6 Aircraft Contracts

No Pecos District employee under any circumstances may schedule or procure aviation services. This is facilitated by the UAM and coordinated through the SAM.

#### 3.6.1 Order Requesting, Recording, and Invoicing of Contract Flight Use

Refer to the *Protocol and Guidance for Order Requesting, Recording, and Invoicing of Department of the Interior Contract Flight Use: Fiscal Year 2012* for processes for fire suppression, other emergency and project aviation flight requirement needs, broken down by contract types.

#### 3.6.4 Contractor Evaluations

The AMD-136 form is to be used for documenting contractor performance. There are form variations that are specific to the contract being utilized. These forms are located at: <http://amd.nbc.gov/library/forms.htm>.

### **3.7 Service and End Product Contracts**

The Pecos District utilizes Service and End Product contracts for herbicide applications and to conduct wildlife species counts. These contracts are not aircraft flight service procurements administered by the AMD. These contracts will be conducted in accordance with OPM-35. OPM-35 aids in determining whether an operation is being conducted as either “end-product” or “flight service” and supplements existing DOI policy regarding End Product contracts found in 353 DM 1.2A (3). If the provisions of 353 DM 1.2A (3) and OPM-35 are met, the aircraft will be operating as a civil aircraft and the aviation management principles normally required for public aircraft under BLM operational control do not apply. The FOM and SAM should be consulted whenever a Service and End Product contract is being written that will involve the use of aircraft.

#### **3.7.1 End Product Project Management**

During the performance of Service and End Product contracts, Pecos District personnel will not exercise operational control of the aircraft in any way. There is absolutely no flexibility due to the potential implications and liability associated with intentionally or inadvertently imposing operational control when it is inappropriate. Pecos District personnel will not direct the contractor as to flight profiles, flight following, landing areas (except for areas restricted by resource management plans), fueling/loading procedures, use of personal protective equipment, etc. Pecos District personnel assigned to administer Service and End Product contracts will have no aviation management responsibility or authority. Any directions to the contractor must be in terms of the service or end-result being specified (e.g. desired herbicide application coverage).

Pecos District personnel are not allowed to board any aircraft that is being provided by the contractor during performance of the service contract. Furthermore, Pecos District personnel must not become involved in any way with aircraft ground operations such as take-off and landing areas, loading, fueling, maintenance, etc.

Pecos District will not submit an AMD 23 in conjunction with a service contract. Any flight time incurred by the contractor will not be recorded or reported as aviation statistics.

Since aircraft utilized by the contractor under service contracts are operating entirely within the applicable 14 CFR as a civil aircraft, the Pecos District will not report aviation incidents or accidents incurred by these contractors through the Safecom system. These events will be noted in the Contract Daily Diary and reported through BLM channels as normally required for service contracts.

It is the responsibility of the contractor to coordinate with the Military Airspace Scheduling Office.

### **3.8 Severity Fire Aircraft**

Severity funding covers the following costs: aircraft mobilization, daily availability, per diem, proficiency/mission currency, rental vehicle, relief crew transportation, and additional aviation management personnel base pay (non - BLM Fire employee), travel and per diem.

### **3.9 Cooperator Aircraft**

Use of Cooperator aircraft and pilots, affiliate, state/local government, military, or other federal agency aircraft by BLM employees may require prior inspection and approval by AMD, usually in the form of a Letter of Authorization. Proposed use of these aircraft must be requested through the SAM.

Any Pecos District employee who is asked to accompany personnel from another agency on other agency's aircraft must consult the UAM to ensure approvals are in place.

#### **3.9.1 Search and Rescue (SAR) Flights**

The request for BLM aircraft to respond to a BLM or cooperator mishap is coordinated through the UAM and the District Manager. Documentation of the request can be made on a 9400-1a Form or in WildCad or equivalent dispatch program.

#### **3.9.2 United States Military and National Guard**

Military 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. Use of military or National Guard aircraft and pilots outside the scope of existing DOI MOUs will be coordinated through the SAM and approved by the State Director. 14 days will be needed to obtain Departmental approval.

#### **3.9.3 New Mexico State Forestry Division (NMSFD)**

The NMSFD has entered into an agreement with AMD which allows the State to utilize AMD on-call contracts and ARAs. Aircraft procured by NMSFD through AMD can be utilized by BLM.

#### **3.9.4 Other Agency and Non-Carded Pilots**

The use of other agency aircraft and pilots or privately operated aircraft will be coordinated through the SAM. A 14 day lead time will be needed to check pilot and aircraft qualifications and to obtain AMD approval.

The BLM can no longer use Civil Air Patrol aircraft or pilots to conduct BLM missions.

### 3.9.5 Life Threatening Emergency Flight Requests

Requests for aircraft to meet life threatening emergency needs should be filled with the closest available aircraft with the appropriate capability for the mission. The normal protocols associated with ordering/hiring of aircraft can be addressed as time allows after the initial response. The response to a life threatening emergency must be coordinated with the UAM and appropriate Line Officer.

Pecos District employees who are involved in an event in which there clearly exists an imminent threat to human life, and there is insufficient time to utilize approved methods, may deviate from policy to the extent necessary to preserve life. The following provisions and follow-up actions apply:

- Personnel involved are expected to use good judgment.
- Personnel involved in the decision making associated with deviating from policy must weigh the risks verses benefit.
- Any deviations shall be documented on a SAFECOM.

### 3.10 Aircraft Use Payment Systems

The home unit billing codes for the Pecos District are:

Roswell Field Office: 6760

Carlsbad Field Office: 61R0

### 3.11 Cost Strings

All Pay Item codes including AV (AV, FT, SM, PD, EP, ET, SC, etc) will be charged to the appropriate office and benefiting activity. Severity codes should not be utilized for any charges that can be legitimately charged to a suppression code. Suppression and severity formats are listed below:

Fire suppression: **LLNMP02310.LF200000.HU0000.LFSPzzzz0000**; where **zzzz** is the “Fire Number”.

Severity aircraft: **LLNMP02310.LF210000.HT0000.LFSRyyyy0000**; where **yyyy** is the severity charge code.

### 3.12 Aviation Program Review

Aviation operations and facilities are reviewed as part of the Fire Preparedness review of Pecos District Fire operations. Reviews are conducted every three years by a national level review team. District or state level fire readiness reviews are conducted annually.

## **4.0 AVIATION SAFETY**

Each BLM employee and contractor involved with aviation has the responsibility to plan missions thoroughly, conduct missions with a conservative attitude, and respect the aircraft and environment in which the missions operate.

All aviation safety standards and requirements identified in the Federal Aviation Regulations, DM 350-354, AMD OPMs, Bureau Manual 9400, and National and State Office Aviation Operational Plans will be followed. The appropriate handbooks, guides, preferred technical and operational procedures should be reviewed and utilized prior to a specific aviation operation or project.

### **4.1 Aviation Life Support Equipment (ALSE)**

All personnel engaged in aviation activities must wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), depending on the mission. Project leaders must ensure that appropriate and adequate ALSE is available and worn by individuals. If required ALSE is not available, all flights will be canceled or postponed.

### **4.2 Project Aviation Safety Planning (PASP)**

A written PASP shall be completed and approved for every non-fire mission flight or aviation project. The PASP shall be reviewed by the UAM and the SAM. The appropriate FOM will be briefed by the UAM prior to their approval of the plan.

Projects that occur periodically over a season or fiscal year can have one PASP prepared and approved. In this situation a 9400-1a form will be required for each periodic flight.

### **4.3 Aviation Safety Communiqué - SAFECOM**

The SAFECOM system is used to report any condition, observance, act, maintenance problem or circumstance which has the potential to cause an aviation-related mishap. All personnel involved in aviation activities are encouraged to submit SAFECOMs, when they feel it is warranted. This form is located on the SAFECOM web page: <https://www.safecom.gov/entry.asp>. Personnel in doubt about completing a SAFECOM should contact the UAM.

## **5.0 AVIATION OPERATIONS**

The National Aviation Plan requires local units ensure that support functions (i.e. airtanker bases and local dispatch centers) necessary for the mobilization of national assets (i.e. large airtankers, lead planes, SEATs) are staffed to support local dispatch as well as GACC to GACC and national mobilization.

## 5.1 Flight Planning

A written PASP shall be completed and approved for every non-fire special use flight or aviation project except point to point flights.

### 5.1.2 Point-to-Point

Point to point flights will not be required to have in-flight, flight following. The pilot will file a flight plan through internet based systems, such as DUATS, or via the 1-800-WX-BRIEF. On long distance flights requiring multiple stops within the Southwest Area, the pilot will call the NM-ADC at each stop to inform them of the flights status. In flights crossing geographical area boundaries, the pilot will call the 24 hour phone (see National Mob Guide) at the NICC.

Upon terminating the flight the pilot will close the flight plan. The pilot will call NM-ADC to verify that the aircraft has made its destination. Flights that require an overnight stop, the pilot will notify NM-ADC that the flight has been terminated for the night.

A qualified flight manager will be assigned to perform the administrative functions and assure a briefing is given to the pilot and a pre-flight safety briefing is given to the passengers. A 9400-1a Form will be utilized to provide dispatch with the appropriate aircraft and pilot information, a passenger manifest, and an estimated time of departure and arrival.

### 5.1.3 Special Use Activities (SUA)

SUAs 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 PPE. SUAs must be approved by the FOM. SUAs require that the pilot and aircraft are approved by AMD for that specific activity. Employees engaged in Special Use Activities must meet the training requirements outlined in 352 DM 1 and DOI-AM OPM No. 06-04.

BLM volunteers will not participate in SUAs, since these missions are considered hazardous duty.

A list of SUAs is contained in DOI-AM OPM No. 06-29. The following are examples of SUAs that are typically conducted by Pecos District:

- Low level flights which are defined as flights conducted within 500 feet of the surface.
- Water or retardant application for wildland firefighting.
- Aerial ignition activities for prescribed burning or wildland fire suppression.
- Changes to the aircraft that invalidate the aircraft's standard airworthiness certificate. An example would be an external antenna mounted on the aircraft to track wildlife.
- Transport of external loads.

## 5.2 Flight Following

AFF is the preferred method of agency flight following. All computers in the NM-ADC have access to the Automated Flight Following System. Each dispatcher will be able to access and use this system to flight follow aircraft.

Flight following on special use flights is required and the procedure should be documented in the PASP. 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 NM-ADC; however, there may be cases in which this check-in may be done with a helibase or other approved method in the field.

Information required at the check-in is:

- Current location: latitude and longitude and a geographic location are desirable.
- Aircraft heading (use magnetic compass on the aircraft)
- Destination or what the aircraft is doing (i.e. circling, recon, etc.)

There are areas within the Pecos District with limited or no radio coverage. Prior to entering these areas, the pilot will notify NM-ADC 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 their intentions while in the dead spot. The pilot should also give an approximate time that the aircraft will be out of radio contact. The pilot will notify the dispatcher when they are back into radio contact.

Aircraft working on fires may use alternate methods for flight following. Contact is usually maintained with an air attack supervisor who will periodically notify NM-ADC of the status of aircraft on the incident.

### 5.2.1 Local Flight Following

Local flight following by incident or project personnel may be implemented and utilized only when certain requirements are met and in place:

- Local flight follow procedures pre-identified and approved in the PASP for project operations and in conjunction with NM-ADC for tactical operations.
- Flight following procedures and responsibilities have been addressed in pre-flight briefings.
- Methods of flight following are in place and tested, including mandatory communication between designated flight following personnel and NM-ADC before flight operations begin. Positive communication NM-ADC must be maintained continuously during the operational period.
- A positive, clean “hand-off” must occur between NM-ADC and the project site when local flight following begins and ends.

- Backup/alternate communication devices are in place, available and tested.
- A reporting interval not to exceed fifteen minutes (or continuous visual contact) is maintained, and the location/status documented on a field radio log.
- Emergency accident and lost communication procedures must be understood by project flight following personnel, the pilot, flight manager, and NM-ADC.

### **5.3 Overdue, Missing, or Downed Aircraft**

An aircraft is considered “overdue” when it fails to arrive within 30 minutes past the estimated time of arrival and cannot be located. An aircraft is considered “missing” when its fuel duration has been exceeded, it has been reported as “overdue” to the FAA and the FAA has completed an administrative search for the aircraft without success. If an aircraft is overdue, missing, or downed, initiate the Interagency Aviation Mishap Response Guide and Checklist. It is critical that the response plan is implemented, followed and documented throughout the duration of the event. The procedures will be initiated by NM-ADC.

### **5.4 Aircraft Mishap Notification and Reporting**

Timely upward reporting of any confirmed or potential accident or Incident With Potential is critical. If there is any doubt on how any occurrence might be classified contact the SAM for clarification.

### **5.5 Fire Chemicals**

A products list is published for each wildland fire chemical type and maintained on the Wildland Fire Chemical Systems (WFCS) web site: <http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/fire/wfcs/index.htm>

Personnel involved in handling, mixing and applying fire chemicals or solutions shall be trained in proper safe handling procedures and use the personal protective equipment recommended on the product label and material safety data sheet (MSDS). The MSDS for each approved fire chemical can be found on the WFCS web site.

The Roswell Airtanker Base will have appropriate spill containment measures in place.

For operational guidelines on use of fire chemicals and the Policy for Delivery of Wildland Fire Chemicals near Waterways, reference the *Interagency Standards for Fire and Fire Aviation Operations*, Chapter 12.

### **5.6 Roswell Airtanker Base**

The Roswell Air Tanker Base Manager will supervise ground operations in accordance with the Interagency Air Tanker Base Operations Guide.

The BLM airtanker base manager and BLM fixed wing base manager certification process is

attached.

A supplement to Interagency Airtanker Base Operations Guide will be prepared and updated as needed by the UAM and ATBM for operations at the Roswell Air Tanker Base.

### **5.7 Single Engine Air Tanker Operations**

SEAT operations will be conducted in compliance with the Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Operations Guide. The Carlsbad SEAT Base Manager will supervise ground operations in accordance with the Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Operations Guide. The Roswell Air Tanker Base Manager, if qualified, may supervise SEAT operations in Carlsbad until a SEMG arrives at the Carlsbad SEAT base.

### **5.8 Aerial Ignition Operations**

Aerial ignition operations and projects are accomplished in accordance with the Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide (PMS 501).

### **5.9 Law Enforcement Operations**

LE personnel involved in any aviation operation will adhere to DOI and bureau aviation policy. LE personnel involved with aviation activities will receive and be current in required aviation training commensurate with the aviation position they will fill, prior to any aviation operations. Local LE personnel that are required to utilize aircraft will coordinate with the UAM or SAM, well in advance of operations. The SAM will be briefed on all BLM law enforcement involvement in short haul missions occurring within the Pecos District. FOMs will be informed of LE aviation activities within their area of responsibility.

Aircraft contracted for fire/resource operations are not mandated to participate in potentially hazardous or threatening LE operations. Missions outside of the scope of the contract require a contract modification.

## **6.0 AVIATION TRAINING**

### **6.1 Aviation Training for Non-Fire Flight Activities and Positions**

DOI-AM OPM No. 09-04 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, 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 for supervisory personnel must include aviation safety, aviation policy, risk

management, and supervisory responsibilities. Supervisors are required to take B-3 Basic Aviation Safety at least once. Supervisors can take this course either online or in the classroom. Supervisors must attend the Aviation Management for Supervisors course (M3). BLM supervisors can take the initial course either in a classroom or online. Refresher training for M3 is required once every three years. Supervisors should reference OPM-4 and the Interagency Aviation Training Guide for further information on required training.

Exceptions to the training requirements include employees that rarely utilize aviation resources and are supervised by an employee with the above mentioned training.

## 6.2 Aviation Training for Line Managers

The DM and FOMs must be familiar with the DOI aviation management program, policies and related requirements and responsibilities. Line managers must attend the Aviation Management Training for Supervisors (M-2) training course or attend a DOI aviation management line managers briefing course once every three years. M-3 Aviation Management Training for Supervisors may be substituted for M-2.

## 6.3 Aviation Training for Fire Flight Activities

Personnel serving in NWCG aviation positions need only meet the qualification and currency requirements required in PMS 310-1, *Wildland and Prescribed Fire Qualifications System Guide*. All fire or NWCG sponsored training will be documented in the employees Red Card file and in the Incident Qualifications and Certification System (IQCS).

## 7.0 AIRSPACE COORDINATION

### 7.1 Flight Hazards, Military Training Routes, Restricted Airspace

#### 7.1.1 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.

All aircraft operations must refer to current Aeronautical Sectional Charts to ensure that operations will not be in restricted or high hazard areas. It will be the pilot's responsibility to check these charts during the pre-mission planning. The Flight Manager will not allow the mission to proceed if there appears to be an unmitigated airspace conflict on the intended route.

NM-ADC will maintain an up-to-date flight hazard map showing meteorological ("met") towers, communications towers, transmission lines, and other flight hazards. This map also shows

MOAs, MTRs, and restricted and closed airspace. NM-ADC maintains the most recent copy of the AP-1B, Military Training Routes book and map.

If the flight plan involves a MOA or MTR, contact NM-ADC. 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 referred to as a “deconfliction”.

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

Flight hazard maps will be printed and posted at the Roswell Air Tanker Base, the Carlsbad Seat Base, and at NM-ADC.

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

Any sightings of low-flying aircraft must be reported to the NM-ADC. 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.

**7.1.2 Environmental factors**

Daylight: Single engine aircraft flights with government personnel on board shall not be conducted into instrument meteorological conditions or night conditions. Night is defined as the time between the end of the evening civil twilight and the beginning of morning civil twilight.

Weather and Visibility: The pilot must evaluate known and predicted weather conditions prior to flight, avoid thunderstorms and cancel, postpone, or terminate flights when weather or visibility conditions warrant it.

Windspeeds: Helicopter operations will cease whenever wind exceeds limitations in the aircraft operators flight manual. If no limitations are prescribed in the Flight Manual, the following limitations will apply:

Mission type	Helicopter type	Wind speed	Max gust spread
Low level (below 500' AGL)	III	30 knots	15 knots
	I and II	40 knots	15 knots
High level (above 500' AGL)	All	50 knots	

**7.1.3 Meteorological Evaluation Towers (METs)**

METs are located throughout the Pecos District. Known METs are noted on local hazards map;

however, METs on state and private land may not be on the map. The NTSB issued a Safety Alert (SA-016) addressing the hazards associated with METs: [www.nts.gov/alerts/alerts.htm](http://www.nts.gov/alerts/alerts.htm).

## **8.0 AVIATION SECURITY – FACILITIES/AIRCRAFT**

### **8.1 Aircraft Security**

Aircraft users and aviation managers should be proactive in protecting aircraft. Aircraft users should be familiar with Chapter 8 of the BLM National Aviation Plan.

### **8.2 BLM Security Risk Assessments - Facilities**

Security risk assessments will be performed on all Pecos District aviation airport facilities using the DOI Field Security Guidelines for General Aviation. This document is available at the following

link: <http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/nifc/aviation/security.Par.2221.File.dat/AAF.pdf>.

Facility risk assessments are to be submitted to the SAM annually.

### **8.3 Safety**

Aviation facilities must comply with safety regulations described in DOI manuals, guides and handbooks, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Buildings, equipment, and aircraft operating surfaces will be inspected annually for safety and maintenance deficiencies by the UAM and unit safety officers.

## **9.0 VIOLATION OF POLICY 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.