

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
FARMINGTON DISTRICT  
AVIATION PLAN 2010**

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## I. Introduction

### A. Purpose

The Aviation Plan has been developed to maintain a safe and consistent aviation management program serving the Farmington District. This plan is meant to be an operational plan that is developed with the needs and work load specific to the area. This plan builds on departmental aviation policy (D.M. 350-354) and elaborates on **the BLM National Aviation Plan** and the BLM-New Mexico State Aviation Plan.

## II. Roles and Responsibilities

### A. Field Office Managers

The Field Office Managers have the overall responsibility for the aviation programs within their areas. This responsibility is exercised through the Assistant Field Office Manager for the Support Services in the Farmington District.

### B. Assistant Field Office Manager for Support Services

The Assistant Field Office Manager for Support Services is responsible for providing program guidance, contract/rental aircraft, and administration and aviation safety. These duties have been delegated to the District Fire Management Officer.

### C. Fire Management Officer

The Fire Management Officer (FMO) serves as the Unit Aviation Manager for the Farmington District. The District FMO has functional responsibilities in the following areas:

1. Developing aviation procedures based upon DOI policies and guidelines.
2. Developing the Aviation Plan for the Farmington District. Reviews and updates annually.
3. Coordinating aviation safety and operational training.
4. Conducting periodic evaluations of the overall program and for specific projects where aviation resources are used.
5. Responsibility for enforcing aviation regulations and policies

6. Responsibility for assigning qualified individuals as Flight Manager for each aircraft flight and/or aviation project.
7. Responsibility for insuring that all procedures are followed for all flights and projects requiring aviation resources.
8. Schedule all aircraft ordering either by the Aircraft Rental Agreements or through dispatch.
9. Process **AMD-23s**, Aircraft Use Reports.
10. Reconcile OPAC detail of monthly changes printout.
11. Coordinate flight following where government employees are passengers. Will maintain logs and records for all flights.

#### D. Flight Manager

The Flight Manager is responsible for coordinating aircraft use with the Unit Aviation Manager. The Flight Manager has the following responsibility:

1. **Initiates the aircraft request** using the Aircraft Flight Request form
2. Provides personal protective equipment (PPE) for flights requiring it.
3. Ensures that flight following is arranged with the Unit Aviation Manager and those procedures are followed.
4. Completes the Aircraft Use Report, AMD-23, at the termination of the flight. The Flight Manager will sign as the responsible government official and ensure that copies are sent to their designated destination.
5. Check **Pilot Qualification Cards and Aircraft Data Cards** prior to any usage.
6. Ensure the pilot is briefed on the objectives on each flight.
7. Ensures that the pilot briefs all on emergency procedures prior to each flight.
8. Is responsible for the flight proceeding safely and has the authority to cancel any flight based on safety concerns.

### **III. General Policy**

- A. Aviation related needs, requests, procedural matters and safety for the Field Office should be routed through the Unit Aviation Manager (FMO) for review and action.
- B. The Unit Aviation Manager will ensure that flight following is done either through Taos Dispatch or make arrangements for another office to do the **flight** following.
- C. The Aircraft Flight Request form must be completed for all flights in the Farmington District except employee use of scheduled commercial airlines.
- D. All BLM employees utilizing aircraft for job related duties must receive safety and operational training consistent with their level of responsibility. It is suggested that BLM employees in the fire organization who fly on aircraft, other than commercial airlines, should take the Interagency B-3 training course every 3 years to maintain currency. **All employees working with helicopters shall meet interagency helicopter qualifications for the position in which they are serving.**

### **IV. Administration**

#### A. Aircraft Flight Request

- 1. Aircraft Flight Request form will be filled out prior to each aircraft flight in the Farmington District. These forms must be submitted to the Unit Aviation Manager in a minimum of 5 days prior to the flight, unless the flight is of an emergency nature. The Unit Aviation Manager will forward this request to the Dispatch center. Documentation of the flight will be kept on file in the Taos Field Office.
- 2. The Aircraft Flight Request form will be **filled out by the requester**. The requester will provide management code information on the form.
- 3. The requester should be specific as to the type of aircraft (fixed wing, rotor wing, etc.) needed, names and weights for all passengers and the mission objective of the flight. Incomplete forms will be returned to the requestor for completion
- 4. A “Best Value Determination Record” will be completed for each rental aircraft order that is estimated to exceed \$2,500.00. This form is available on the [www.nbc.gov/amd](http://www.nbc.gov/amd) web site, and we are required to keep it on file for three years.

#### B. Procurement

All aircraft use which will cost in excess of \$25,000 will require a formal contract through the DOI Aviation Management Directorate (DOI-AM).

1. Contracting

All projects that include the significant use of aircraft will be identified in the Annual Work Plan. The Unit Aviation Manager will coordinate all contract requests from the Farmington District. Allow at least 120 days of lead-time for all aircraft contracts.

- C. Aircraft Use Reports-AMD-23

1. Procedures

The AMD-23 document is a three-part form used for recording aircraft use and as a record for payment for the aircraft vendor. The form is used for both fixed wing and rotor wing aircraft. Since this form is a payment document, the Prompt Payment Act applies. Speedy processing of this form is important in order for the vendor to be paid on time. In many instances, the vendor may request to send in the AMD copy (white Copy) of the form for payment themselves. This is acceptable as long as the form is complete and signatures are obtained. It is the responsibility of the Flight Manager to make sure that the form is complete and accurate. Forward the Yellow Copy to the FMO and the vendor retains the Blue Copy for their records. Remember, the White Copy is the copy in which the vendor is paid. Make sure it gets to the DOI-AM in a timely manner.

2. Payment

Payment for services rendered is made directly to the vendor by information from the AMD-23, White Copy. It is the responsibility of the Flight Manager to make sure that services paid for were services provided. Any question or problems with payment should be referred to the Unit Aviation Manager.

3. District Files

The AMD-23 Yellow Copy should be submitted to the Unit Aviation Manager within 5 working days of the flight. The Taos Field Office will retain this form for payment verification for all flights within the Farmington District.

## V. Pilot and Aircraft Requirements

### A. Pilots

1. Only DOI-AM and or Forest Service approved and carded pilots will be used on all BLM projects. Pilots must be qualified and approved to fly the mission or project requested. Not all DOI-AM approved pilots are approved to fly all special use missions. The backside of the Pilot Qualification Card will state the type of aircraft and special use mission(s) that the pilot is approved for.
2. Military pilots cannot be used without an approval from DOI-AM. In certain circumstances NM National Guard pilots may be used for law enforcement missions (drug eradication) and firefighting. Contact the Aviation Manager on the use of the NM National Guard.
3. No BLM employee with a private pilot's license will be authorized to fly government missions as a pilot.

### B. Aircraft

1. Only DOI-AM and or Forest Service approved and carded aircraft will be used on BLM projects.
2. All aircraft shall have a DOI-AM or Forest Service Aircraft Data Card or other approval before they can be utilized on government flights.
3. Military aircraft cannot be used without an approved agreement by the DOI-AM. Certain exceptions do apply. Contact the Unit Aviation Manager on the use of the NM National Guard.

## VI. Operating Standards

### A. Point to Point Flights (airport to airport)

Employees using aircraft on point-to-point flights will be required to flight follow. The pilot is required to initiate an FAA flight plan and the flight plan will meet the requirement for flight following. Any deviation from the flight plan must be reported to the nearest FAA Flight Service Station. Generally, the Flight Manager will check-in with either Taos Dispatch, 575-758-6208 (in state flights) or with the Southwest Coordination Center, 505-842-3473 (out of state flights) upon arrival at their destination.

### B. Special Use Mission Flights

Special use mission flights are defined as a flight where the aircraft is required to perform activities where there is an abnormal risk to the aircraft and passengers. Such activities may include low level flying, fire fighting, external load transportation, or any other high risk activity. Special use mission flights require the following:

- a. Pilots and aircraft shall be DOI-AM/USFS approved for each special use mission prior to use
- b. Employees engaged in special use activities must meet the training requirements outlined in the Interagency Aviation Training Program.
- c. Aircraft shall be equipped with an intercom system capable of serving the pilot and observer.
- d. All PPE shall be worn as required for special use mission flights. This includes the Pilot and all passengers.
- e. All special use missions will be flight followed by an approved dispatch office.
- f. Follow all standards and procedures as found in D.M. 351 1.1 to 351 1.11

#### C. Helicopter Load Calculations

1. For non-fire flights, a load calculation will be done at every fuel stop, when passengers are added or dropped off, or when the density altitude exceeds that which was last computed.
2. For fire **suppression** flights, a load calculation will be completed for each load of passengers or cargo.

#### D. Flight Following

1. Flight following on special use mission flights shall be a **minimum Automated Flight Following (AFF)**. In addition to AFF radio **check-in every 15 minutes** may be required with an approved dispatch office. Information required at this check in is:
  - a. current Latitude and longitude
  - b. Aircraft heading (direction in degrees, magnetic compass)
2. Upon take-off the following information will be required from the aircraft;
  - a. Amount of fuel on board (check with the pilot prior to the flight)
  - b. Number of souls (include the pilot and passengers) on board
  - c. Give the geographic destination in which you are headed.
3. In areas of marginal radio coverage, a field vehicle may be used to flight follow a special use mission flight. This scenario must be approved prior to the flight by the Unit Aviation Manager

4. In areas of no radio coverage, a radio check-in prior to entering the area will be required. Aircraft heading, speed and altitude should be given at this time. The check-in should include an approximate time when the aircraft will return into radio contact with the flight following office. Deviations from the flight plan while out of radio contact are not allowed.
5. Aircraft flights on large fires are under the direction of an Incident Management Team and are exempt from local flight following. Refer to the Incident Action Plan, Aviation Plan for procedures and responsibilities on large fires incidents.

## **VII. Overdue Aircraft**

- A. Any aircraft which has not been accounted for within twenty (20) minutes of the last designated check-in will be considered overdue. The following procedures will be initiated by the dispatcher and the Unit Aviation Manager

Phase I: The dispatcher and/or the Unit Aviation Manager will:

- a. Begin emergency response plan implementations (in dispatch).
- b. Conduct a telephone search of all known destinations, airports or landing strips. Contact the vendors' home office.
- c. Complete Search & Rescue (SAR) Emergency Event Procedure and Record, Form 9240-1A, with all available information.
- d. Contact Field Office Managers, supervisors, and The Search and Rescue Coordinator (Law Enforcement Ranger)
- e. Continue to try to make radio contact with overdue aircraft.

Phase II: This Phase will begin within one (1) hour after the last contact with the aircraft and initial contacts have failed to turn up the whereabouts of the missing aircraft. The Unit Aviation Manager will;

- a. Notify the State Police of an impending Search and Rescue Mission
- b. Notify Federal Aviation Agency Flight Service Station of an overdue aircraft.
- c. Expand the telephone search of all possible sources of information

Phase III: This phase will begin in thirty (30) minutes after phase II has been implemented.

- a. Make a formal request for assistance to the State Police.
- b. Contact the State Aviation Manager.
- c. Notify DOI-AM.
- d. Set-up a briefing with local authorities and cooperating agencies

## **VIII. Aircraft mishap Notification and Reporting**

All aircraft mishaps, mechanical problems, near **hits**, and aircraft accidents will be reported to the Unit Aviation Manager as soon as possible after the incident. The Unit Aviation Manager will assist in filing SafeCom reports, setting up investigations and following procedures as outlined in 352 DM 6.

## **IX. Flight arrangement and Procedures**

### A. Commercially scheduled airlines

Employees will make their own arrangements for commercially scheduled airline flights. Commercial airline operations will not be covered by this plan.

### B. Charter and/or ARA aircraft

#### 1. Employees responsibility

- a. Initiate flight request with the Unit Aviation Manager 5-7 days in advance of desired date of flight.
- b. Fill out Aircraft Flight Request completely and forward it to the Unit Aviation Manager for scheduling
- c. Inform the Unit Aviation Manager of any changes in plans or cancellations of flight.
- d. Inform the Unit Aviation Manager of any flight discrepancies, problems and concerns.

#### 2. Dispatch

- a. With concurrence of the Unit Aviation Manager, schedule the flight from the appropriate **aircraft**
- b. source **list**
- c. Insure that all forms, procedures and paperwork are completed prior to flight.

3. Unit Aviation Manager
  - a. Provides program and project oversight

## **X. Aircraft and Flight Safety**

- A. All aviation safety standards as identified in the Federal Aviation Regulations, 350-354 DM, DOI-AM Operational Procedure Memoranda(OPMs), DOI-AM Informational Bulletins (IBs), Interagency Operational Guides (i.e. IHOG), BLM Manual 9400 and the Field Office Aviation Plan will be followed.
- B. The State or local Unit Aviation Manager may terminate any flight when not in compliance with safety regulations or other DOI-AM requirements.
- C. Low level fixed wing flying (below 500ft AGL) will not be permitted. No exceptions!
- D. All helicopter operations using aerial ignition, long line cable or external loads will not be permitted without prior approval of the Unit Aviation Manager.

## **XI. Aviation Training and Qualifications**

All BLM employees who use aircraft on the job will receive appropriate training and be qualified to work with aircraft prior to any flight or flight operation. Such training will be a minimum of the Interagency Aviation Training Basic Aviation Safety Course (B-3).

Other training may include;

1. Fixed Wing-aerial Observer (agency training)
  - a. Air Attack Supervisor (S-378 for fire operations)
2. Rotor Wing-S-271 Interagency Helicopter training
  - a. CWN Helicopter manager
  - b. Helibase Manager

## **XII. Flight Hazards, Military Training Routes and Military Operating Areas**

1. All aircraft operations must refer to current Aeronautical Sectional Charts for New Mexico prior to operations to insure that operations will not be in **high flight hazard areas**. Most commercial pilots carry these, but it is the Flight Manager's responsibility to check during the flight planning phase.
2. **The Dispatch** will keep an updated **flight hazard map** showing towers, transmission lines and other flight hazards. Contact **this office** for information on flight hazards during the pre-mission planning stage of the flight. **A flight hazard map can be found at the Taos Field Office and the Farmington Field Office.**
3. If the flight plan places you in any Military Operation Area (MOA) or on any Military Training Route (MTR) contact the Unit Aviation Manager for proper procedures before operation in these areas. NOTE: It is important to realize that in some instances, a Military Operating Area may be inactive according to military authorities, but in fact may still have military aircraft training occurring. Keep an eye out for other aircraft at all times while in these areas.

### **XIII. Violation of Policy**

Violations of national, state and local aviation policy and procedures will not be tolerated. Management may take disciplinary action for any employee who willfully violates policies and procedures. An employee ordering an aircraft outside of normal procedures and their authority may be held **financially** liable for any cost incurred by the government by that aircraft.