

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

2014 EASTERN STATES AVIATION PLAN



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Table of Contents

1. Aviation Plans
2. Aviation Management Organization
3. Administrative Requirements
4. Aviation Safety
5. Aviation Operations
6. Aviation Training
7. Airspace Coordination
8. Aviation Security
9. Aviation Facilities
10. Appendix

Appendix A: Example of a Pilot/Passenger Briefing

1.0 Aviation Plans

1.1 State Aviation Plan

The State Aviation Plan is both a Statewide Aviation Safety Plan and an Aviation Operations Plan for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Eastern States (ES) organization. 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 Department of the Interior (DOI) and BLM policies. 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.

1.2 Unit Aviation Plans

District/Field Offices are required to maintain written "Unit Aviation Plans", as per BLM Manual 9400.33. F. These plans should be concise documents which guide field employees who will be involved in aviation activities. The plans should be reviewed annually and updated as necessary. Section 3.3 of the BLM National Aviation Plan outlines the items that need to be addressed in the Unit Aviation Plan.

The State Aviation Plan serves as the Unit Aviation Plan for:

- Southeastern State Field Office
- Northeastern States Field Office
- Lower Potomac Field Station

The ESO and Field Offices may supplement National aviation policy with more restrictive local policies.

1.3 Project Aviation Safety Plans

Project Aviation Safety Plans (PASP) will be developed for all non-fire flights. Section 4.3.2 of the BLM National Aviation Plan lists the required elements of a PASP. The State Director (SD) is responsible for approving PASPs for Special Use Activities conducted by ES Field Offices.

One-time, non-complex missions may use the one page "Hazard Analysis and Dispatch/Aviation Manager Checklist" form as a PASP. An example of this form is in the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide. Also, some Special Use Activities, such as aerial ignition, have established formats and templates for PASPs (See the Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide).

PASPs with a final risk rating of "High" or above must be reviewed by the State Aviation Manager (SAM) prior to line manager approval. A copy of the signed plan should reside with the flight following entity prior to conducting operations.

2.0 Aviation Management Organization

2.1 State Director

The SD is responsible for all aviation activities within the jurisdiction of BLM ES to include all states east of and adjacent to the Mississippi River.

The SD is responsible for approving all PASPs for Special Use Activities conducted by the ES State Office.

2.2 State Aviation Manager

The SD has appointed the ES Fire Management Office as the State Aviation Manager (SAM) to provide professional staff support on all aspects of aviation management. ES employees should contact the SAM with any aviation questions. The incumbent will be Lamar Liddell, (601) 715-5448.

Duties of the SAM include:

- Serves as the senior staff expert for aviation activities within the BLM, ES organization.
- Provides liaison with the National Aviation Office, the Department of the Interior Office Aviation Service (OAS), cooperators, Field Offices and ES Management.
- Plans and organizes aviation projects at the ESO 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 ES personnel and maintains records of aviation training received.
- Provides guidance for the development and maintenance of Aircraft Mishap Response Guides and Known Aerial Hazard Maps for ES.
- Provides guidance for implementation of National aviation program directives in support of the BLM Mission.
- Clarifies regulations and provides guidance for 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 the Contracting Officer's Representative for exclusive use aircraft contracts.
- Facilitates the ordering and movement of National shared aviation resources within ES.

2.3 Field Managers

The Field Managers are responsible for the overall aviation management program in their respective offices.

2.4 Unit (Field Office) Aviation Managers

Each Field Manager appoints a Unit Aviation Manager who is knowledgeable in the field of aviation and who coordinates the aviation program and provides technical assistance on all aviation matters for the Field Office.

Duties of the Unit Aviation Managers include:

- 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 Field Office personnel.
- Will maintain local office Aviation Mishap Response Guides 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 non-fire 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 pertaining to aviation.

2.5

Supervisors.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that employees receive training and procure the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) commensurate with assigned aviation activities, and are responsible for recognizing and eliminating or reducing aviation hazards in their programs.

2.6 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. The “IAT Requirements Matrix”, which is contained in DOI OPM No. 04 identifies the training required for Aviation Dispatchers.

2.7 Flight Manager.

Each flight or aviation project will have a designated Flight Manager, whether the flight is under 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 the mission. Training requirements are found in DOI OPM04.

2.8 Passengers and Aviation Users.

All employees are required to maintain current certifications in the training required for the aviation activities they are involved in.

Aircraft users 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 encouraged to report it via the safecom system. Reference 4.3 Aviation Safety Communique’ – Safecom. This does not substitute the immediate on the spot correction.

Aircraft users are required to check 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.

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.

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

2.9 Fiscal and Procurement Personnel.

Fiscal and procurement personnel need to be familiar with procurement and payment procedures for aircraft.

3.0 Administrative Requirements

3.1 Requests for Services and Procurement

Requests for aircraft charter/rental services for ES projects will be coordinated by the SAM. Field Offices are responsible for establishing local aircraft request procedures.

3.2 Payment

DOI utilizes the Aviation Management System (AMS) which is an electronic invoicing and billing system. Upon completion of flight services, the government representative and the vendor will complete and sign a paper copy of Form AMD-23E, which documents flight hours and other services received. It is the vendor's responsibility to transfer the data from the AMD-23E to the AMS system, and submit their invoice electronically for payment. Copies of the paper AMD-23E will be retained by the government representative. An (excel spreadsheet) version of the AMD-23E is available to create the paper document, and its use is encouraged.

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

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

Detailed information on completing Form AMD-23E can be obtained from the SAM or Unit Aviation Managers or on the OAS web site: www.oas.doi.gov.

3.3 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.

3.4 Documenting Aircraft Use

All use of non-DOI aircraft will be documented on form AMD-23E, whether or not

reimbursement takes place. An exception is the use of USFS aircraft for wildfire suppression.

3.5 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.

End product contracts where contractors could conceivably utilize aircraft must be reviewed by the SAM to ensure that specifications and language do not unintentionally imply or determine aircraft operational control.

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

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 OPM-35.

3.6 Reference Materials

District and Field Offices are required to maintain an aviation reference library as per the BLM National Aviation Plan. 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 ES BLM aviation program. Most of these documents are also available on the Internet, at either www.oas.doi.gov or www.fire.blm.gov.

- Departmental Manual 350-354, "Aviation Policy" (2011)
- BLM Manual 9400 Series "Aviation Management" (1999)
- BLM National Aviation Plan (updated annually)
- DOI-AM Operational Procedures Memoranda (OPMs) (updated annually)
- Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide (2013)
- Interagency Airspace Coordination Guide (2003)
- Interagency Airtanker Base Operations Guide (2011)
- Interagency Helicopter Rappel Guide (2011)
- Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide (2012)
- Interagency Single Engine Air Tanker Operations Guide (2011)
- Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR)

- BLM Safety & Health for Field Operations Handbook 1112-2
- Aviation Life Support Equipment Handbook (2008)
- Interagency Aviation Transport of Hazardous Materials Handbook/Guide (2005)
- DOI Field Reference Guide for Aviation Users (2006)
- Interagency Aviation Training Guide (2012)
- Interagency Aerial Supervision Guide (2014)
- Aviation Risk Management Workbook (2011)
- Current BLM Instruction Memoranda and Information Bulletins related to aviation OPM-11 and that all requests must be routed through the respective SAM to the NAO

3.7 Billee Codes

Billee Codes are required on the AMD-23E in order to track the office being billed for use of the aircraft. The Billee codes are assigned as follows:

<u>Billee Code</u>	<u>Ordering Office</u>
6360	Eastern States Office
6910	Southeastern States Field Office
6880	Northeastern States Field Office

4.0 **Aviation Safety**

4.1 General Policy

All BLM aviation operations within ES 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.

4.2 Safety Management Systems

SMS serves to structure the BLM existing safety initiatives and provides a review process for how well those initiatives function. Safety is a system that incorporates a proactive approach to using hazard identification and risk management in all phases of an aviation operation and programs. The SMS has four major components: policy, risk management, assurance and promotion. Additional aviation safety information can be found:

- BLM Aviation Safety
- OAS Safety
- Risk Assessment Tool ([IHOG3-1](#))

4.3 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

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.

Non-BLM passengers flying on BLM aircraft will utilize all PPE required of BLM passengers.

4.4 Aviation Safety Communique' - Safecom

The Safecom system is used to report and condition, observance, act maintenance problem or circumstance which has the potential to cause an aviation-related mishap. The Safecom system is not intended for initiating punitive actions. Mission personnel are encouraged to collaborate on SAFECOM development prior to submission to avoid any punitive implication and increase narrative accuracy of events. Submitting a Safecom is not a substitute for “on-the-spot” correction(s) to a safety concern. It is a tool used to identify, document, track and correct safety related issues. All personnel involved in aviation activities are encouraged to submit SAFECOMs when they feel it is warranted. www.safecom.gov Reference NAP 4.5.3

5.0 Aviation Operations

5.1 Special Use Activities

Special Use Activities are aircraft missions requiring special considerations due to increased risk involved in those missions, as opposed to point-to-point transportation of passengers or cargo. This may require specific aircraft equipment, deviation from normal operating practices, special pilot skills and techniques, and personal protective equipment (PPE). Since Special Use Activities involve a higher level of risk and/or pilot skills, specialized training and detailed planning are required. Requirement for Special Use Activities include:

- Special Use Activities must be approved by the Field Manager or the SD.
- A Project Aviation Safety Plan (PASP) must be completed.
- 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.
- Special Use Activities have stringent flight following requirements, normally a 15 minute check-in via radio, or use of the Automated Flight Following (AFF) system, if the aircraft is properly equipped.
- Special Use Activities have PPE requirements specific to that particular mission.
- Special Use Activities require that the pilot and aircraft are approved by OAS for the specific activity.
- In general, BLM Volunteers shall not participate in Special Use Activities, since these missions usually entail increased risk.
- Employees engaged in Special Use Activities must meet the training requirements outlined in 352 DM 1, and DOI OPM-04.
- Only air crew members and passengers essential to the mission may be on board Special Use Flights.

A listing of Special Use Activities is contained in DOI OPM-29. The following are examples of Special Use Activities that are typically conducted by ES BLM:

- Low level flights, which are defined as flights conducted within 500' of the surface.
- Air Tactical Group Supervisor, Helicopter Coordinator, or Airtanker Coordinator operations.

- Aerial ignition activities for prescribed burning or wildland fire suppression. (See the Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide.)
- 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.
- Transport of external loads.
- Takeoff or landing requiring special techniques due to hazardous terrain, obstacles, pinnacles, or surface conditions.
- Mountain flying in helicopters.

5.2 Cooperator Aircraft

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, OAS must give approval prior to using these aircraft and pilots. Two week's lead time will be needed to check pilot and aircraft qualifications and to obtain OAS approval.

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.

5.3 U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Aircraft

USFS Carded Aircraft and Pilots meet DOI requirements, and 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.

5.4 Military and National Guard Aircraft

Military and National Guard aircraft will not be used as an alternative to rental or contract aircraft in order to save BLM funds.

Military and National Guard aircraft can be used in emergencies, and 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 the existing DOI MOUs will be coordinated through the SAM and approved by the SD. Two week's time will be needed

to obtain Departmental approval.

5.5 Law Enforcement Operations

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. BLM Law Enforcement personnel will not ride in aircraft operated by other agencies, unless their use of the aircraft is authorized by OAS.

Confidentiality is occasionally a concern with law enforcement operations. However, the supervisors of Law Enforcement personnel, as well the Eastern States Special Agent in-charge and SD. Law Enforcement Office, must be informed whenever employees will be involved in law enforcement aviation operations.

5.6 Law Enforcement Agreements

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

Drug Enforcement Administration
Department of Homeland Security/U.S. Customs and Border Protection
U.S. Coast Guard
Department of Defense

These MOUs are generally intended for law enforcement activities, but some have provisions for non-law enforcement projects. They are currently being reviewed by OAS. Updated guidance on the use of these MOUs is pending.

6.0 Aviation Training

6.1 Responsibility

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

6.2 Training Courses

The DOI OPM04 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. DOI personnel who are required to take the B3 curriculum will now be required to take the A-100 Basic Aviation Safety course in order to maintain their qualifications. The next revision of the OPM-04 and the interagency Aviation Training Guide will reflect these changes. A-100 Basic Aviation Safety course can be found at www.iat.gov.(reference [IATNG 14-01](#)).

Training and qualification requirements for aviation positions in wildland fire operations, including prescribed fire, 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 their duties.

7.0 Airspace Coordination--Reserved

8.0 Aviation 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 for vandalism or sabotage. Aircraft users should be familiar with Chapter 8 of the BLM National Aviation Plan, which addresses aviation security.

9.0 Aviation Facilities—Reserved

10.0 Appendix

Appendix A is attached.

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.

Additional aviation safety reference material can be referenced within the Incident Pocket Response Guide (IRPG).