

CHAPTER 80
AIRCRAFT
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80.1 AVIATION MANAGEMENT MISSION STATEMENT

A. Purpose

The BLM Alaska State Aviation Plan sets forth policy, procedures and guidance to implement the Aviation Management Program for Alaska BLM. The purpose is to clarify and standardize aviation management procedures and operations for BLM employees in all Alaska Field Offices, Alaska State Office and Alaska Fire Service.

B. Mission Statement

The Office of the State Aviation Manager is responsible for providing safe, cost-effective aviation support to the BLM, Alaska and its interagency partners. The agency will be guided in accomplishing this mission by rigorous adherence to Departmental aviation policy and safe aviation practice, sound mission and risk management planning, ongoing safety training and education, and technical and contractual support from DOI Aviation Management. Continuous evaluation and critique of mission performance and customer satisfaction will be used to measure our success.

C. Priorities

1. Support of the Alaska BLM
2. Support of the Alaska BLM's interagency partners
3. Support of the Lower 48 BLM
4. Support of Lower 48 interagency partners

D. Objectives

1. First and foremost, the agency will be guided by the philosophy of maximum safety, minimum risk in all flight operations. Each member of the Office of the State Aviation Manager has the right and the responsibility to point out safety concerns and see that they are addressed. Each employee has the right and the responsibility to refuse an unsafe mission.
2. The BLM provides a wide variety of services to a many customers. The agency will meet their needs safely, cost effectively, professionally, and competently. Customers will be treated with courtesy and respect. Alaska Field Offices are empowered to accomplish their mission without undue restriction, regulation or oversight.
3. Alaska personnel performing aviation functions shall meet all qualification requirements of the DM and recognized BLM standards. Aviation personnel will be service oriented, exhibiting professionalism and integrity.
4. Every employee will take a high level of personal responsibility and maintain high personal standards; do high quality work and expect it of others; obey the rules and do the right

thing. Employees are not permitted to make decisions based on personal convenience. Silent acceptance of another person's wrongdoing is unacceptable.

5. Employees should take personal responsibility to establish and maintain good communications throughout the organization. The opinions and perspectives of every employee are important. Open, respectful communications are essential to building a professional and successful team.
 6. Personal safety is the highest priority in every aviation activity. The BLM's philosophy is risk reduction, proactive mitigating controls and accident prevention.
 7. Individual development, employee wellness and workforce diversity will be emphasized at all levels of the Alaska aviation program.
 8. The aviation organization will be developed and maintained to the most efficient level, commensurate with Alaska BLM aviation use.
 9. Aviation plans at the State and Field Office level will not implement policy or procedures *less* restrictive than national policy; aviation policy that is *more* restrictive than national policy requires approval by the National Office.
- E. Authority

The BLM Alaska Aviation Operations Plan is authorized by *BLM Manual 9400*, paragraph .33. As a supplement to the *9400 Manual*, it conforms to all Bureau and Departmental aviation policy.

80.2 ALL EYES AVIATION SAFETY IN ALASKA

Successful fire management and resource programs in Alaska are highly dependent on aviation support. Quality training, planning, and procedures coordinated on an interagency basis have contributed to aviation support that has established an impressive record of efficiency and safety. Continued interagency aviation cooperation is essential to maintaining the record established throughout Alaska and its fire agencies. Agency employees have extensive aviation expertise. Everyone must be alert and aware during all aviation operations. All aviation concerns should be reported to the local aviation manager, FMO, or IC for resolution. The idea is simply to maximize the number of "eyes" looking for possible problems and to report them immediately at the local level. Aviation operations in Alaska are closely linked and interconnected to fire and resource operations. Every employee is responsible for aviation safety at all times, regardless of job titles, agency affiliation, or situation. With respectful and courteous communication, this "All Eyes Aviation Safety Philosophy" may recognize and correct problems before they become links in an accident chain.

In addition, when fire or resource activity warrants, the agencies will organize and conduct aviation safety reviews on an interagency basis, with teams made up of aviation and fire technical experts drawn from a cross-section of our agencies. Teams will in-brief and out-brief with local line officers and will be required to spend sufficient time to not only identify potential

problems, but to organize and implement solutions in conjunction with the local fire organization.

The aviation safety record for agencies in Alaska is due to individual commitment and competence. The “All Eyes Aviation Safety Philosophy” is an attempt to formalize and communicate expectations to aviation users and aviators across agency lines and across the state.

80.3 ALASKA AVIATION DIRECTORY

BLM, ALASKA FIRE SERVICE	
NAME/TITLE	NUMBER
CHIP HOUDE, State Aviation Mgr	907-356-5523
WES STARK, Helicopter Specialist	907-356-5525
JOHN SOFTICH, Fixed Wing Specialist	907-356-5520
JAY PETERSON, Ramp Manager	907-356-5758
BOBETTE ROWE, Aviation Officer, Tanana Zone	907-356-5222
MIKE LANDAU, Aviation Officer, Upper Yukon Zone	907-356-5577
DOUG GIBBS, Aviation Officer, Galena Zone	907-656-1222
NICK STROHMEYER, Aviation Officer, AFS Southern Zone	907-267-1378
DAVE DOUCET, Project Helicopter Manager South	907-267-1360
BLM Flight Following South	907-267-1360

DOI ALASKA AVIATION MANAGERS	
NAME/TITLE	NUMBER
NPS , KEN BARNES, Regional Aviation Manager	907-644-3407
FWS , FOX, Kevin, Regional Aviation Manager	907-786-3433
USDA FOREST SERVICE SAFETY OFFICER	
NAME/TITLE	NUMBER
USFS , BENING, Pat, Forest Aviation Officer	907-743-9530

STATE OF ALASKA DIVISION OF FORESTRY	
NAME/TITLE	NUMBER
STEVE ELWELL, Aviation Officer	907-761-6271
DENNIS RICKER, Coastal Region Aviation Officer.	907-761-6229
BOB MCALPIN, Northern Region Aviation Officer.	907-451-2691

80.4 UTILIZATION

A. Zone Offices

Zones may request use of contract initial-attack aircraft directly from adjacent zones or DOF areas for initial-attack operations only. Requests for initial attack assistance will be honored between zone and area FMOs with adjoining areas of responsibilities; the AICC must be notified of these actions over the teletype. Requests for logistical support of missions or for long-term use must be made on a resource order to AICC, which will fill the request or forward it to the

appropriate zone or area. The responding zone or area will comply with requests commensurate with their own workload and the priority of the request.

When contract aircraft are not available, additional aircraft may be obtained through the DOI Aviation Management on-call contract, then Aircraft Rental Agreement (ARA) system. Zones may charter light (Gross weight less than 12,500 lbs.) fixed-wing aircraft point-to-point directly from any DOI Aviation Management-approved vendor based within the zone. All other aircraft must be ordered through AICC – aircraft desk.

B. Alaska Interagency Coordination Center

All requests for helicopters, fixed-wing aircraft with a gross weight of more than 12,500 pounds, aircraft hired at the guarantee rate, aircraft to perform a non-fire mission with a total cost of \$25,000 or more, or military aircraft must be ordered through AICC. AICC will in turn forward all orders for large aircraft (12,500 lbs. gross weight or more), aircraft performing a single non-fire mission costing more than \$25,000, military aircraft, or for helicopters hired at the guarantee rate to the flight coordination center of DOI Aviation Management. AICC will also notify DOI Aviation Management whenever any aircraft is hired at the guarantee rate and whenever such an aircraft is released from hire.

When notifying DOI Aviation Management of a guarantee-rate aircraft charter, AICC will relay the following information to the DOI Aviation Management Flight Coordination Center: the name of the vendor, the name of the pilot (and copilot, if applicable), the type and tail number of the aircraft, the expected period of use, the intended use of the aircraft, the charge code and the billee code. When ordering an aircraft from DOI Aviation Management, AICC will relay to DOI Aviation Management the resource order and request number as well as all the information previously listed.

The following constraints are in force:

1. With the exception of light fixed-wing aircraft hired within zone on a point-to-point basis, all support aircraft must be ordered through AICC.
2. Above actions remain subject to AFS manager approval.

C. AICC: Aircraft procurement procedures

AICC will ensure that sources for aircraft will be used in the following order:

1. Aircraft owned, leased, or contracted by Alaska BLM.
2. Aircraft owned, leased, or operated by other Federal civilian agencies in Alaska or by the Alaska State Division of Forestry.
3. Aircraft offered for rental through the DOI Aviation Management Aircraft Rental Agreement/on-call contract system in Alaska.

- a. AICC must notify DOI Aviation Management whenever an aircraft is hired or released at the guarantee rate; this is not necessary for point-to-point hires. Also, if the projected total aircraft cost for a single non-fire project is greater than \$25,000, AICC may not hire the aircraft but must relay the order to DOI Aviation Management to fill.
 - b. If no suitable aircraft are available through the Basic Ordering Agreement system, AICC will relay the order to DOI Aviation Management to fill.
4. Out-of-state aircraft.
- a. If no suitable aircraft (e. g. air tankers or smokejumper aircraft) are available within Alaska, AICC will relay the order to the NICC aircraft desk.
 - b. All out-of-state orders must be approved by the AFS manager.
5. Military aircraft.
- a. AFS may use military aircraft only if all other sources have been exhausted. AICC will relay the order to DOI Aviation Management to fill and will notify the AFS Aviation Officer of the order. All orders for military aircraft must be approved by the AFS manager.
 - b. AICC will coordinate with the Office of Aviation Management for special aircraft services such as marshaling, auxiliary power units, hot-air starts, etc.

80.5 FLIGHT FOLLOWING PROCEDURES

For reasons of safety and flight coordination, it is mandatory that all BLM aircraft be monitored during in-flight service (Departmental Manual 9400.45.B2).

(See current BLM Alaska memorandum.)

80.51 All aircraft will be required to submit to the closest BLM dispatch office a "BLM Flight Plan" (This requirement does not release aircraft from adhering to Federal Aviation Flight Plans).

A. Flight Plans Within the State

Administration (FAA regulations concerning FAA flight plans).

Each plan will consist of the following:

1. Type of aircraft
2. "N" number
3. Destination and Route
4. Time en route
5. Purpose of flight
6. Number of people on board
7. Amount of usable fuel (in hours and minutes)

It will be the responsibility of each pilot to provide the flight plan and to close the plan upon termination of the flight. This can normally be done by contacting the BLM dispatcher by radio upon arrival at the destination point. In addition to the information within the flight plan, each administrative unit at the origin of the flight is required to have a manifest of passengers and cargo throughout the flight. The flight manager will ensure that these procedures are carried out by the pilot.

Dispatch offices, upon receiving flight plans and manifest, will immediately notify destination points by, (1) radio, (2) teletype, or (3) telephone and retain the responsibility of monitoring the aircraft's progress until such time as the plan is closed. Action will be started by the office at the destination of the flight to contact or locate any aircraft that is 10 minutes past the scheduled position report or destination.

Aircraft may alter their original flight plan by contacting the nearest dispatch office (preferably the office from which the plan originated).

Detection aircraft may submit reference to normal detection routes; however, deviations from their normal routes and patterns must be made known. New ETA's and Routes should be hard copied on the TTY.

B. Flight Plans To and From Alaska

Aircraft traveling between Alaska and the Lower 48 states will follow the procedure outlined below:

1. A flight plan will be filed with the FAA and AICC.
 - a. Pilots will flight-follow with AICC as long as the aircraft is in Alaska. This can be accomplished by calling the aircraft desk at 1-800-237-3646 at fuel stops.
 - b. AICC will relay all flight-following information to the NICC aircraft desk.
2. Outside Alaska
 - a. Pilots are required to update their progress by calling NICC at 1-800-994-6312 (800 numbers will not work in Canada) whenever they stop for fuel or duty time requirements.
 - b. When stopping in Canada call NICC collect at 208-387-5400.
 - c. Flight plans will again be updated with NICC prior to departure.
3. NICC can also notify the pilot of any pertinent information such as a change in destination, etc.

80.52 PROGRAM CONTROL

- A. AICC has the responsibility for following all inter-zone aircraft flights and all flights that originate or terminate at Fort Wainwright, Fairbanks International, or any other airstrip within the Fairbanks bowl area.
 - 1. AICC initial attack dispatch
 - a. Maintains a map display of all tactical flights in progress.
 - b. Receives and relays flight plans from tactical aircraft departing the Fairbanks vicinity.
 - c. Initiates follow-up action on overdue flights.
 - d. Coordinates search efforts for tactical or support flights that are more than 60 minutes overdue.
 - 2. AICC Logistics aircraft desk
 - a. Maintains flight strips for planned and in-progress support flights.
 - b. Initiates follow-up action on overdue support flights.
 - c. Receives and relays flight plans from support aircraft departing the Fairbanks vicinity.
 - d. Monitors support flights and assures proper closure of flight plans; notifies shift coordinator and initial attack dispatch of overdue flights.
 - e. Receives incoming flight plans from field offices.
 - f. Relays flight plan closures to originating points.
 - 3. Ramp Operations
(See BLM Alaska Aviation Operations Plan)
 - a. Provides specific instruction to pilots on operational procedures (primarily flight plan requirements.)
 - b. Relays the manifest and flight plan for each support flight at departure time via teletype.
- B. Zone and Field Offices (Including staging areas)
 - 1. Maintain intra-zone flight following.
 - 2. Relay flight plans and manifests on inter-zone flights originating in their zone to the receiving station and AICC and assure flight plans are closed at termination point.
 - 3. Relay flight plan closures to originating points.
- C. Flights that require tracking past normal office hours shall be monitored by the nearest dispatch office unless arrangements have been made prior to the time of the flight for the pilot to flight-follow with FAA Flight Services.

80.6 MINIMUM FLIGHT ALTITUDES

In order to comply with an Interagency Agreement signed January 15, 1993, a minimum cross country altitude of 2000 feet (AGL) should be established **whenever possible** for both helicopter and fixed wing aircraft. It is understood that circumstances may dictate a deviation from this standard, but voluntary compliance is strongly urged. This will be for all Alaska Fire Service

flights with the exception of tactical fire operations involving paracargo, smokejumper, air attack and fire reconnaissance.

80.7 GUIDELINE MATERIAL

- *Departmental Manual of Aviation Policy
- *BLM Aviation SOP
- *Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide
- * DOI Aviation Management Operational Procedures Memoranda
- *BLM Manual 9400
- *BLM State Office Memoranda
- *Interagency Air Tanker Base Operations Guide
- *Lead Plane Operations Guide

80.8 MAJOR BASES OF OPERATION

80.81 Retardant Sites

Zones identify location of primary sites and particular information on surface conditions, limitations, storage capacity, etc.

80.82 Helitack Bases

Zones identify primary and secondary base locations and particular information on sites for conditions, limitations and use of each base.

80.83 Staging Areas

Zones list primary and secondary locations identifying runway conditions, location by latitude and longitude, communication facilities, phone numbers at base, fuel availability, type of landing lights, and any other pertinent information.

80.84 Fuel Caches

All zones have handbooks on fuel caches, which identify location, instruction on use and operations of caches, maps, etc. These are incorporated into the Alaska Fire Plans.

80.9 INVENTORY LIST OF AIRCRAFT

80.91 AFS Contract and Fleet Aircraft (See the Aviation Office for a current list of aircraft.)

80.92 Alaska Airstrips (See the Aviation Office for a current list of Alaska airstrips.)

80.10 AVIATION WEATHER

To obtain latest weather conditions, contact FAA Flight Services. Telephone numbers for these offices are listed in the telephone directory under U.S. Government, Federal Aviation Administration (1-800-WX-BRIEF).

In-flight weather briefings are obtained by calling the nearest FAA Flight Services. Radio frequencies are noted on aeronautical charts and in the Alaska Supplement.

It is expected that pilots are to report flying conditions encountered other than what was expected.

80.11 EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

(See Chapter 90.)

80.12 SMOKEJUMPERS AIRCRAFT USE

(See Section 60.4 for Smokejumper Operations Plan.)