

Logistics and Dispatch - Aviation - Aviation Safety

"All Eyes"

Successful fire management and suppression operations 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 we have established throughout Alaska and its fire agencies. We have extensive aviation expertise within our organizations, and we are asking people to be heads up and look for and report aviation concerns regardless of agency affiliation. If a DOF firefighter sees a problem in the AFS Galena Zone, if an AFS pilot sees a problem in McGrath, if an OAS inspector sees a problem in Palmer, if an NPS firefighter sees a problem on a fire assignment with AFS, we expect them to report the problems 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. We want employees of all our organizations to recognize that because of our closely linked and interconnected fire and aviation operations, we all need to be 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 activity warrants, we 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.

This "All Eyes Aviation Safety Philosophy" is really nothing dramatically different or new-our aviation safety record is due to individual commitment and competence throughout our agencies. This is merely an attempt to formalize and communicate our expectations to our firefighters and aviators across agency lines and across the state. Please join your aviation managers and aviation staffs in embracing an Alaska wide commitment to an "All Eyes Aviation Safety Philosophy".