

1.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter describes the:

- A. Authorities,
- B. Responsibilities,
- C. General policy, and
- D. Program evaluation for the Service's aviation management program.

1.2 What is the scope of this chapter? This chapter applies to the following people when their job tasks include Service aviation operations:

- A. Service employees,
- B. Volunteers,
- C. Youth Conservation Corps members and students, and
- D. Seasonal workers.

1.3 Why does the Service have an Aviation Management Program? We have a formal program to make sure we manage aviation operations effectively because of the cost of aviation assets and the risks to personal safety involved.

1.4 What is the Service policy for aviation assets?

- A. Our employees may use aircraft to conduct Service business when it is the most effective or economical means available, **or** when there is no practical alternative to using aircraft.
- B. All aircraft we use must be certified, maintained, and operated as directed by Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations and Departmental policies and procedures.

1.5 What is the Service policy for environmental issues involving aviation operations? We use aircraft to help manage natural resources. We are concerned about the impact of noise and visual pollution on wildlife, wilderness areas, and visitors using public land. Employees must consider environmental issues during all aviation mission planning, particularly low-altitude flights and when using fuel caches.

1.6 What are the authorities for this chapter?

- A. FAA, General Operating and Flight Rules (14 CFR, Part 91).
- B. [Department of the Interior \(DOI\) Management Responsibilities, Policies, and Procedures for the Use and Operation of Service Aircraft:](#)
 - (1) Departmental Manual (DM), Parts 350 through 354.
 - (2) 112 DM 12, Office of Aircraft Services.
 - (3) [Departmental Operational Procedure Memoranda Series.](#)

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
AVIATION**

Aviation

Part 330 Aviation Management

Chapter 1 Aviation Organization

330 FW 1

(4) [Departmental Handbooks for Aircraft Operations and Management](#), including examples of the Aviation Life Support Equipment and Aerial Capture, Eradication, and Tagging of Animals (ACETA).

(5) [Departmental Operational Guides](#) with preferred procedures for specific aspects of aviation operations. For interagency fire activities, we use the following operational guides:

- (a) Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide.
- (b) Interagency Aerial Ignition Guide.
- (c) Interagency Seat Operations Guide.
- (d) Interagency Airspace Coordination Guide.

1.7 What terms do you need to know to understand this chapter?

A. Aircraft Pilot. An aircraft pilot is someone we require to perform the following duties:

- (1) Piloting or copiloting an aircraft to carry out various programs and functions;
- (2) Providing ground and flight instruction and in-flight evaluation when piloting aircraft;
- (3) Testing developmental and modified aircraft and components;
- (4) Inspecting and evaluating air navigation facilities and the environmental conditions affecting instrument flight procedures; and
- (5) Performing staff work related to planning, analyzing, or administering aviation programs, where the work requires primarily the application of pilot knowledge and skills, i.e., GS-2181.

B. Crew Members. There are two types of crew members—air crew members and flight crew members:

- (1) **Air Crew Member:** A person we assign to specialized duties not involving flying the aircraft. Examples include an observer for wildlife surveys, aerial camera operator, and wildlife tracking radio operator.
- (2) **Flight Crew Member:** A pilot, flight engineer, or flight navigator we assign to duty in an aircraft. The flight crew member must hold a valid FAA Airman's Certificate and have passed a flight physical.

C. Flight Authority. Flight authority is permission given by the Service Director that allows employees to pilot aircraft while doing Service business.

D. Pilot-in-command (PIC). The PIC is the pilot responsible for all phases of the flight.

1.8 Who is responsible for the Aviation Management Program in the Service? (See Exhibit 1 for an organizational chart.)

A. The Director:

- (1) Ensures that we manage all aviation support functions safely and efficiently to accomplish our goals.
- (2) Grants flight authority to Service pilots (see 330 FW 3, Exhibit 1 for examples of requests for authority).
- (3) Approves requests for Departmental aviation policy waivers and sends them to the Department, when necessary.

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
AVIATION**

Aviation

Part 330 Aviation Management

Chapter 1 Aviation Organization

330 FW 1

(4) Assigns responsibility for our aviation program to the appropriate Assistant Director by including the aviation function as one of his/her performance standards.

B. The Assistant Director– Migratory Birds oversees the Aviation Program as the **Service Aviation Executive**, and must:

(1) Advise the Director on aviation matters.

(2) Develop, implement, and maintain our Aviation Management Program.

(3) Coordinate all Service requests for Departmental aviation policy exceptions and waivers with the Associate Director – Department of the Interior Aviation Management (NBC AM).

(4) Represent the Service on the Department's Aviation Board of Directors. See section 1.9 for more information on the Board.

C. The Chief – Law Enforcement (LE):

(1) Ensures the LE aviation program meets Service and Departmental requirements.

(2) Assigns an Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) Aviation Manager or Coordinator for Alaska and the lower 48 States to address OLE Aviation Program issues and provide feedback on the Service aviation program to the Service Aviation Executive.

D. Regional Directors:

(1) Ensure that for their Regions meet Service and Departmental requirements.

(2) Appoint Regional aviation managers.

(3) Assign an Assistant Regional Director (ARD) to oversee the Regional Aviation Program. The ARD may assign day-to-day oversight of aviation operations to a Deputy.

(4) Review the Regional Aviation Program at least once a year or ask the ARD to review the program.

E. The Service Aviation Manager must:

(1) Assist and advise the Director and Service Aviation Executive on all aviation matters.

(2) Serve as the primary Service contact and coordinator with the Department for all aviation activities.

(3) Revise and update this chapter as necessary.

(4) Interpret Aviation Management Program requirements and serve as a consultant to resolve Servicewide questions or issues.

(5) Evaluate all aviation programs in the Regions in coordination with the Department's NBC AM, Aviation Program Evaluation Manager.

(6) Represent the Service as a member of the Department's Aviation Managers Working Group (see section 1.9) and on other aviation related committees, as required.

03/24/08

AVIATION

Supersedes 330 FW 1 - 3, 06/03/93

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
AVIATION**

Aviation

Part 330 Aviation Management

Chapter 1 Aviation Organization

330 FW 1

(7) Serve as a member of the Department's Aviation Management Evaluation Team on evaluations of other bureaus.

(8) Convene an Annual Aviation Managers Workshop to:

(a) Review National, Regional, and Programmatic aviation issues,

(b) Review aviation safety trends, and

(c) Address other aviation related matters.

(9) Review proposed Departmental aviation policy and procedures and recommend revisions or approval to the Aviation Executive. Propose policies involving all aspects of aviation operations, management, and safety.

(10) Evaluate Service aviation performance data by Program and Region each fiscal year.

(11) Coordinate development of the annual Aviation Management Directorate Funding Report with our Budget and Finance Divisions.

(12) Coordinate with the Chief, Fire Management Branch, on aircraft operations and acquisitions for fire suppression, preparedness, and prescribed fire operations for the Service.

F. The Regional Aviation Manager (RAM) may be located in the Regional office or at another location that the Regional Director determines is best to serve the needs of the Region. His/her responsibilities are similar to those of the Service Aviation Manager, but are limited to the Region. For his/her Region, the RAM must:

(1) Assist and advise the Regional Director on all aviation matters.

(2) Serve as the primary contact with the NBC AM.

(3) Participate in NBC AM vendor inspections.

(4) Assess Regional aviation operations to determine if using aircraft could reduce costs or improve the effectiveness of missions and administrative (point-to-point) flying.

(5) Coordinate with the supervisors of air crews based in the Region and others who operate in the Region to ensure that they meet Regional requirements.

(6) Encourage and assist Project Leaders in developing and using hazard maps and aviation operational plans when they are involved in special use activities. Promote periodic review of hazard maps for accuracy and help update them, when necessary.

(7) Coordinate with the Fire Management Coordinator to:

(a) Implement aviation activities for the prescribed fire and wildland fire programs involving the interagency fire community, and

(b) Ensure that our fire aviation management plans, agreements with other agencies, and decision criteria are compatible with our aviation management policy.

G. The Project Leader/Refuge Manager must:

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
AVIATION**

- (1) Make sure that flight operations he/she initiates and oversees follow Service requirements.
 - (2) Coordinate with the Regional Aviation Manager to ensure that the Region's air crews meet flight proficiency and aviation operations requirements, and that the Region completes and documents Service training and familiarization requirements.
- H. The **PIC** is directly responsible for the safety of the aircraft and people on board the flight and is the final authority for flight-related operations and decisions.

1.9 What are the Departmental organizational elements responsible for directing Service aviation operations?

A. The Aviation Board of Directors develops and reviews Departmentwide aviation policies and procedures. It includes an Executive Committee and the Aviation Managers Working Group. A senior management official from each bureau and the NBC AM are members of the Executive Committee.

B. The Aviation Managers Working Group provides advice and technical assistance to the Aviation Board of Directors and reports to the Board Chair. The Bureau Aviation Managers are members of the Working Group.

C. Associate Director, NBC AM is responsible for:

- (1) Departmentwide functions related to aircraft services and facilities.
- (2) Aviation program evaluation and aircraft mishap investigation.
- (3) Contracting for aircraft, maintenance, and pilots.
- (4) Assigning Government aircraft to the Service and providing administrative support and a cost accounting system for all aircraft use.
- (5) Maintaining records on Service pilots, aircraft, and money available for aviation operations.

1.10 What are the major elements of the Service's Aviation Management Program? The program includes policies and procedures governing:

A. Aircraft Acquisition and Use including (also see 330 FW 2):

- (1) How to get aircraft for our missions;
- (2) Marking and disposal of aircraft; and
- (3) Obtaining contract, charter, and rental aviation services.

B. Aviation Training, including (also see 330 FW 3):

- (1) Granting pilots' flight authority,
- (2) Air crew training, and
- (3) Pilot training and certifications.

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
AVIATION

Aviation

Part 330 Aviation Management

Chapter 1 Aviation Organization

330 FW 1

(3) Pilot training and certifications.

C. Aviation Operations and Maintenance, including (also see 330 FW 4):

(1) Requirements for carrying cargo,

(2) Flight planning and standardization,

(3) Transporting passengers,

(4) Security,

(5) Aircraft weight and balance requirements, and

(6) Aircraft maintenance and inspection.

D. Aviation Safety, including (also see 330 FW 5):

(1) Accident prevention and risk mitigation planning,

(2) Accident/incident reporting and investigation,

(3) Awards, and

(4) Requirements for life support equipment.

1.11 How does the Service evaluate the Aviation Management Program? Working with the Department, we have a systematic process for evaluating the effectiveness of our Aviation Management Program.

A. The NBC AM conducts the Aviation Evaluation Program outlined in Operational Procedures Memorandum 06-33. The evaluation program gives the Director an independent appraisal of our aviation management and safety programs. Each Region is evaluated every 5 years. The evaluation team gives the Regional Director a written report of its findings and recommendations. The NBC AM Evaluation Manager coordinates with the Service Aviation Manager to make sure the Regions take appropriate corrective actions.

B. The Service Aviation Manager must evaluate our aviation performance data (total flying hours by Program, Region, and aircraft) each fiscal year to ensure we are conducting our aviation operations in the most efficient, effective, and economical manner possible.



DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Date: March 24, 2008