

**Forest Service Manual
National Headquarters - Washington Office
Washington, DC**

**Forest Service Manual 5700 – Aviation Management
Chapter 5710 – Aviation Business**

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Superseded Directive: 5700_10 (Amendment 5700-2017-1, 09/25/2017)

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Responsible Staff:

Explanation of changes: Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

5710 - Changes chapter title from “Administration” to “Aviation Business” and sets forth direction. Revises the entire chapter to better align with the U.S. Forest Service mission. Substantive changes listed.

5710.1- 5710.7 - Direction moved to Zero Code of 5700.

5711 - Changes title from “Planning, Documentation, and Procedures” to “Planning” and sets forth direction.

5712 - Changes title from “Pilots, Maintenance, and Avionics Approvals, Qualifications, and Revocations” to “Risk Management” and sets forth direction.

5713 - Changes title from “Aircraft and Equipment” to “Cooperator Agreements” and sets forth direction.

5714 - Changes title from “Exemptions” to “Aviation Contracts” and sets forth direction.

5715 - Changes title from “Airspace Restrictions” to “Aircraft Administration” and sets forth direction.

5716 - Changes title from “Flight Operations” to “Recordkeeping” and sets forth direction.

5717 - Changes title from “Records and Reports” to “Quality Assurance” and sets forth direction.

5718 - Changes title from “Aircraft Ownership and Financial Management” to “Awards” and sets forth direction.

5719 - Removes Reviews and Evaluations.

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5710 – Aviation Business

Forest Service (agency) aviation business is structured around planning, agreements, contracts, aircraft cost and use reporting, reports, inquiries, reviews and audits, policy, and awards. Aviation business components provide standardization for the structure, organization, and accountability to the overall Forest Service aviation program.

Refer to FSM 5700 and FSH 5709.16.

5710.1 – Authority

Refer to FSM 5701.

5710.2 – Objectives

Refer to FSM 5702.

5710.3 – Policy

Refer to FSM 5703.

5710.4 – Responsibility

Refer to FSM 5704.

5710.5 – Definitions

Refer to FSM 5705 and the National Aviation Safety Management System Guide (NASMSG).

5710.6 – References

Refer to FSM 5706.

5710.7 – Quality Assurance

Refer to FSM 5717.

5711 – Planning

5711.1 – Aviation Strategic Plan

The Forest Service Aviation Strategic Plan is the overarching document that provides strategic context for all future aviation activities. It complements, enhances, and guides other plans and strategies. It is tied to the Forest Service Strategic Plan.

The Aviation Strategic Plan provides an outline of how the Agency will use aviation assets to accomplish the Forest Service mission; accountability and transparency on how well the Agency

can accomplish our mission, and defines Aviation Management's vision, mission, values, and goals.

Aviation management goals are focused on safety, people, organization, and technologically advanced assets. These goals are characterized by specific objectives.

Performance Measures are used to define how well the Agency has advanced towards accomplishing each objective.

Strategies define the method or approach taken to accomplish the objectives and are reflective of opportunities and threats.

Action Plans will move the strategies forward and will be specific, measurable, and attainable. Progress will be reported on a regular basis to assist the organization in monitoring our performance.

5711.2 – Aviation Safety and Management Plans

The National Aviation Safety and Management Plan (NASMP) serves as a first tier document for Forest Service programs, regions, forests, and units with aviation activities. Regions, forests, and units will create supplements which tier to responsibilities and administrative procedures in their unit every two years, or more often if substantial program changes have been made. These supplements may be more restrictive, but they must not make responsibilities and administrative procedures less restrictive.

These plans should include, at a minimum:

1. Aviation Management Plan;
2. Organization;
3. Administration; and
4. Aviation Safety Management Systems.

5711.3 –Programmatic Aviation Operations Standards or Plans

National aviation operations standards or plans are required for each program listed in FSM 5707 to define the aviation program and operational considerations. Regions are responsible for Ground-Based Aviation Programs listed in FSM 5707, unless the Washington Office establishes a base to support national aircraft. The Washington Office is then responsible for the base operations plans. For plan requirements, refer to FSH 5709.16, chapter 11.5.

The Washington Office Branch Chief responsible for the programs listed in FSM 5708 is responsible for updating these plans annually, if necessary. The Washington Office Branch Chief responsible for the programs is responsible for initiating review and collecting comments and recommendations for these plans. All operational plans will be reviewed annually by the

Washington Office Program Manager, the Washington Office Aviation Branch Chiefs, the Regional Aviation Officer, and the Regional Aviation Safety Manager.

The Regional Aviation Safety Manager and the Regional Aviation Officer must review, and the Regional Forester must approve, the regional supplements when updated, or every two years.

5711.31 – Operations Plans

Each program identified in FSM 5707, must have an Operations Plan. Forest Service specific operational procedures, equipment, staffing, and organization must be specified in the Agency or interagency guides. A list of guides can be found in FSM 5706.

Refer to FSH 5709.16, chapter 11.5.

5711.32 – Base Operations Plans

Each base must have an operations plan.

Refer to FSH 5709.16, chapter 11.5.

5711.4 – Security Plan

Refer to FSH 5709.16, chapters 11.3 and 38.2.

5711.5 – Aviation Mishap Response Plans

The Interagency Mishap Response Guide and Checklist (PMS 503) must be used as the template for Forest Service aviation mishap response planning. It is not intended to be all encompassing; rather it provides the minimum essential elements that apply to most aviation mishaps. This plan must be reviewed and updated annually, or as needed.

All personnel involved in aviation activities should be familiar with the Interagency Aviation Mishap Response Guide and Checklist.

All national/regional coordination centers, dispatch centers, and aviation bases must have an updated Interagency Mishap Response Guide and Checklist.

5712 – Risk Management

Risk management is a critical component of the Agency Aviation Safety Management System (ASMS). All Forest Service aviation missions must manage risk to a level as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP). Three levels of risk management are recognized: strategic, deliberate and time critical.

Refer to FSH 5709.16, chapter 20 for details and requirements.

5713 – Cooperator Agreements

Cooperator agreements must be required for all aviation services conducted on National Forest System Lands. Agreements must use Forest Service pilot and aircraft approval standards, levels of operational requirements and procedures, financial considerations, and safety standards.

Refer to FSH 5709.16, chapter 13.

5714 – Aviation Contracts

Acquisition Management (AQM) provides acquisition support to all contract aviation activities. AQM supports the national and regional applications for aviation services. AQM support includes the Incident Support Branch (ISB) and contracting officers in several regions.

The ISB and regional contracting officers provide acquisition support to agency aviation staff, on a national and regional basis, for requirements that exceed the Simplified Acquisition Threshold. AQM uses different types of contracts, such as Exclusive Use (EU), Call-When-Needed (CWN), Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantities (IDIQ), or Basic Ordering Agreements (BOA)/Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPA) to acquire aircraft and aviation services for Forest Service missions. Contract types are decided after a Contracting Officer analysis is performed to determine the specific needs of the Government.

All Forest Service helicopter and fixed-wing contracts must use an approved contract specification template for aircraft services. These templates must be approved collaboratively by the Washington Office Aviation Branch Chiefs and the Regional Aviation Officers and Regional Aviation Safety Manager Councils.

Mission specific requirements additional to the master specification will be coordinated through the Branch Chiefs, Aviation Operations, and Airworthiness, for inclusion as an exhibit.

Refer to Forest Service Aviation Contracting Desk Reference and FSH 5709.16, chapter 14.

5714.1 – Fire Aviation Contract and Agreement Funding

The Washington Office funds the availability of all exclusive use national fire suppression aircraft contracts. These contracts include, but are not limited to:

1. Airtankers;
2. Helicopter Type 1 – Heavy;
3. Helicopter Type 2 – Medium;
4. Helicopter Type 3 – Light;
5. Water Scoopers;
6. Smokejumper aircraft;

7. Air Tactical Group Supervisor aircraft;
8. Aerial Supervision Module/Leadplane aircraft; and
9. Transport aircraft.

The Washington Office also funds aviation services contracts and agreements, including Defense Logistics Agency aviation fuel purchase, interagency agreements to support Forest Service aviation, aviation studies, applications, and services.

Commitment and obligation of funds for all Washington Office funded aircraft contracts, aviation services contracts and agreements must be reviewed by the Washington Office Assistant Director, Aviation and approved by the Washington Office Assistant Director, Planning and Budget.

5714.2 – Pre-Use Inspections

After award of an aircraft contract and any renewal thereof, an inspection of the contractor's equipment and personnel will be made. For more information, refer to the specific contract and FSH 5709.16, chapter 40.

5715 – Aircraft Administration

The USDA, Property Management Regulation (PMR) 110-33 supplements Federal Management Regulation 102-33 Management of Government Aircraft. Both documents are agency-wide policy for the use of Government aircraft to accomplish official business. In coordination with the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-126, they restrict the operation of government aircraft to defined official purposes of restricting travel on such aircraft, requiring special review of such travel on government aircraft by senior officials or non-federal travelers under certain circumstances, and codify policies for reimbursement for the use of government aircraft. The transportation of passengers or cargo on Forest Service aircraft must be limited in accordance with these regulations.

FSH 6509.33, chapter 301 Federal Travel Regulation requires that all employees have a travel authorization for any official travel. Each instance of administrative use of a Forest Service aircraft to transport passengers must be justified, documented, and approved, and as such, will comply with the requirements contained in OMB A-126 and FMR 102-33. All documents pertaining to these flights must be maintained by the originating unit and kept on file for two years.

Utilize the Forest Service Administrative Use of Aircraft Guide to provide guidance and clarify the Administrative Use of Aircraft.

For additional direction, refer to FSH 5709.16, chapter 15.

5716 – Record Keeping

5716.1 – Reports

The Forest Service is responsible for the following:

1. Providing responses to Department of Agriculture Office of Inspector General (OIG) audits.
2. Meeting the requirement of the Federal Requirement for Federal Aviation for Interactive Reporting System (FAIRS).
3. Coordinating the approval and documentation for senior executive travel in agency and agency-procured aircraft as required by OMB Circular A-126.
4. Complying with existing records holds and freezes for all records, as applicable.
5. Responding to National Transportation Safety Board recommendations.
6. Creating an annual Forest Service Aviation Program Report each calendar year and submit it to the Director, Fire and Aviation. This is the responsibility of the Aviation Division.
7. Responding to agency accident review board recommendations.
8. Per OMB A-126, periodically reviewing the continuing need for all of their aircraft and the cost effectiveness of their aircraft operations in accordance with the requirements of OMB Circular No. A-76. A copy of each agency's review must be submitted to GSA when completed and to OMB with the agency's next budget submission. The Forest Service must report any excess aircraft and release all aircraft that are not fully justified by these reviews. Refer to OMB A-126, 6.c.

This list of reports is not all-inclusive.

5716.2 – Inquiries

The Forest Service is responsible for responding to the following types of inquiries:

1. Congressional inquiries.
2. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.
3. Internal inquiries.
4. External inquiries.

5717 – Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance is auditing to a standard. The standard can be policy, a contract, an agreement, or operational procedures in agency plans and interagency guides.

5717.1 – Programmatic and Operational Oversight: Aviation Management Reviews, Quality Assurance Reviews, and Functional Assistance Trips

Refer to FSM 1410 for additional direction regarding management reviews.

Aviation management reviews, quality assurance reviews, and functional assistance trips are three quality assurance methodologies used to ensure standardization, accountability and quality assurance in the aviation program. Aviation Supervisors and Managers at all organizational levels will review and monitor the aviation program and activities they are responsible for, utilizing data and comparing operations and outcomes with leaders' intent, policy, risk management, and efficiency.

5717.11 – Aviation Management Reviews

Aviation management reviews are used to validate aviation strategic goals, aviation priorities, and aviation program focus areas. An aviation management review can also evaluate the overall performance of a field unit program area(s) and develop actions needed to improve efficiency and effectiveness within and between program areas. In addition, each Deputy Chief's review, activity review, or other reviews involving aviation, must provide special emphasis to the use of Forest Service-owned/other government aircraft. Conduct management reviews in each region and the Washington Office every 5 years.

5717.12 – Quality Assurance Reviews

Quality Assurance Reviews (also known as Activity Reviews) are one of the programmatic review and quality assurance methodologies used in the Aviation Management Program. Within aviation, they include reviews and audits of aviation programs, including operations and personnel. Examples include follow-up to management reviews, field audits which may include specific aircraft contract compliance, aircraft inspection, flightcrew evaluation, aircrew evaluation, policy review, and standardization assurance.

Refer to 5709.16, chapter 30.17 for additional information.

5717.13 – Functional Assistance Trips

Functional Assistance Trips are part of the quality assurance process. Functional assistance trips support the transfer of information in any program or activity, and provide quality assurance in terms of policy, contracts, and operational procedures. Emphasis should be to assist in implementing direction, solving technical or operational problems, exchanging information and determining needs. Examples include, Aviation Safety Technical Assistance Teams (ASTAT), base inspections, operational site visits, preparedness visits, and other similar aviation activities.

Refer to 5709.16, chapter 30.17 for additional information.

5718 – Awards

Individuals and organizations may be recognized with awards for exceptional performance or acts, service in support of agency aviation safety, length of service, or aircraft mishap prevention.

Refer to FSH 5709.16, chapter 18.