

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

**Forest Service Handbook 5709.16 – Flight Operations Handbook  
Chapter 50 – Aircrew Standardization**

**Amendment:** 5709.16-2020-6

**Effective date:** September 09, 2020

**Duration:** This amendment is effective until superseded or removed.

**Approved by:** Jaelith Hall-Rivera, Associate Deputy Chief, S&PF

**Date approved:** September 4, 2020

**Responsible Staff:**

**Last Change:**

**Superseded Document(s):** 5709.16\_60, Amendment 5709.16-2013-1, September 3, 2013;  
5709.16\_40, Amendment 5709.16-2020-5

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

**50:** Establishes new chapter and sets forth codes, captions, and direction for Aircrew Standardization. Revises, consolidates, organizes, and codes direction on aircrew standardization formerly coded in FSH 5709.16, chapter 60 and FSM 5710.

**Table of Contents**

<b>50.1 – Authority.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>50.2 – Objectives .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>50.3 – Policy.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>50.4 – Responsibility .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>50.41 – Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>50.42 – National Standardization Pilots .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>50.42a – National Fixed-wing Standardization Pilot .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>50.42b – National Helicopter Standardization Pilot.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>50.43 – Inspector Pilots .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>50.43a – Fixed-wing Inspector Pilots (FWIP) .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>50.43b – Helicopter Inspector Pilots (HIP).....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>50.44 – Regional Standardization Pilots .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>50.45 – Regional Fixed-Wing Instructor Pilots .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>50.46 – Regional Fixed-Wing Evaluator Pilots.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>50.47 – Forest Service Pilots .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>50.48 – All Forest Service Flightcrew Members .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>50.5 – Definitions.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>50.6 – References.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>50.7 – Quality Assurance.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>51 – Agency Flightcrew .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>51.1 – Pilots .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>51.11 – Instructor Pilots.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>51.12 – Evaluator Pilots .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>51.13 – Inspector Pilots .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>51.14 – Administratively Determined (AD) Pilot.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>51.15 – Forest Service Employees Not Primarily Employed as Pilots .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>51.2 – Medical Certificates .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>51.3 – Flight Time Requirements, Currency, and Pilot Qualifications .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>51.31 – Hiring, In-service Placement, and Promotion .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>51.32 – Agency Pilot Currency Requirements .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>51.32a – Fixed-Wing Pilots .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>51.32b – Helicopter Pilots .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>51.32c – Helicopter Inspector Pilots .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>51.32d – Unmanned Aerial Systems Pilots.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>51.33 - Employee Pilot Duty Assignments .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>51.33a – GS-7 (For developmental pilot positions only) 2199.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>51.33b – GS-2181-9.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>51.33c – GS-2181-11 .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>51.33d – GS-2181-12 .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>51.33e – GS-2181-13 .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>51.34 – Fixed-Wing Pilots Operating Multiple Aircraft.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>51.35 – Helicopter Pilots Operating Multiple Aircraft .....</b>	<b>23</b>

51.36 – Pilot-in-command of Multiple Aircraft .....	25
51.37 – Second-in-command of Multiple Aircraft .....	25
51.38 – Special Use Missions .....	26
51.38a – Backcountry Airstrip Pilot Qualifications .....	26
51.38b – Off-Airport and Off-Seaplane Base (Remote Water Operations) Pilot Qualifications .....	27
51.4 – Contract Pilots Flying Agency Aircraft.....	28
51.5 – Loadmaster .....	28
52 – Agency Flightcrew Training and Evaluations .....	28
52.1 – Flightcrew Training .....	28
52.11 – Flightcrew Training and Proficiency Flight Approval .....	30
52.11a – Washington Office .....	30
52.11b – Regional Office .....	30
52.12 – National Standardized Syllabi .....	30
52.2 – Pilot Training and Qualification Records.....	30
52.3 – Logging Pilot Flight Time .....	31
52.4 – Flightcrew Evaluations.....	31
52.41 – Failure of Flightcrew Evaluation.....	32
52.42 – Suspension and Revocation of Flight Qualifications.....	32
52.43 – Flight Evaluation Board (FEB).....	32
52.43a – Convening a Flight Evaluation Board .....	33
52.43b – Timeliness of Action.....	34
52.43c – Operating Procedures of Board Chairperson .....	35
52.43d – Flight Evaluation Board Findings .....	36
52.43e – Flight Evaluation Board Recommendations .....	37
52.43f – Review of Flight Evaluation Board Report .....	37
52.43g – Flight Evaluation Board Final Action(s) .....	37
52.43h – Reconvening a Flight Evaluation Board.....	39
53 – Agency Flightcrew Procedures.....	39
54 – Vendor Contracts and Flightcrew.....	39
54.1 – Vendor Contracts.....	39
54.11 – Vendor Safety Briefing .....	39
54.11a – Vendor Safety Briefing Content.....	39
54.2 – Vendor Pilot Approvals .....	40
54.21 – Vendor Pilot Approval Forms.....	41
54.22 – Suspension/Revocation .....	41
54.23 – Reinstatement .....	42
54.24 – Alternate Means of Compliance (AMOC) .....	42
54.24a – Prerequisites for Requesting 100 Flight Hour AMOC .....	42
54.24b – Pilot 100 Flight Hour AMOC Approval.....	42
54.24c – Other AMOC Approvals .....	43
54.24d – Pilot Not Granted an AMOC .....	43
54.25 – Failure of Aircrew Evaluation.....	44

54.3 – Authority and Responsibility .....	44
54.4 – Required Flightcrew Members .....	45
55 – Military, Other Federal Agency, and Cooperator Flightcrew Approval .....	45
55.1 – Department of Defense Flightcrews .....	45
55.2 – Federal Executive Agency (non-DOD) Flightcrews.....	45
55.21 – Flightcrew Members Carded by the Department of the Interior .....	46
55.3 – Cooperator Flightcrew Approval .....	46
55.4 – Suspension/Revocation of Approval .....	46
56 – Unmanned Aircraft Systems .....	46
56.1 – Remote Pilots (UAS).....	46

Standardization is a process of developing and implementing policy, procedures, training, and operational requirements which are similar and consistent. Standardization is essential to promote professionalism, consistency, predictability, and safety throughout the Forest Service aviation program. This chapter sets forth the standards for fixed-wing, helicopter, and unmanned aircraft system pilots, flightcrew, and aircrew (agency, partner, cooperator, and vendor).

### **50.1 – Authority**

Refer to FSM 5701.

### **50.2 – Objectives**

Refer to FSM 5702.

### **50.3 – Policy**

The Agency will achieve its objectives using a doctrinal approach that incorporates agency and interagency aviation policies, the 14 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), and Federal laws and regulations for pilot, flightcrew, and aircrew standardization. This is to ensure appropriate, risk-informed decisions, effective management, and standardization consistent with the Agency's aviation missions in the administration and protection of public lands.

All agency pilots, flightcrew, and aircrew will comply with 14 CFR Parts 61, 91, and 107 as a baseline for U.S. Forest Service professional aviation operations. Agency direction must at a minimum complement, and potentially enhance, the aforementioned regulations. Exceptions to this concept of operations must only be through a Grant of Exemption. Conflicts in guidance should be immediately elevated to the appropriate Supervisor for resolution. Until the noted conflict is resolved, adhere to 14 CFR Parts 61, 91, and 107 or the more restrictive and conservative guidance.

### **50.4 – Responsibility**

Responsibilities related to standardization are listed in this section.

#### **50.41 – Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization**

Refer to 5704.

#### **50.42 – National Standardization Pilots**

##### **50.42a – National Fixed-wing Standardization Pilot**

The National Fixed-wing Standardization Pilot reports to the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization and has the responsibility to:

1. Provide leadership and oversight for the development and implementation of a National Fixed-wing Pilot Standardization and Training Program;

2. Perform ground and flight evaluations of pilots, flightcrew, and aircrew in all missions;
3. Perform ground and flight evaluations for initial upgrades to pilot-in-command (PIC), aircraft commander (AC), instructor pilot/aircrew, and evaluator pilot/aircrew;
4. Establish the content and methodology of the National Fixed-wing Inspector Pilot and Agency Fixed-wing Pilot Training Program;
5. Authorize in writing fixed-wing pilot Alternate Means of Compliance (AMOC) in accordance with policy;
6. Initiate, lead, and conduct the annual National Fixed-wing Standardization Workshop;
7. Initiate, lead, and conduct special use mission workshops for inspector pilots, as needed;
8. Oversee development and recommend approval of the U.S. Forest Service National Fixed-wing Pilot Standards Operations Plan;
9. Conduct a Quality Assurance (QA) flight evaluation every 24 months for fixed-wing inspector pilots;
10. Conduct a QA review of agency pilot, flightcrew, and aircrew training records;
11. Understand, implement, and maintain the responsible areas of the FS Aviation Safety Management System within the scope of their duties.

#### **50.42b – National Helicopter Standardization Pilot**

The National Helicopter Standardization Pilot reports to the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization and has the responsibility to:

1. Provide leadership and oversight for the development and implementation of a National Helicopter Pilot Standardization and Training Program;
2. Will designate, in writing, qualified agency instructor pilots and inspector pilots. This will be approved by the Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization;
3. Maintain and approve single/multiple aircraft PIC authorizations for agency helicopter inspector pilots in agency aircraft. Designate Special Use Mission PIC authorization for agency pilots;
4. Establish the content and methodology of the National Helicopter Inspector Pilot (HIP) and Agency Helicopter Pilot Training Program;
5. Authorize helicopter pilot Alternate Means of Compliance (AMOC) as appropriate in accordance with policy;

6. Initiate, lead, and conduct the Interagency Helicopter Inspector Pilot Standardization Workshop and the Forest Service Helicopter Inspector Pilot Workshop;
7. Initiate, lead, and conduct special use mission workshops for agency-approved helicopter inspector pilots, as needed;
8. Receive a QA review from an individual designated by the Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization every 24 months;
9. Conduct a QA review and/or Special Use Mission flight evaluation for agency-designated HIPs every 24 months;
10. Conduct a QA review of agency helicopter pilot, flightcrew, and aircrew training records;
11. Understand, implement, and maintain the responsible areas of the FS Aviation Safety Management System within the scope of their duties.

#### **50.43 – Inspector Pilots**

##### **50.43a – Fixed-wing Inspector Pilots (FWIP)**

National and Regional Office fixed-wing inspector pilots have the responsibility to:

1. Provide leadership and oversight to assist in the development and implementation of the inspector pilot training program;
2. Perform contract pilot inspections;
3. In coordination with the Contracting Officer, approve or suspend authorization of vendor pilots to operate airplanes under agency/interagency contracts and agreements;
4. Administer vendor aircrew evaluations for the purpose of authorizing agency or interagency special use missions;
5. Provide evaluation and technical oversight of vendor pilots, aircraft, and equipment used in agency or interagency missions;
6. Serve as an agency aviation subject matter expert on aviation boards, incident and accident investigations, contract compliance inspections, and Aviation Safety and Technical Assistance Teams (ASTAT), as needed;
7. Act as a liaison with the military, commercial airplane industry, cooperators, and interagency partners, as needed;
8. Provide the National Fixed-wing Standardization Pilot with recommendations for an Alternate Means of Compliance (AMOC);

9. Conduct a QA review of agency pilot, flightcrew, and aircrew training records, as directed by the Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization;
10. Perform pilot evaluations/inspections, briefings, and interagency pilot approvals, based on the applicable aircraft contract or cooperator agreements;
11. Attend the National Fixed-wing Inspector Pilot Workshop every 24 months;
12. Understand, implement, and maintain the responsible areas of the Forest Service Aviation Safety Management System within the scope of their duties.

#### **50.43b – Helicopter Inspector Pilots (HIP)**

National and Regional Office helicopter inspector pilots have the responsibility to:

1. Provide leadership and oversight to assist in the development and implementation of the helicopter inspector pilot training program;
2. Approve or suspend authorization of vendor pilots to operate helicopters under agency/interagency contracts and agreements, in coordination with the Contracting Officer;
3. Administer helicopter pilot evaluations for the purpose of authorizing agency/interagency special use missions. Provide evaluation and technical oversight of helicopter pilots, aircraft, and equipment used in agency/interagency missions;
4. Serve as an agency aviation subject matter expert on aviation boards, incident/accident investigations, ASTAT, FAST, and contract compliance inspections;
5. Act as a liaison with the military, commercial helicopter industry, cooperators, and interagency partners;
6. Provide the National Helicopter Standardization Pilot with recommendations for an AMOC;
7. Receive a QA review from the National Helicopter Standardization Pilot every 24 months;
8. Perform pilot evaluations/inspections, briefings, and interagency pilot approvals, based on the applicable aircraft contract or cooperator agreements;
9. Attend either the National Helicopter Inspector Pilot Workshop or the Interagency Helicopter Inspector Pilot Workshop every 12 months;
10. Understand, implement, and maintain the responsible areas of the Forest Service Aviation Safety Management System within the scope of their duties.



#### **50.44 – Regional Standardization Pilots**

Regional Standardization Pilots are responsible to the Regional Aviation Officer (RAO), and have the responsibility to:

1. Provide leadership and oversight for the development and implementation of a Regional Pilot Standardization and Training Program that aligns with the National standardization program;
2. Recommend agency instructor and inspector pilot designations to the Regional Aviation Officer;
3. Perform duties at the National workshops;
4. Oversee the maintenance of regional pilot and flightcrew training records;
5. Coordinate with the National Office to provide leadership and oversight in the creation of training materials and syllabi required for the safe and effective execution of the Forest Service aviation mission;
6. Coordinate with the National Office to organize and lead special use mission workshops and training sessions for inspector pilots; and
7. Understand, implement, and maintain the responsible areas of the Forest Service Aviation Safety Management System within the scope of their duties.

#### **50.45 – Regional Fixed-Wing Instructor Pilots**

Regional fixed-wing instructor pilots have the responsibility to:

1. Provide ground and flight instruction for pilots, flightcrew, and aircrew that aligns with the Regional and National Fixed-wing Pilot Standardization and Training Program;
2. Provide aircraft equipment evaluations for pilots, flightcrew, and aircrew;
3. Demonstrate the highest level of performance and quality control. Ensure that standards are being met, intervene where standards are not being met, and escalate issues to the appropriate National/Regional standardization pilot;
4. Create training materials as required for the safe and effective execution of the Forest Service aviation mission in support of the Regional and National Fixed-wing Standardization Program; and
5. Understand, implement, and maintain the responsible areas of the Forest Service Aviation Safety Management System within the scope of their duties.

## **50.46 – Regional Fixed-Wing Evaluator Pilots**

Regional fixed-wing evaluator pilots have the responsibility to:

1. Perform ground and special use mission flight evaluations of pilots, flightcrew, and aircrew that aligns with the Regional and National Fixed-wing Pilot Standardization and Training Program;
2. Demonstrate the highest level of performance and quality control. Ensure that standards are being met, intervene where standards are not being met, and escalate issues to the appropriate National/Regional standardization pilot; and
3. Understand, implement, and maintain the responsible areas of the Forest Service Aviation Safety Management System within the scope of their duties.

## **50.47 – Forest Service Pilots**

Reserved.

## **50.48 – All Forest Service Flightcrew Members**

All Forest Service flightcrew members have the responsibility to:

1. Maintain flight and training records, and make them available on Supervisor's request.
2. Bring emerging pilot and flightcrew standardization issues to the attention of the appropriate Regional Aviation Officer/Washington Office Branch or the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization through the National Standardization Pilot.

## **50.5 – Definitions**

Refer to FSM 5705.

## **50.6 – References**

Refer to FSM 5706.

## **50.7 – Quality Assurance**

Refer to FSM 5717.

## **51 – Agency Flightcrew**

### **51.1 – Pilots**

Agency pilots must be initially evaluated by the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization or the respective National Standardization Pilot, or designee, in accordance with

the appropriate guide. Their inspector, instructor/evaluator, pilot in command, and all mission designation must be approved in writing by the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization. In addition:

1. Agency pilots must be appropriately rated for the category and class of aircraft assigned.
2. All pilots, with the exception of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), must have, at a minimum, an FAA commercial pilot certificate and instrument rating within the appropriate category and class, as well as any required endorsements. UAS pilots must be appropriately certificated in accordance with 14 CFR, Part 107 and the Agency UAS Operations Plan.
3. For aircraft greater than 12,500 pounds maximum takeoff weight (MTOW) or an aircraft requiring a type rating, the pilots must possess appropriate aircraft type ratings, and either (a) a valid FAA commercial pilot certificate and instrument rating, or (b) an Airline Transport Pilot (ATP) certificate.

#### **51.11 – Instructor Pilots**

1. All instructor pilots must possess a current FAA certified flight instructor certificate with the appropriate category, class, and type rating if required (to include required endorsements) for any aircraft in which they instruct. Fixed-wing instructor pilots must hold an instrument instructor certificate.
2. All instructor pilots will be recommended by the Regional Aviation Officer to the respective National Standardization Pilot for consideration and approval.
3. Fixed-wing and helicopter instructor pilots must maintain aircraft currency in the category and class, and type rating if required, for the aircraft in which they are instructing. Refer to 51.3 for agency currency requirements.
4. All instructor pilot designations are specific to aircraft and special use mission. Instructor pilots are restricted from providing instruction in any type of aircraft and/or special use mission for which they are not specifically designated.

#### **51.12 – Evaluator Pilots**

Evaluator pilots are mission instruct pilots and must meet the same requirements for instructor pilots in 51.11.

#### **51.13 – Inspector Pilots**

1. All inspector pilots must possess a current FAA certified flight instructor certificate. Inspector pilots will be familiar with the aircraft type, performance characteristics and performance planning charts for any aircraft in which they conduct inspections. Fixed-wing inspector pilots must additionally hold an instrument instructor certificate.

Current inspector pilots who do not possess an FAA certified flight instructor certificate are exempt from this requirement until they obtain the certificate, or they retire from the Agency.

2. The Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization; National Standardization Pilot; and National inspector pilots may perform inspector pilot duties for any special use mission as designated on the Forest Service Approved Inspectors list.

3. Fixed-wing inspector pilots must be current in the special use mission type they are evaluating. Fixed-wing inspector pilots current as Leadplane or Air Tactical Pilots or Smokejumper Captains are considered current special use mission inspector pilots. Fixed-wing pilots who are not current must demonstrate proficiency in the tasks outlined in the Interagency Practical Test Standards Guide.

4. Regional fixed-wing inspector pilots will be recommended in official correspondence by the Regional Aviation Officer to the National Fixed-wing Standardization Pilot for consideration and approval.

5. Candidates for helicopter inspector pilot designations must be Federal or State employees who have the necessary ratings and qualifications and who meet the requirements of this chapter.

6. Helicopter inspector pilots shall be designated by the Helicopter Standardization Pilot, with approval from the Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization.

#### **51.14 – Administratively Determined (AD) Pilot**

All pilots hired under Administratively Determined (AD) Emergency Firefighting authority to perform pilot services in aircraft owned, leased, or rented by the Agency, must be considered agency employee pilots and must meet all agency pilot qualification requirements listed in 51.1.

#### **51.15 – Forest Service Employees Not Primarily Employed as Pilots**

All agency employees not primarily employed as pilots but who qualify as collateral duty pilots (for example, a GS-2101) must meet all appropriate agency pilot qualification requirements in this chapter for the make/model of aircraft being flown before being authorized to perform pilot services in aircraft owned, leased, or rented by the Agency.

Forest Service employees not employed as pilots operate small UAS utilizing a Government aircraft for government benefit will meet training requirements as specified in FSH 5709.16, chapter 60, as well as all agency remote pilot qualification requirements in 56.1. Approval of remote pilots (UAS) must be on the approval card.

#### **51.2 – Medical Certificates**

Agency personnel performing pilot duties aboard government aircraft must have a current first or second class FAA medical certificate.

### **51.3 – Flight Time Requirements, Currency, and Pilot Qualifications**

#### **51.31 – Hiring, In-service Placement, and Promotion**

All agency pilots must comply with Office of Personnel Management (OPM) qualification and classification standards, and flight time requirements in hiring, in-service placement, and promotion. More stringent requirements may be specified for positions requiring a higher level of experience, including specific aircraft ratings, training, or unique aviation qualifications.

The Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization may waive flight hour requirements or other qualifications in accordance with OPM policy.

**51.32 – Agency Pilot Currency Requirements****51.32a – Fixed-Wing Pilots**

Fixed-wing agency pilots must meet all applicable flight time and training requirements listed in 51.32a, exhibit 01 prior to an operational mission.

**51.32a - Exhibit 01****Fixed-Wing Pilot Flight Time and Training Requirements**

<b>Minimum Annual Requirements (Hours):</b>	
Flight Time <sup>1</sup> (last 12 months)	100 <sup>2</sup> in the preceding 12 months
Flight Time in Category	24 in the preceding 12 months
Emergency Procedures Training Professional Simulator School <sup>3</sup>	Every 12 calendar months
Aircraft Standards Evaluation (Equipment/Instrument)	Every 12 calendar months (at least every 24 calendar months for each aircraft) <sup>4</sup>
Special-Use Aircrew Mission Evaluation	Every 12 calendar months for each mission
<p><sup>1</sup> Pilots unable to attain 100 flight hours must request an Alternate Means of Compliance (AMOC) through the National Fixed-wing Standardization Pilot. If approved, pilot will undergo recurrent flight training and a proficiency flight evaluation in order to re-establish designation as PIC. The request for this waiver must be made through the pilot's chain of command. This AMOC is only to be used in extenuating circumstances such as long-term medical grounding and slow fire-seasons. An AMOC should be the exception to the rule, not a tool used to reduce training flight hour requirements.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> When the position requires operation as PIC of large multi-engine airplanes (GTOW &gt; 12,500 pounds) then at least 25 hours must have been flown in such large airplanes.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> For single engine aircraft for which a simulator is not available emergency procedures training requirements will be documented and approved by the Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization.</p> <p><sup>4</sup> If a pilot flies a single aircraft, a single standards aircrew evaluation is required every year. If a pilot flies two (2) different aircraft, a standards aircrew evaluation in each aircraft is required every other year. If a pilot flies three (3) different aircraft, the potential exists for two (2) standards aircrew evaluations per year.</p>	
<b>Preceding 6 Calendar Months Requirements:</b>	
Six (6) Instrument Approaches and holding in actual IMC, or in simulated conditions with a qualified pilot acting as a safety pilot. A pilot who has failed to meet the instrument experience requirements for more than six calendar months must reestablish instrument currency only by completing an instrument proficiency check.	
<b>Preceding 90 Day Minimum Requirements<sup>5</sup>:</b>	
Three (3) Takeoffs/Landings	
Three (3) Night Takeoffs/Full-Stop Landings	
One (1) Hour	
<sup>5</sup> Requirements must be accomplished in category, class, and type, if type rating is required. For currency in float/tailwheel aircraft, requirements must be accomplished in similarly configured aircraft.	

Forest Service Handbook 5709.16 – Flight Operations Handbook

Chapter 50 – Aircrew Standardization

Amendment: 5709.16-2020-6

Effective date: September 09, 2020

51.32a - Exhibit 01--Continued

Preceding 60 Day Minimum Requirements (Hours):	
Flight Time Category	10 <sup>6</sup>
<sup>6</sup> . A pilot who has failed to meet the 60 day flight hour requirement has a 30 day grace period in which to regain currency without an instructor pilot. To regain currency after the grace period, the pilot must complete the appropriate refresher syllabus.	
Other Requirements:	
National Fixed-wing Standardization Workshop	Every 24 calendar months
National Inspector Pilot Workshop (inspectors only)	Every 24 calendar months
Standardization Branch approved Crew Resource Management (CRM) training	Every 36 calendar months

**51.32b – Helicopter Pilots**

Agency helicopter pilots must:

1. Meet flight time and training requirements listed in 51.32b Exhibit 01.
2. In addition to minimum OPM flight time requirements, helicopter pilots at GS-2181 must meet Forest Service minimum requirements listed in 51.32b, exhibit 02, plus any additional requirements.

**51.32b - Exhibit 01****Helicopter Pilot and Flightcrew Flight Time Requirements**

<b>Minimum Annual Requirements (Hours):</b>	
Flight Time <sup>1</sup> (every 12 calendar months)	24 in the preceding 12 months
<b>Preceding 90 Day Minimum Requirements:</b>	
	3 Takeoffs/Landings 3 Takeoffs/Landings Night (full stop)
<b>Other Requirements:</b>	
Factory School <sup>2</sup>	Every 12 calendar months <sup>3</sup>
National Interagency Helicopter Inspector Pilot Standardization Workshop OR Helicopter Pilot Workshop	Every 12 calendar months
Crew Resource Management (CRM)	Every 36 calendar months
<sup>1</sup> Helicopter pilots unable to attain 24 flight hours must request an AMOC through the National Helicopter Standardization Pilot. <sup>2</sup> A flight review (equipment check) in any aircraft type may be substituted for the annual Factory School training. <sup>3</sup> Annually, each helicopter pilot must attend helicopter Factory School or an equivalent course approved by the Standardization Branch.	



**51.32b - Exhibit 02**

**Helicopter Pilot and Flightcrew GS 12/13/14 Flight Time Requirements**

	<b>Minimum OPM Requirement</b>	<b>Minimum Forest Service Requirement</b>
PIC, helicopter	1,500	1,500
Helicopter preceding 12 months	100	100
FAA weight class	None	100*
Make and model	None	50* <sup>1</sup>
Make, model, series, last 12 months <sup>2</sup>	None	10*
Mountain flying (FSM 5710.5)	None	200*
Turbine helicopter operations	None	100*
<sup>1</sup> Flight hour requirements may be reduced by 50% if the pilot submits evidence of satisfactory completion of the manufacturer's approved pilot ground and flight procedures training in the applicable make and model.		
* Denotes a Forest Service requirement beyond OPM requirements.		

**51.32c – Helicopter Inspector Pilots**

Agency helicopter inspector pilots must:

1. Meet flight time and training requirements listed in 51.32c, exhibit 01.

**51.32c - Exhibit 01****Helicopter Inspector Pilot Time Requirements**

<b>Minimum Annual Requirements:</b>	
Flight Time <sup>1</sup> (last 12 months)	24 <sup>2</sup> Flying Hours
<sup>1</sup> If a HIP is acting as an agency helicopter pilot, they must meet the flight time requirements in 51.32b.	
<sup>2</sup> For HIP annual flying time, the target requirement is 6 hours of flying time per quarter.	
<b>Preceding 90 Day Minimum Requirements:</b>	
Acting as PIC (day)	3 Takeoffs/Landings
Acting as PIC (night)	3 Takeoffs/Landings Night (full stop)
<b>Other Requirements:</b>	
Factory School <sup>3</sup>	Yearly <sup>4</sup>
National Interagency Helicopter Inspector Pilot Standardization Workshop OR Helicopter Pilot Workshop	Yearly
Crew Resource Management (CRM)	Every 3 years
<sup>3</sup> A flight review (equipment check) in any aircraft type may be substituted for the annual Factory School training.	
<sup>4</sup> Annually, each helicopter pilot must attend helicopter Factory School or an equivalent course approved by the Standardization Branch.	

### **51.32d – Unmanned Aerial Systems Pilots**

Agency UAS pilots must meet the training, qualifications, currency, and proficiency requirements listed in the Forest Service UAS Operations Plan.

### **51.33 - Employee Pilot Duty Assignments**

#### **51.33a – GS-7 (For developmental pilot positions only) 2199**

Pilots at the GS-7 level are hired primarily as trainees and can perform only limited flight missions. They may serve as flightcrew members in the following capacity, provided they have at least a commercial pilot certificate in the appropriate category and class, an instrument rating, and meet the currency requirements of 51.32.

1. Serve as PIC, Visual Flight Rules (VFR) point-to-point or reconnaissance flight assignments in light single-engine aircraft.
2. Serve as copilot on light twin-engine aircraft and transport category aircraft.
3. Employee pilots at the GS-7 level may not be assigned Aerial Supervision Module/Leadplane, Smokejumper, or Seaplane responsibilities due to the complexities involved in these missions.

In the event a GS-7 pilot candidate is unable to comply with the check ride and currency requirements, the pilot must remain in training status without mission assignments until successfully completing all the requirements. Repeated failure can result in personnel action, such as reassignment or termination.

#### **51.33b – GS-2181-9**

Pilots at the GS-9 level are hired in career ladder (9/11/12) positions with expectations for advancement after extensive training in a variety of Forest Service mission activities. They may serve as flightcrew members in the following capacity, provided they have at least a commercial pilot certificate in the appropriate category and class, an instrument rating, and meet the currency requirements of 51.32.

1. Serve as PIC in light single- and multi-engine aircraft with a maximum certified takeoff weight of 12,500 pounds or less.
2. Copilot assignments in transport category aircraft.

Employee pilots at the GS-9 level may not be assigned Aerial Supervision Module/Leadplane, Smokejumper, or Seaplane Pilot-in-Command responsibilities due to the complexities involved in the mission.

### **51.33c – GS-2181-11**

Pilots at the GS-11 level are hired in career ladder (9/11/12 or 11/12) positions with expectations for advancement after completion of applicable time-in-grade requirements and training qualification in a variety of Forest Service mission activities. They may serve as flightcrew members in the following capacity, provided they have at least a commercial pilot certificate in the appropriate category and class, an instrument rating, and meet the currency requirements of 51.32.

1. PIC of light single- and multi-engine aircraft 12,500 pounds or less maximum certified takeoff weight for VFR point-to-point missions, and IFR missions for any aircraft for which they are qualified and approved.
2. Copilot assignments in transport category aircraft.
3. PIC for Special Use Missions other than Leadplane, Air Tactical, Smokejumper, or Seaplane. Exception: Pilots at the GS-11 level who have completed mission specific training and qualification in one or more of these missions, but lack time-in-grade experience, may act as PIC in the appropriate mission, but must be promoted to the GS-12 level upon reaching time-in-grade.
4. Instructor Pilot in light single- and multi-engine aircraft, provided they currently hold a Certified Flight Instructor (CFI) certificate with a Single Engine or Multi-Engine Instructor (MEI) rating and a Certified Flight Instructor Instrument (CFII) rating.
5. Employee pilots at the GS-11 level may not be assigned as Aerial Supervision Module/Leadplane, Smokejumper, or Seaplane instructor pilots due to the complexities involved in the mission.

### **51.33d – GS-2181-12**

Pilots at GS-12 level must meet time in grade requirements and be fully qualified as PIC in the Aerial Supervision Module/Leadplane, Smokejumper, or Seaplane mission. They may serve as flightcrew members in the following capacity, provided they have at least a commercial pilot certificate in the appropriate category and class, an instrument rating, and meet the currency requirements of 51.32.

1. PIC of transport category aircraft, provided they have an Airline Transport Pilot Certificate (ATP) and the appropriate type rating.
2. GS-12 pilots may function as Aerial Supervision Module/Leadplane, Smokejumper, or Seaplane mission instructor, evaluator and/or inspector pilots provided they maintain the training, proficiency, and special use mission qualification.
3. May function as instructor pilots in transport category aircraft provided they currently hold a Certified Flight Instructor (CFI) certificate with Multi-Engine Instructor (MEI)

rating, a Certified Flight Instructor Instrument (CFII) rating, and the appropriate type rating.

### **51.33e – GS-2181-13**

Pilots at GS-13 level must meet time-in-grade requirements and be assigned duties as National/Regional Program Manager or Standardization Pilot, or be classified at the GS-13 level based on additional OPM standards.

### **51.34 – Fixed-Wing Pilots Operating Multiple Aircraft**

Fixed-wing pilots may be designated in and act as PIC and/or Second-In-Command (SIC) in no more than three (3) aircraft “groups” as defined in 51.34, exhibit 01.

For purposes related to standardization and training programmatic oversight, the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization, National Standardization Pilot, and National inspector pilots are authorized to operate, instruct, and evaluate in multiple aircraft without numerical restriction.

**51.34 - Exhibit 01**

**Examples of Fixed-Wing Groups**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Model</b>
Transport Category Airplane	Any series which falls under the Type Rating or is considered by the FAA in common with another type rating (i.e. CASA C-235 and C-295)
Multi-Engine Turboprop	
Beechcraft	B65-A90, 90, 99, 100, and 200
Cessna	Any 400 series
Fairchild	SA 226-227 Series
Piper	Cheyenne Series
Rockwell Commander	680T, 690V, 680W, and 690
Multi-Engine General Purpose	
Beechcraft	B50, 55, 56, 57, 58, 60, 70, and 95
Cessna	T303, C310, 320, 340, and 400 Series
Cessna	336 and 337
Piper	PA-23, PA-30, PA-31, PA-34, PA-39, and PA-44
Rockwell Commander	500, 560, 680, 685, and 720
Single-Engine General Purpose	All single-engine airplanes of not more than 12,500 pounds MTOW, other than turbine-powered airplanes. The type of operation may require specific training, such as seaplane, ski-plane, or tailwheel.
Additional Forest Service Groups	
De Havilland	DHC-6-400, 300, and 200 series
Shorts	SD3-30, SD3-60, C-23

**51.35 – Helicopter Pilots Operating Multiple Aircraft**

For helicopter pilots-in-command qualified in more than one “group” of aircraft, 6-month proficiency checks must be given alternately in each aircraft. Examples of defined groups are displayed in 51.35, exhibit 01.

**51.35 - Exhibit 01****Examples of Helicopter Groups**

<b>Make</b>	<b>Model</b>
Agusta	A-119
Agusta	AW-139
Bell	47 Series (All Recips)
Bell	47 Series (Soloy)
Bell	206A, 206B, 206B3
Bell	206L, 206L1, 206L3, 206L4
Bell	407
Bell	204, 205, UH-1, All Series
Bell	212, 412
Bell	214
Bell	210
Boeing	BV-107-II, KV-107-II
Boeing	BV-234, CH-47
Boeing	369 (500) Series
Boeing	MD-600N
Boeing	MD-900, 902
Enstrom	28 Series
Eurocopter	SA-315, SA-316, SA0319 (Alouette/Lama)
Eurocopter	SA-318
Eurocopter	AS 350 Series (A-star)
Eurocopter	AS-355 Series (Twin Star)
Eurocopter	SA-341 (Gazelle)
Eurocopter	SA-360
Eurocopter	SA-365 (Dauphin)
Eurocopter	SA-330, AS-332 (Puma)
Eurocopter	MBB-105 Series
Eurocopter	BK-117 Series
Eurocopter	EC-145
Eurocopter	ED-135
Eurocopter	EC-120
Eurocopter	BO-105
Hiller	12 Series (Recips)
Hiller	12 Series (Soloy)
Hiller	FH-1100
Hughes/Schweizer	269 (300) Series (Recips)

**Forest Service Handbook 5709.16 – Flight Operations Handbook**

**Chapter 50 – Aircrew Standardization**

**Amendment:** 5709.16-2020-6

**Effective date:** September 09, 2020

**51.35 - Exhibit 01--Continued**

<b>Make</b>	<b>Model</b>
Schweitzer	330
Sikorsky	S-55, H-19 (Recip), S-55T
Sikorsky	S-58, H-34 Series (Recip), S-58T Series
Sikorsky	S-62
Sikorsky	S-61 Series, SH-3
Sikorsky	S-64, CH-54
Sikorsky	CH-53
Sikorsky	S-76 Series
Sikorsky	S-70, Uh-60 Series



### **51.36 – Pilot-in-command of Multiple Aircraft**

Fixed-wing and Helicopter pilots may be designated as PIC in no more than three (3) groups of aircraft at any one time. No restrictions apply to remote pilots.

The respective National Standardization Pilot will review and recommend all multiple aircraft PIC designations to the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization. The Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization may further limit the ability to be qualified in multiple aircraft for reasons such as mission complexity, aircrew experience, or when significant differences within aircraft make and model exist.

If a need for a change in an aircrew member's designated aircraft qualification is required, the following procedures must apply:

1. The pilot must meet the applicable Forest Service requirements associated with the request.
2. The request will be submitted through the pilot's chain of command to the National Standardization Pilot and will include which aircraft designation should be removed and replaced along with justification for the new designation.
3. The pilot must have completed an authorized ground school in the previous three (3) months for the aircraft being requested.
4. The pilot must complete the approved syllabi for both the equipment and the special use mission before completing the required evaluations.
5. The pilot must accomplish a standards aircrew evaluation prior to operating as PIC.
6. The pilot must accomplish a special use mission aircrew evaluation prior to acting as PIC on any special use mission training or operational flights.
7. This requirement may be temporarily waived if the flight is conducted under the direct supervision of a current and qualified instructor.

The pilot must be appropriately designated as PIC in the requested aircraft.

### **51.37 – Second-in-command of Multiple Aircraft**

1. A pilot who has passed their initial standards aircrew evaluation may be assigned in writing by the Regional Aviation Officer to operate as a SIC of up to three (3) aircraft defined by group after satisfactory completion of the following:

- a. The pilot must have completed an authorized ground school in the previous three (3) months prior to designation.
- b. The pilot must complete the approved syllabi for the equipment and/or special use mission before completing the required evaluations.

- c. The pilot must accomplish a standards aircrew evaluation prior to operating as SIC.
  - d. The pilot must accomplish a special use mission aircrew evaluation prior to acting as SIC on any special use mission operational flights.
2. A designated PIC may act in the capacity of SIC on an aircraft certificated for either single or dual pilots when conducting flights commensurate with their current aircrew evaluation(s).
  3. In aircraft where the certificate or operations manual requires two pilots, the SIC must hold the appropriate category and class, and type rating if required, along with an instrument rating.
  4. The SIC must maintain currency in the aircraft.

### **51.38 – Special Use Missions**

Any flight that is not point-to-point is considered a Special Use Mission. Special use mission flights are incident or project flights conducted for the express purpose of performing, or directly supporting, an agency for management of an incident or project. Special use mission flights may require special pilot endorsements, flight evaluations, training, and/or specialized aircraft equipment.

To act as PIC on a special use mission, the pilot must meet all requirements of this handbook and successfully complete the appropriate standards and mission flightcrew evaluations, as applicable.

Examples of special use mission flights include but are not limited to: dropping retardant or water (including scooper operations), aerial supervision, low-level flight below 500 feet, mountain flying, airtanker mission, Infrared (IR), reconnaissance, survey, aerial photo, night vision device (NVD), night tactical missions, all external loads, smokejumper and cargo delivery, back country airfield operations, off airport operations, search and rescue, counter narcotics activities, research, rappel, short-haul, tactical transport of fire crews, overhead, all UAS flights, or other personnel or cargo required for management of an incident or project, seaplane operations, and water landings.

#### **51.38a – Backcountry Airstrip Pilot Qualifications**

Pilots must maintain proficiency and currency for high-complexity backcountry airstrips within the preceding 24 months prior to backcountry missions. Pilots must not be dispatched for backcountry missions without meeting currency requirements.

Initial Pilot Approval Requirements:

1. Minimum of 200-hours pilot experience in category in typical terrain and density altitudes. This must include agency-approved backcountry airstrip training.

2. Pass an initial flight evaluation performed by an authorized USDA Forest Service or DOI/OAS instructor/inspector pilot. A flight evaluation must require a successful take-off and landing at a minimum of two backcountry airstrips.

**Currency Requirements:**

1. A pilot may acquire currency in any pilot station.
2. Pilots shall complete a minimum of 5 takeoffs and 5 landings at 2 different backcountry airstrips in the preceding 12 months, before being qualified to takeoff with cargo/passengers. Pilots can maintain currency with cargo/passengers aboard.
3. Pilots shall have a flight evaluation from an authorized USDA Forest Service or DOI/OAS inspector/instructor pilot every 36 months.
4. Pilots will maintain proficiency for high complexity airstrips within the preceding 24 months prior to backcountry missions carrying passengers. Refer to FSH 5709.16, 37.1.
5. Pilots shall not be dispatched for backcountry missions without meeting currency requirements.

**51.38b – Off-Airport and Off-Seaplane Base (Remote Water Operations) Pilot Qualifications**

Pilots shall be endorsed for this operation.

**Initial Pilot Approval Requirements:**

1. Currency is based on aircraft Category and Class.
2. Minimum of 200-hours pilot experience in typical terrain and density altitudes. This must include agency-approved off-airport training.
3. Pass an initial flight evaluation performed by an authorized USDA Forest Service or DOI/OAS Instructor/Inspector Pilot. A flight evaluation must require a successful take-off and landing at a minimum of two off-airport locations.

**Currency Requirements:**

1. Currency is based on aircraft Category and Class. A pilot may acquire currency in any pilot station.
2. Pilots shall complete a minimum of 5 takeoffs/landings at 2 different off-airport locations in the preceding 12 months.
3. Pilots shall have a flight evaluation from an authorized USDA Forest Service or DOI/OAS inspector/instructor pilot every 36 months.

## 51.4 – Contract Pilots Flying Agency Aircraft

Reserved.

## 51.5 – Loadmaster

Reserved.

## 52 – Agency Flightcrew Training and Evaluations

### 52.1 – Flightcrew Training

1. The Washington Office Pilot Standardization Branch must:
  - a. Oversee the development, implementation, and approval of aviation training and evaluation requirements in coordination with Regional Standardization Pilots and Instructor Pilots specific to all Forest Service special use missions.
  - b. Approve aviation training, qualification requirements, and national syllabi. After approval, the National Standardization Pilots, Regional Standardization Pilots, and Instructor Pilots must implement these training plans.
  - c. Coordinate with the National UAS Program Manager to develop, implement, and approve UAS training and evaluation requirements.
2. National standardized syllabi must identify initial, recurrent, refresher, and upgrade aviation training needs, both general and mission-specific.
  - a. Only flightcrew who have successfully completed the appropriate syllabi and have been appropriately designated may act as qualified flightcrew in their respective position on operational flights. Flightcrew who are gaining experience or are in an upgrade program may participate in training or operational flights if under the direct supervision of a qualified and current instructor for the respective position.
  - b. The following general training requirements apply to both aircraft and special use mission designations. Additional training requirements may exist for special use missions.
    - (1) Instructor – In order to be qualified as an aircrew instructor, the candidate must complete individual ground training and flight training syllabi. The instructor must receive their initial instructor evaluation from a designated National Standardization Pilot. Additional aircraft instructor designations may be added through joint approval of the National Standardization Pilot and the respective RAO.

After initial designation as an instructor, all subsequent flightcrew evaluations must be conducted with the candidate performing duties as an instructor.

Subsequent flightcrew evaluations will consider ground and flight instruction and will be conducted by a designated instructor pilot for equipment evaluations, or an evaluator pilot for mission evaluations.

(2) Evaluator – In order to be qualified as a flightcrew evaluator, the candidate must complete individual ground training and flight training syllabi. The evaluator must receive their initial evaluation from a designated National Standardization Pilot. Additional mission evaluator designations may be added by the Washington Office Pilot Standardization Branch.

After initial designation as an evaluator, all subsequent flightcrew evaluations must be conducted with the candidate performing duties as an evaluator or instructor. Subsequent flightcrew evaluations will consider ground and flight instruction and will be conducted by a representative authorized to conduct ground and flight evaluations on behalf of the National Standardization Pilot.

(3) Fixed-Wing Inspector Pilot – Fixed-wing inspector pilots must be trained in accordance with the Fixed-Wing Inspector Pilot (FWIP) Syllabus. Refer to the Washington Office Pilot Standardization Branch for the training syllabus.

(4) Helicopter Inspector Pilot – Helicopter inspector pilots must be trained in accordance with the Helicopter Inspector Pilot (HIP) Syllabus. Refer to the Washington Office Pilot Standardization Branch for the training syllabus.

1. National Fixed-wing Standardization Workshop. Designated fixed-wing pilots must attend this workshop annually. This workshop satisfies training requirements for CRM, safety, and instrument training. Individual topics that focus on agency emphasis items, aircrew and aircraft trend data, or other special training should be considered as complementary agenda items. Knowledge assessments should be considered at every workshop to assess the effectiveness of training.

2. National Interagency Fixed-Wing Inspector Pilot Workshop. Designated fixed-wing inspector pilots must attend this workshop biennially. The purpose of this workshop is to ensure National standardization in all fixed-wing operations. The workshop is organized and facilitated by the National Fixed-wing Standardization Pilot in cooperation with the Office of Aviation Services (OAS).

3. National Interagency Helicopter Inspector Pilot Standardization Workshop. Designated helicopter inspector pilots must attend this workshop biennially. The purpose of this workshop is to ensure National standardization in all interagency helicopter operations. The workshop is organized and facilitated by the National Helicopter Standardization Pilot in cooperation with the Office of Aviation Services (OAS).

4. Forest Service Helicopter Inspector Pilot Workshop. The purpose of this workshop is to provide continuing education and standardization on special use missions for pilots and inspector pilots. The workshop is organized, funded, and facilitated by the National Helicopter Standardization Pilot on an annual basis, if needed.

## **52.11 – Flightcrew Training and Proficiency Flight Approval**

### **52.11a – Washington Office**

Washington Office pilot training and proficiency flights must be approved in a specific Operations Plan or Mission Aviation Safety Plan (MASP).

### **52.11b – Regional Office**

Regional pilot training and proficiency flights must be approved in a specific Operations Plan or MASP.

## **52.12 – National Standardized Syllabi**

A National standardized syllabus must be developed for each flightcrew position on each aircraft make, model, and series for each special use mission. Syllabi must clearly define expected performance standards and emphasize training to proficiency and standards, with the goal of finding a responsible balance between capability and cost.

## **52.2 – Pilot Training and Qualification Records**

All agency pilot competency records must be maintained in the pilot's training and qualification record and must contain at least the following:

1. A master list of pilot's training and qualification requirements.
2. Record of initial and refresher training flights.
3. Record of initial and recurrent flight evaluations.
4. Record of standards checks.
5. Record of mission qualification evaluations.
6. Record of simulator/training device training.
7. Record of flight time (FS 5700-25).
8. Interagency Aviation Training (IAT) certificates and qualifications.
9. Workshops and training certificates.

The official pilot training and qualification record must contain at least two years of the above information. Older information may be archived.

Pilot training and qualification records contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII), and must be secured against unauthorized access. The RAO must designate an employee to maintain pilot training and qualification records for the Region. It is the individual pilot's responsibility to ensure that all records are sent to the designated employee and are kept up to date.

The Washington Office Pilot Standardization Branch will provide quality assurance visits to the regions to review pilot training and qualification records at least every 3 years.

All employee training and qualification records must meet the requirements stated in the FSH 5109.17 for all NWCG qualifications.

### **52.3 – Logging Pilot Flight Time**

Forest Service employee pilots must record the breakdown of flight time as required in 14 CFR 61.51 and must document the breakdown on form FS-5700-25, Record of Individual Flying Time.

### **52.4 – Flightcrew Evaluations**

All flightcrew evaluations must consist of an oral evaluation and check ride (simulator or flight) and may include a written evaluation. Every evaluation must cover the topics defined by the FAA for the highest level of FAA certificate the pilot holds. For example, a pilot who holds an ATP certificate must demonstrate a knowledge and performance level that at a minimum meets the FAA Practical Test Standards. The same pilot is also responsible for any agency requirements or expectations that exceed those of the FAA.

1. Standards and special use mission evaluations must be conducted by the last day of the month on a 12-month cycle. Evaluations should be accomplished within the 3-month window prior to the currency expiration of the flightcrew evaluation. Failure to complete any evaluation prior to the end of the relevant cycle will require the flightcrew member to conduct an AMOC approved by the Washington Office Pilot Standardization Branch.
2. When accomplishing an equipment-related flightcrew position upgrade or when adding an equipment-related qualification, the standards evaluation must be considered accomplished and the 12-month cycle must be reset.
3. Special use mission evaluations must be considered accomplished and the 12-month cycle reset when the flightcrew member upgrades to PIC, Instructor Pilot, or Evaluator Pilot in the mission.
4. Standards and special use mission flightcrew evaluations may be accomplished simultaneously if all required items are accomplished and the Evaluator Pilot is current and qualified to conduct the individual evaluations.
5. Unscheduled aircrew evaluations in the form of any and all components (written, oral, simulator, and/or flight) may be conducted with no advance notice by the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization, the National Standardization Pilot, or an

Evaluator Pilot who has coordinated with the Branch Chief or the respective National Standardization Pilot. An aircrew member receiving an unscheduled evaluation will be notified prior to initiation of the evaluation. This evaluation must reset the evaluation cycle for the related mission.

#### **52.41 – Failure of Flightcrew Evaluation**

1. If flightcrew member fails an evaluation, the Evaluator Pilot and the unit's Standardization Pilot must consult with the National Standardization Pilot who must define additional training and steps required before the aircrew member may be reevaluated. The National Standardization Pilot must identify the Evaluator Pilot who will reevaluate the aircrew member.
2. If a flightcrew member fails a standards evaluation, all qualifications of that flightcrew member must be suspended until the aircrew member successfully completes a standards evaluation.
3. If a flightcrew member fails a special use mission evaluation, all special use mission qualifications of that flightcrew member must be suspended until the flightcrew member reattempts and successfully completes the evaluation.

#### **52.42 – Suspension and Revocation of Flight Qualifications**

A flightcrew member's flight qualifications may be suspended for up to 30 days by the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization. Suspension longer than 30 days must be coordinated between the Washington Office and the affected Region.

#### **52.43 – Flight Evaluation Board (FEB)**

The purpose of a Flight Evaluation Board (FEB) is to determine an agency pilot's ability to safely and effectively perform agency aviation missions. An FEB is a fact-finding proceeding to review a pilot's aviation performance, judgment, compliance, and qualifications in a knowledgeable, fair, and impartial manner. An FEB will not be commissioned based on personnel issues or conducted as an adversarial proceeding.

1. An FEB must be commissioned for the following reasons:
  - a. Consistent failure to meet minimum aviation performance standards in ground or flight,
  - b. Intentional violation of agency aviation policy and/or FAA regulations,
  - c. Repetitive demonstration of aviation-related behaviors that are not consistent with a safety or professional aviation culture; or
  - d. A self-requested FEB may be initiated by the pilot (Pilot Self-Requested FEB).
2. An FEB may be commissioned for the following reasons:



- a. Lack of judgment in performing pilot duties, or
  - b. Pilot exhibits habits, traits of character, or personality characteristics that make it undesirable to continue their flying duties.
3. Scope: An FEB is an administrative, fact-finding proceeding conducted to ensure all information relevant to a pilot's qualifications is reviewed and evaluated in a knowledgeable, fair, and impartial manner.
4. Findings for Pilot Disqualifications: Recommendations by an FEB to disqualify a pilot from flight status must be based on clear, factual, and logical findings as to the pilot's ability to safely and effectively perform agency missions. Apply the following guidelines in formulating recommendations for action:
- a. Recommendations to disqualify a pilot from flight status should consider the incident that triggered the initiation of the FEB, the circumstances surrounding the incident, and the pilot's aviation record accrued while in Federal service.
  - b. Incidents or actions that clearly demonstrate willful or wanton disregard for established rules, regulations, or procedures, or otherwise unacceptable performance, may be grounds for disqualification from aviation services.
  - c. When applicable, also consider the pilot's potential to perform appropriately after receiving additional training and flying experience.

#### **52.43a – Convening a Flight Evaluation Board**

1. A Flight Evaluation Board may be requested by the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization, or Regional Aviation Officer. The requesting official's unit is responsible for all travel and other associated costs the board may generate. The convening official must be the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization. The convening official may assign an appropriate representative to coordinate administration of the FEB.

2. Pilot Self-Requested FEB: A pilot who has been removed from flight status due to a personal issue unrelated to job performance may submit a request for an FEB to their Supervisor. This request must be considered by the second level Supervisor, the appropriate aviation safety manager, and the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization. The convening official must make final determination on the merits of convening an FEB.

A pilot receiving disciplinary action related to safety, technical competence and/or flying skills may request an FEB review through the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization. The convening official must make final determination on the merits of convening an FEB.

3. Board Membership and Selection: The Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization, must select the board members and ensure that board members have not

been directly involved in the case and are current FAA qualified pilots. The FEB must provide a fair and impartial evaluation.

- a. The board must be composed of at least three (3) agency pilots who hold the same category and class certifications and are not assigned to the same unit as the pilot being evaluated.
- b. At a minimum, one pilot board member must be current in the same type of aircraft and mission as the pilot being evaluated and hold the same level of designation within the Agency (evaluator, instructor, inspector).
- c. Consultants, or non-voting technical specialists, may be included as advisors to the board.
- d. The convening official must not serve as a member of the board.
- e. The pilot being evaluated may request a union representative (provided the pilot is a bargaining unit employee) or other representation that would ensure the pilot receives a fair and impartial evaluation.
- f. A Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) designated flight surgeon or medical officer may be appointed as a non-voting member of the board when a suspected medical problem may be a contributing factor in the pilot's performance.
- g. If aviation management officials suspect there is probable cause for an adverse action related to the pilot's conduct or performance, a personnel employee relations specialist must be appointed as a non-voting member. In this situation, the board must be the primary investigating body, and the employee relations specialist must take statements, as appropriate, and assemble documents creating a case file. The board's recommendation(s) must become part of the case file.
- h. The convening official must select one of the voting members to act as the Board Chairperson.

#### **52.43b – Timeliness of Action**

1. Convening an FEB: Convene the board at the earliest practical date and no later than 10 working days from appointment of the board.
2. Pilot Notification: Notify the pilot in writing that an FEB has been convened. This notice of intent must include:
  - a. Specific information relative to the reason(s) for convening the FEB, including allegations and/or references;
  - b. The time when the pilot is directed to appear before the board;
  - c. The location of the meeting;

- d. Instructions for acknowledgment of the notification; and
  - e. Information on the pilot's rights in presenting the pilot's side of the issue.
2. Pilot's Voluntary Removal from Flight Status: A pilot subject to an FEB hearing may voluntarily request to be taken off flight status in lieu of convening an FEB. Should this course of action be elected, the pilot must prepare a written request for voluntary removal from flight status within five (5) working days of receipt of the notification letter.
- a. Upon receipt of the pilot's request for voluntary removal from flight status, the convening official must immediately suspend the pilot from flight status and defer convening the FEB until further action is determined.
  - b. In the event the pilot's request for voluntary removal from flight status is disapproved, the pilot will be advised in writing of the denial and of the intention to proceed with the FEB.
3. Previous Flight History Review: The FEB must take into consideration the pilot's performance history, as well as all other pertinent facts, prior to making any recommendations to the convening official.

#### **52.43c – Operating Procedures of Board Chairperson**

The Board Chairperson must conduct the FEB in accordance with the following procedures and timeline:

- 1. Evaluation Preparations: Prior to convening the FEB, the Board Chairperson must:
  - a. Specify the time and place where the FEB will convene.
  - b. Make arrangements for a meeting location consistent with the gravity of and privacy requirements for the proceedings.
  - c. Accommodate the pilot's request for any information relative to the pilot's case.
  - d. Evaluate requests for delay in convening the board.
- 2. Board Proceedings: During the FEB, the Board Chairperson must:
  - a. Convene the FEB.
  - b. Explain the purpose of the evaluation to the board members and pilot.
  - c. Define the evaluation process and procedures.
  - d. Conduct the evaluation in an orderly manner.

- e. Ensure the pilot is allowed to present the pilot's side of the issue(s).
  - f. Ensure board members avoid informal conversation or comments pertaining to the proceedings outside of the process.
  - g. Conduct the evaluation and develop recommendations in closed session.
  - h. Ensure the findings of the board are complete and factual, clearly stated, and fully supported by the evidence.
  - i. Ensure the recommendations of the board are consistent with the limits of the board's authority.
  - j. Adjourn the board.
3. Post-Evaluation Duties: The Board Chairperson prepares the Flight Evaluation Board (FEB) report, ensures its completeness and accuracy, and ensures that all members have signed the report. Complete the FEB report as soon as possible, but no later than 5 working days from the day the board adjourns. The Washington Office, Director of Fire and Aviation Management or Regional Director of Fire and Aviation Management may authorize additional time due to unforeseen circumstances. When additional time is required, specify the reason for the delay in the report.
4. The Board Chairperson is also responsible for distributing the FEB report to the appropriate personnel (refer to 52.43f) for review and comment prior to a determination of final action.

#### **52.43d – Flight Evaluation Board Findings**

The FEB is responsible for the accuracy of the information used in the evaluation of pilot performance and must fully consider any extenuating circumstances surrounding the facts, including those that the pilot may present. Information on extenuating circumstances aids the board in determining if the pilot had complete control over the factors involved. Members of the FEB must use their professional knowledge, insight, and common sense. Each finding must be supported by evidence of record and must include, at a minimum:

- 1. Factual information of specific instances that support a conclusion the pilot cannot safely perform aviation duties.
- 2. Supporting testimony and evidence of unsafe past performance.
- 3. Evidence that the pilot did or did not have complete control over the circumstances leading to convening of the FEB.
- 4. Written comments on the allegations or points of question, stated separately in brief, clear language and including specific dates, places, and events.

### 52.43e – Flight Evaluation Board Recommendations

The FEB must prepare a written report containing the FEB's recommendations.

1. FEB Report Recommendations: Recommendations of the FEB must be consistent with the relevant findings supporting the determination(s) for:
  - a. Continued aviation services as a pilot,
  - b. Additional training required,
  - c. Interim measures, such as disqualification from certain aircraft types or removal from specific mission duties, based on other mitigating circumstances, or
  - d. Disqualification from flight status as an agency pilot.
2. Minority Report: In the event of disagreement among the board members, a minority report may be prepared that clearly states the scope of the disagreement(s), findings, and recommendations. Board members supporting the minority opinion must be identified in the report.

### 52.43f – Review of Flight Evaluation Board Report

Before final action is taken, the recommendations and findings of the FEB must be reviewed at the Washington Office and Regional Office level as appropriate by the following positions:

1. Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization: Prior to any other notifications, the findings and recommendations of all FEBs must be provided to the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization for review and comment.
2. Convening Official: The findings and recommendations of the FEB must be provided to the convening official for review and comment.
3. Washington Office: The findings and recommendations of all FEBs must be provided to the Director of Fire and Aviation Management; Assistant Director, Aviation; and Branch Chief, Aviation Safety Management System for review.
4. Regional Office: The findings and recommendations of the FEB must be provided to the Regional Director of Fire and Aviation Management, Regional Aviation Officer, and Regional Aviation Safety Manager (RASM) for review.
5. Aircrew Member: The findings and recommendations of the FEB must be provided to the aircrew member who is the subject of the FEB.

### 52.43g – Flight Evaluation Board Final Action(s)

The Washington Office Assistant Director, Aviation, or the Regional Director of Fire and Aviation Management for the affected unit is responsible for determining final action(s) based on

the findings and recommendations of the FEB and any additional comments provided by reviewers of the report.

1. Responsibility: Findings and recommendations of the FEB must be submitted to the appropriate official as follows.
  - a. If an FEB is conducted for a Washington Office pilot, the board findings and recommendations, along with the review comments of the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization and the convening official, must be provided to the Washington Office, Director of Fire and Aviation Management.
  - b. If an FEB is conducted for a Regional Office pilot, the board findings and recommendations, along with the review comments of the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization and the convening official, must be provided to the Regional Director of Fire and Aviation Management.
2. Agreement with Findings and Recommendations: Provided the Washington Office Assistant Director, Aviation (for a Washington Office assigned pilot), or the Regional Director of Fire and Aviation Management (for a regional pilot) agree with the findings and recommendations of the FEB, the respective Director may include additional comments and/or recommendations when dating and signing acceptance of the report.

The Line Officer of Human Resources Management has the authority for taking adverse actions in cases involving FEB recommendations approved by aviation management officials.
3. Disagreement with Findings and Recommendations: In the event the Washington Office Assistant Director, Aviation, or the Regional Director of Fire and Aviation Management does not concur with the FEB findings and recommendations, the respective director must identify specific areas of contention and explain the reasons in the written comments.
4. Statement of Corrective Action: Where the FEB makes a finding of lack of proper supervision or supervisory error, the Washington Office Assistant Director, Aviation, or the Regional Director of Fire and Aviation Management must include a statement relative to the corrective action to be taken or contemplated.
5. Final Action: The Washington Office Assistant Director, Aviation, or Regional Director of Fire and Aviation Management must either implement the recommendations of the FEB or implement their own course of action with supporting documentation.
6. Report Retention: The Director responsible for aviation management in the respective unit must maintain a file copy of all FEB activity for an appropriate retention period. Do not include an FEB report in a pilot's official personnel folder. FEB reports are exempt from FOIA and are covered by the Privacy Act. Full disclosure of the findings of the FEB, supporting documentation, and final corrective action must be made available to the pilot.

### **52.43h – Reconvening a Flight Evaluation Board**

The convening official may reconvene an FEB provided:

1. Initial board action was not in compliance with established procedures, or prejudicial errors concerning the rights of the pilot occurred in the initial proceedings.
2. New information that could materially affect the findings and recommendations of the FEB is discovered and brought to the attention of the convening official.
3. The pilot has been allowed 10 days to prepare a response to notice of the convening official's intent to reconvene the FEB.

### **53 – Agency Flightcrew Procedures**

Agency flightcrew procedures must be in accordance with the respective Interagency and Agency operations guides and plans.

### **54 – Vendor Contracts and Flightcrew**

#### **54.1 – Vendor Contracts**

Vendor flightcrews including aircraft services contracts and pilot services contracts must meet or exceed all of the requirements set forth in their respective FAA operator certificate and the applicable contract. They also must comply with the applicable Practical Test Standards.

Refer to the applicable contract for flight time requirements, currency, and pilot qualifications for vendor flightcrews.

#### **54.11 – Vendor Safety Briefing**

A safety briefing with the vendor pilot must be conducted as part of the initial and continuing vendor pilot credential process.

1. All vendor pilots shall receive a safety briefing following initial approval and annually at the beginning of the contract or rental agreement period.
2. Vendor pilot shall keep written documentation of the briefing signed by the inspector pilot.

#### **54.11a – Vendor Safety Briefing Content**

Vendor safety briefings should at a minimum include the following topics, as applicable:

1. Pilot flight and duty limitations.

2. Evidence of appropriate loading, weight, and balance requirements provided by the contractor's representatives.
3. Safe and effective mission altitudes and accuracy criteria.
4. Regulations about persons other than flightcrew members aboard the aircraft.
5. Use of personal protective equipment and how it should be worn.
6. Check-in prior to entering the incident area and procedures over the incident.
7. Initial attack procedures and the importance of locating persons and property on the ground.
8. Flight operations in congested areas.
9. Engine shut down during fueling, loading, and unloading.
10. Geographic area briefing, including hazards that may affect safety of flight and the location of approved jettison areas.
11. Effective use of contract-required avionics equipment.
12. Demonstrate proper use of a Flight Risk Assessment Tool (FRAT).

#### **54.2 – Vendor Pilot Approvals**

1. Forest Service or interagency inspector pilots must verify that vendor pilots meet the experience and qualification requirements under the contract.
2. Forest Service or interagency inspector pilots must approve in writing (refer to 54.21 below) vendor pilots provided to the Forest Service under contract or rental agreement.
3. All vendor pilot approvals must be conducted by an agency or interagency inspector pilot designated to approve that special use mission according to the individual agency's requirements.
4. Point-to-point flight operations by vendor pilots engaged in 14 CFR, Part 135 operations may be approved for a period not to exceed 24 calendar months from the date of approval.
5. For other than point-to-point flight operations, vendor pilots may be required annually by an agency or interagency inspector pilot or the contracting officer to demonstrate competency and proficiency in flight for the make and model of aircraft and for the special use mission to be flown under the contract or agreement. Vendor pilots must complete a ground and flight evaluation to determine contract compliance at least once every three (3) years.



6. More stringent requirements may be specified for pilot positions requiring a higher level of experience, including specific aircraft ratings, training, or unique aviation qualifications.
7. Vendor pilots, except airtanker pilots, are approved for a one year period; approval must not exceed 12 calendar months from the date of approval.
8. Vendor pilots are required to present their pilot approval documents upon request.

#### **54.21 – Vendor Pilot Approval Forms**

1. Each vendor pilot being evaluated must complete the applicable Pilot Qualifications Card (form FS-5700-20, 5700-20a, or OAS 30U).
2. The inspector pilot must complete the applicable Interagency Pilot Qualification Card to document approval of a vendor pilot.
3. Copies of the application form and approval card/form must be maintained by the Regional/National Inspector Pilot.

#### **54.22 – Suspension/Revocation**

1. The Contracting Officer, in coordination with the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization, may suspend a vendor pilot who fails to follow safe operating practices, does ineffective work, exhibits conduct detrimental to the purpose for which contracted, or is under suspension or revocation by another Government agency.
2. Upon involvement in an Aircraft Accident or NTSB Reportable Incident (refer to 49 CFR Part 830), a vendor pilot under contract with the Agency must be suspended from performing pilot duties under the contract and any other activity authorized under the interagency pilot qualification card(s) issued to the pilot, pending the outcome of an incident investigation.
3. Upon involvement in an Incident-with-Potential as defined under mishaps, a pilot operating under contract with the Agency may be suspended from performing pilot duties under the contract and any other activity authorized under the interagency pilot qualification card(s) issued to the pilot, pending the outcome of an incident investigation.
4. When a pilot is suspended, and when requested, the interagency pilot qualification card(s) must be surrendered to the Contracting Officer or the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization or their representative. Suspension will continue for up to 90 days or until:
  - a. The investigation findings and decision indicate no further suspension is required and the interagency pilot qualification card(s) is returned to the pilot; or
  - b. Revocation action to cancel the interagency pilot authorization(s) is taken by the issuing agency in accordance with agency procedures.

### **54.23 – Reinstatement**

When appropriate, an inspector pilot may re-issue a vendor pilot's card with approval from the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization or the respective National Standardization Pilot.

### **54.24 – Alternate Means of Compliance (AMOC)**

Some pilot requirements may be waived using an Alternate Means of Compliance (AMOC). Final waiver authority resides with the National Standardization Pilot.

For example, an AMOC may be utilized for fixed-wing pilots who do not meet the current policy or the contract requirements of 100 flight hours within the preceding 12 months. Refer to 51.3.

In the event an AMOC is required for something other than the 100 flight hour requirement, refer to 51.3.

#### **54.24a – Prerequisites for Requesting 100 Flight Hour AMOC**

1. Pilots shall have been carded or authorized for special use missions in the previous carding cycle (one year).
2. In the previous 12 months, a pilot shall have 25 hours as PIC, and 24 hours in category in the previous six months.

#### **54.24b – Pilot 100 Flight Hour AMOC Approval**

1. The company seeking an AMOC will submit a letter to the appropriate inspector pilot, requesting an AMOC for any pilot not meeting the 100-hour flight requirement in the preceding 12 months. Documentation supporting the minimum pilot requirements listed above and an explanation of why the pilot was unable to meet this requirement must be included in this letter. An AMOC is only to be used in extenuating circumstances such as long-term medical grounding and slow fire seasons. An AMOC should be the exception to the rule, not a tool used by vendors to save money by not giving their pilots appropriate training and currency.
2. The inspector pilot must review all contractual required documentation and assess the pilot's experience and past performance.
3. The inspector pilot will send documentation recommending the AMOC to the respective National Standardization Pilot for review.
4. The respective National Standardization Pilot will send documentation of approval/denial to the inspector pilot.
5. Any pilot approved under the AMOC must successfully complete a proficiency flight evaluation administered by an authorized interagency inspector pilot.

- a. An AMOC flight evaluation may only be waived after the inspector pilot submits a written justification to the appropriate National Standardization Pilot and receives written approval to waive the AMOC flight evaluation. In the event the inspector pilot and the National Standardization Pilot are unable to reach concurrence regarding the AMOC flight evaluation, an evaluation must be administered.
  - b. The evaluation flight should be administered by the inspector pilot conducting the preliminary review of the contractor's AMOC request.
1. If the flight evaluation is successful, the inspector pilot will document on FS-5700-20 or FS-5700-20(a) that Block 28 will be waived.
  2. The inspector pilot can then issue the pilot an Interagency Aircraft Qualifications Card.

#### **54.24c – Other AMOC Approvals**

1. The company seeking an AMOC will submit a letter to the appropriate inspector pilot requesting an AMOC for any pilot not meeting a requirement as being eligible for waiver. Documentation explaining why the minimum pilot requirements cannot be met and a proposed train-to-proficiency plan must be included in this letter.
2. The inspector pilot must review all contractually required documentation and assess the pilot's experience and past performance.
3. The inspector pilot will send documentation recommending an AMOC to the National Standardization Pilot for review.
4. The National Standardization Pilot will send documentation of approval/denial to the inspector pilot.
5. evaluation administered by an authorized interagency inspector pilot.
6. If the flight evaluation is successful, the inspector pilot will document on FS-5700-20 or FS-5700-20(a) that Block 28 will be waived.
7. The inspector pilot may then issue the pilot an Interagency Aircraft Qualifications Card.

#### **54.24d – Pilot Not Granted an AMOC**

If the pilot will not be granted an AMOC, the requesting company will be notified immediately and issued a formal letter by the Contracting Officer. The Washington Office Assistant Director, Aviation; Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization; and Branch Chief, Aviation Operations must also be notified via carbon copy (cc) of the notification letter to the company.

## 54.25 – Failure of Aircrew Evaluation

If a vendor aircrew member fails an evaluation, the inspector pilot and the vendor's chief pilot must consult with the National Standardization Pilot who must define additional training and steps required before the pilot may be reevaluated. The National Standardization Pilot must identify the inspector pilot who will reevaluate the pilot. If continued issues exist, removal of the contract aircrew will be coordinated between the National Standardization Pilot, respective program manager, and the Contracting Officer.

## 54.3 – Authority and Responsibility

1. The PIC is responsible for the safety of the aircraft, loading and unloading of occupants and cargo. The pilot must comply with the directions of the government, except when in the pilot's judgment compliance will be a violation of applicable federal or state regulations or contract provisions. The pilot has final authority to determine whether the flight can be accomplished safely and must refuse any flight or landing which is considered hazardous or unsafe.
2. The pilot is responsible for computing the weight and balance for all flights and for assuring that the gross weight and center of gravity do not exceed aircraft limitations. Pilots must be responsible for the proper loading and securing of all cargo. Load calculations must be computed and completed by the pilot using performance charts in the appropriate Pilot's Operating Handbook, Operator's Manual, or Technical Order, depending on the aircraft.
3. Smoking is prohibited within 50-feet of fuel servicing vehicle, fueling equipment, or aircraft.
4. Pilot(s) will use an approved cockpit checklist for all flight operations.
5. Equipment such as radios, survival gear, fire tools, etc., must be located in or on the aircraft in such a manner as to potentially not cause damage or obstruct the operation of equipment or personnel. All cargo must be properly secured.
6. Passenger Briefing: Before each takeoff, the PIC must ensure that all passengers have been briefed in accordance with the briefing items contained in 14 CFR 135. Briefing must include the following: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Shut-Off Procedures for Battery and Fuel, and Aircraft Hazards.
7. Flight Plans: Pilots must file and operate on a FAA, ICAO, or agency flight plan. Contractor flight plans are not acceptable. Flight plans must be filed prior to takeoff when possible.
8. Flight Following: Pilots are responsible for flight following with the FAA, ICAO, or in accordance with Forest Service or DOI-Bureau approved flight following procedures, which includes Automated Flight Following (AFF) and radio check-ins.

9. Manifest: Prior to any takeoff, the PIC must provide the appropriate Forest Service or Department of Interior (DOI) dispatch office or coordination center with current passenger and cargo information.

10. Fuel Reserve: To provide adequate fuel reserve all operations must comply with 14 CFR 91 for VFR (20-minutes reserve for helicopter or 30-minutes reserve for fixed-wing).

#### **54.4 – Required Flightcrew Members**

Flight Engineers must receive the required training from the company to accomplish their mission. Vendor companies must send the associated inspector pilot documentation of completed training. These individuals are not issued a card.

### **55 – Military, Other Federal Agency, and Cooperator Flightcrew Approval**

#### **55.1 – Department of Defense Flightcrews**

The Washington Office Deputy Chief or Regional Forester, through an agreement with Department of Defense (active and reserve), authorizes federal- or state-activated flightcrews on National Forest system lands. This must be in accordance with the Military Use Handbook and an applicable military aviation operations plan.

The Regional Aviation Officer must approve, in writing, the use of state-activated National Guard flightcrews on National Forest system lands. This must be in accordance with the Military Use Handbook and an applicable military aviation operations plan.

Approval may be for each individual or for all pilots of the organization and must specify the approved mission types.

The U.S. Army designation of Readiness Level 1 (RL1) or equivalent designation within other military service branches with a corresponding Commanders Task List that includes the specific mission, e.g. fire suppression (water bucket / tank operations), must be considered comparable to Forest Service standards required of contractor and agency pilots. Military aircraft must be flown and staffed with the standard pilot(s) and crew complement for the specified mission. PIC must be RL-1 qualified.

Refer to FSH 5709.16, chapter 47.1 for aircraft approvals.

#### **55.2 – Federal Executive Agency (non-DOD) Flightcrews**

The Deputy Chief, State and Private Forestry must approve, in writing, the use of Federal Executive Agency (non-DOD) flightcrews, except for Department of the Interior agencies.

Refer to FSH 5709.16, chapter 47.2 for aircraft approvals.

## **55.21 – Flightcrew Members Carded by the Department of the Interior**

The Forest Service may use flightcrew members carded by the Department of the Interior (DOI) for specific missions without re-inspection. Forest Service units may use flightcrew members with DOI approval for point-to-point transportation regardless of the specific type of approval document.

## **55.3 – Cooperator Flightcrew Approval**

All cooperator flightcrews offered for use on National Forest system lands must meet current flight crew standards in the applicable Department of the Interior or Forest Service Call When Needed aircraft services contracts.

Cooperators must be approved by letter by the dual signature letters referenced in FSH 5709.16, chapter 13.

Pilots flying not covered by the NASF Cooperator Standards must meet current FS approval standards for that special use mission until they are incorporated into the NASF Cooperator Standards (airtanker pilots and UAS pilots, for example).

## **55.4 – Suspension/Revocation of Approval**

Suspension and/or revocation of a military, other Federal agency, or cooperator flightcrew member may be implemented by the Washington Office Branch Chief, Pilot Standardization or the Regional Aviation Officer.

## **56 – Unmanned Aircraft Systems**

### **56.1 – Remote Pilots (UAS)**

All requirements and procedures of this chapter apply to remote pilots and UAS operations except where specified. Agency remote pilots prior to mission use must meet flight time and training requirements listed below.

**56.1 - Exhibit 01****Remote Pilot Flight Time Requirements**

<b>Minimum Annual Requirements:</b>	
Flight Time <sup>1</sup> (Every 12 calendar months)	Once per approved UAS type or as specified on UAS Pilot Approval Card
<b>Preceding 90 Day Minimum Requirements:</b>	
	3 Takeoffs and Landings under the observation of a current remote pilot.
<b>Other Requirements:</b>	
A-452R (UAS refresher) Crew Resource Management (CRM) Refer to 5709.16 Ch. 68 for approved CRM courses.	Every 24 calendar months Every 36 calendar months
<sup>1</sup> A pilot who has failed to meet the 90 day takeoff/landing requirement, may not fly an operational mission without first performing the flight maneuvers and emergency procedures for the specific make and model, during a proficiency flight prior to an operational mission. Alternatively, the remote pilot must conduct their mission flight under the observation of a current remote pilot.	