

## CHAPTER 80 AIR OPERATIONS

### General

DNRC and Federal Agency personnel may be passengers on each other's aircraft for fire and administrative flight purposed under certain conditions. Other individuals may also occasionally ride on government-owned aircraft, but only under specific circumstance, and only with written approval.

Specific agency direction for aircraft usage is located in the Forest Service 5700 Manual and the R1Beaverhead-Deerlodge Aviation Plan.

Specific agency direction for the Bureau of Land Management is located in the 9600 Manual and the Department of Interior Office of Aircraft Management Directorate 350. [www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/wo/Information\\_Resources\\_Management/policy/blm\\_manual.Par.56073.File.dat/9400.pd](http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/wo/Information_Resources_Management/policy/blm_manual.Par.56073.File.dat/9400.pd)

Specific agency direction for Department of Natural Resources is located in the 1500 Air Operations Manual. <http://dnrc.mt.gov/forestry/Fire/Manuals/manuals.asp>

### Administrative Flights

All aircraft for Forest Service flights will be scheduled and monitored through DDC. For administrative flights, (transportation instead of commercial air service) a completed Flight Request/Justification of Administrative Use of Aircraft (Form FS-5700-10) and a Travel Cost Comparison Worksheet (Form FS-5700-11) will be given to DIDC before the flight is scheduled. Administrative flights will be scheduled on an air service request form filled out by DIDC with copies sent to the Fixed Wing Flight Manager.

Flight following for administrative flights on the zone or leaving the zone will be done by DIDC. The Fixed Wing Flight Manager will contact DIDC at stops while en-route and at the final destination. Aircraft equipped with AFF will be monitored while in flight.

Forest Service administration reconnaissance flights will be scheduled by DIDC. The R1Beaverhead-Deerlodge Aviation Plan contains procedures for participating in reconnaissance type flights with cooperators.

### Non-Tactical Incident Flights

These flights include point-to-point transportation of personnel to assignments and movement of tactical aircraft to assignments.

Flights being scheduled for the purpose of transporting personnel to incidents do not require a Justification of Administrative Use Form. The air service request form will be completed and forwarded through the proper channels by the Fixed Wing Flight Manager. The Fixed Wing Flight Manager will contact DIDC at stops while en-route and at the final destination.

Tactical Aircraft on non-tactical flights will be flight followed by DIDC upon request. DIDC will assure that the aircraft has made contact with the next dispatch center for

flight following. Tactical aircraft are responsible for additional flight following procedures as stated in the National Mobilization Guide.

### **Tactical Aircraft Orders**

Tactical Aircraft Orders will be processed by DIDC in accordance with direction in the Geographic and National Mobilization Guides.

### **Air Patrol Procedures**

Air patrol will be flown daily when the zone staffing level reaches 4, or at the request of individual units after lightning storms, for checking reported or going fires, or at the discretion of the Center Manager or acting.

Air patrol may be accomplished using more than one airplane depending on conditions. Conditions that might require more than one aircraft include: multiple starts, or areas of lightning at opposite ends of the zone, staffing level 5 for a continued period of time and volatile fuel conditions.

Air patrol will contact the District upon arrival for any special requests or areas of concern; air patrol will notify the District when they leave.

When DIDC schedules air patrol on the North end of the Wise River District or on the Pintler District the Anaconda Unit DNRC will be notified.

DIDC will call Anaconda Unit and advise them of the time and general area that air patrol will be flying. DIDC will fax Anaconda Unit a map with the air patrol route being flown, the anticipated direction of travel, aircraft number, flight origination point and time.

Air patrol will contact Anaconda Unit when they enter their protection area.

### **Flight Following Protocols**

Aircraft on FAA flight plans exiting the B-D will submit an aircraft flight request/flight (flight strip) schedule prior to departure. Non-FAA flight plans made through DIDC must list the aircraft identification tail number and color, pilot names(s), passenger name(s), mission, route, destination, ETD, and ETA. All flights over the Forest on a Forest Service flight plan will maintain AFF or radio contact on a pre-designated frequency and relay position and heading information every 15 minutes as well as notification of take-offs and landings, unless another flight following format is designated by DIDC. Any deviation from the original flight plan must also be reported to DIDC. All flight following will be conducted with DIDC or an alternate contact designated by DIDC. In the event that an aircraft on a Forest Service flight plan is determined to be overdue (30 minutes after ETA at destination, or if two successive periodic checks are not made) the dispatcher will follow procedures in the Interagency Aviation Mishap Response Guide and Checklist

**Safety**

All personnel will follow Interagency and Agency specific safety guidance for aviation practices. Most aviation incidents are caused by deviation from established policy and procedures.