United States Department of the Interior
Office of Aviation Services
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DOI OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES MEMORANDUM (OPM) NO. 13-54

Subject: Contract Pilots Flying Government-Owned Aircraft

Effective Date: January 1, 2013

Supersedes: OPM 11-54 dated December 19, 2011

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1. **Purpose.** This OPM establishes experience and operational requirements for using non-government pilots providing contract pilot duties in government-owned aircraft.

2. **Authority.** This policy is established by the Director, Department of the Interior, Office of Aviation Services (OAS) in accordance with the provisions of Departmental Manual 112 DM 12, 350 DM 1, and Secretarial Order 3250 dated September 30, 2003.

3. **Policy.** Some bureaus within the Department of the Interior have chosen to use contract pilots to assist with the accomplishment of certain bureau functions. This has been determined to be "flight services," and therefore the procurement process shall comply with 353 DM 1.

If a bureau has chosen to use contract pilots, they must meet the following requirements:

A. Meet the personnel requirements in the appendix.

B. A contract pilot must have a letter of authorization issued by at least the bureau's Regional/State office in coordination with the National Aviation Manager. That letter shall include a description of pilot duties, responsibilities, and restrictions to include any special-use requirements. Organizations acquiring contract pilots shall check the FAA database, in cooperation with OAS, for accident/violation history prior to commitment. The FAA mailing address is: Information Management Section, AFS-624, P.O. Box 25082, Oklahoma City, OK 73125. The FAA request for pilot "accident/incident and enforcement action history" must include the pilot's full name, airman certificate number and date of birth.

C. Comply with all of the requirements of this OPM, 351 DM 1, 351 DM 2, 351 DM 3, 352 DM 1, and any other portions of the *Departmental Manual* that are applicable to DOI pilots to include training and pilot carding with authorized missions.

D. Ensure a complete pilot orientation with emphasis on safety, mishap reporting, differences between civil and public aircraft operations, effective working relationships, cooperation, professionalism, and positive attitude toward accomplishment of the mission(s).

E. Comply with applicable bureau policy.

F. All flight evaluations shall be administered by the DOI OAS.

Mark L. Bathrick

Director, Office of Aviation Services

Minimum Personnel Requirements

I. Pilot Requirements

A. Pilots shall have at least a FAA commercial pilot certificate with appropriate category, class, and type rating if required.

B. Pilots shall have an instrument rating appropriate to category and class for airplanes.

C. Pilots shall hold at least a current second-class medical certificate issued under provisions of 14 CFR Part 67.

D. All pilots shall meet the currency requirements of 14 CFR 61.57 and 61.58 as required.

E. 24 hours PIC last 12 months in category, including six hours in last six months in category.

F. Pilot flying hours shall be verified from pilot records. Further verification of flying hours may be required at the discretion of DOI OAS.

G. Pilots shall have recorded minimum flying time as pilot-in-command as follows:

1. 1,500 hours total pilot time.

2. 100 hours in category within the preceding 12 months.

3. For airplane:

   a. 1,200 hours PIC, airplanes.

   b. 25 hours make and model.

   c. 75 hours instrument of which 50 hours must have been in flight, for IFR operations approval.

   d. 200 hours multiengine, as appropriate.

   e. 25 hours seaplane, as appropriate.

   f. 100 hours turboprop or jet, as appropriate. 50 hours must be in make and model for transport of passengers

   g. 250 hours large airplanes, as appropriate. 50 hours must be in make and model for transport of passengers.

4. For airplane low-level operations:

   200 hours PIC in normal low-level operations, over typical terrain (hazardous/ mountainous), such as powerline/pipeline patrol, agriculture operations, wildlife survey, law enforcement, aeromagnetic survey, and search and rescue. This experience must have been gained while conducting operations under certificates or authorizations that allow aircraft operations below 500 feet AGL. Some activities not considered normal low-level operations are traffic watch, banner towing, aerial photography, and civil flight instruction.

5. Pilots shall show evidence of experience in low-level operations and be knowledgeable of all

specialized mission requirements. This may include low-level operations, special flight techniques, terrain considerations, use of specialized navigation equipment, or operation of other equipment as appropriate for the specific mission. Pilots shall be required to demonstrate their ability during an agency evaluation flight

6. For airplane wheel operations on unprepared landing areas: *Locations where a pilot has not previously operated or other pilots have not routinely used for takeoffs and landings. A landing area previously used could be identified as unprepared when the surface conditions have changed significantly by environmental factors such as flooding and breakup.*

   a. Pilots shall be knowledgeable of the unprepared landing area, i.e., beach/gravel bars, ridge tops, tundra, tidal areas, etc. This will include special flight techniques for the specific type of area to be used (i.e.: Glacier landings). Equipment operation could include tundra tires, extended gear, wheel skis etc.

   b. Pilots will be required to demonstrate proficiency during an initial and recurrent agency evaluation flight.

7. For helicopter:

   a. 1,500 hours PIC helicopters.

   b. 50 hours make and model. 25 PIC if pilot has satisfactorily completed a DOI OAS-approved school and checkout in make and model.

   c. 10 hours make and model in the last 12 months.

   d. 100 hours in weight class of helicopter. Defined as: "small" - up to an approved gross weight of 7,000 pounds; "medium" - above 7,000 pounds up to 12,500 pounds.

   e. 200 hours reciprocating engine time, as appropriate.

   f. 100 hours turbine engine time as appropriate.

   g. 200 hours mountainous terrain, as appropriate.

   h. 10 hours mountainous terrain in make and model, as appropriate.

   Mountainous terrain experience is defined as: Experience in maneuvering a helicopter at more than 7,000 feet mean sea level (MSL) altitude including numerous takeoffs and landings in situations indicative to mountainous terrain. This terrain consists of abrupt, rapidly rising terrain resulting in a high land mass projecting above its surroundings, wherein complex structures in which folding, faulting, and igneous activity have taken place. These mountainous areas produce vertical mountain winds and turbulence associated with mountain waves, producing abrupt changes in wind direction often resulting in upflowing or downflowing air currents.

   Mountain-qualified pilots are considered rough terrain qualified.

   j. 200 hours rough terrain, as appropriate.

   k. 10 hours rough terrain in make and model.

Rough terrain experience is defined as experience in maneuvering a helicopter at less than 7,000 feet MSL altitude including numerous takeoffs and landings in situations indicative to rough terrain. This terrain consists of abrupt, rapidly rising terrain resulting in a high land mass projecting above its surroundings, wherein complex structures in which folding, faulting, and igneous activity have taken place. Rough terrain features can disrupt smooth wind flow into a complex of eddies or mechanical turbulence. Characteristic of this type of terrain is the higher the wind speed and/or the rougher the terrain, the greater the turbulence.

II. Personnel Duty Limitations

A. The Government may remove any Contractor personnel for fatigue or other causes before reaching their daily duty or flight limitations.

B. During periods of high activity, Federal agencies may issue a notice reducing the length of personnel duty days and/or increasing days off either on a geographic or agency-wide basis.

C. Pilots reporting for duty under contract may be required to furnish a record of all duty and flight time during the previous 14 days.