

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
AVIATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

BUREAU of LAND MANAGEMENT

Oregon/Washington

2001

Department of the Interior
Aviation Program Evaluation

Bureau of Land Management
OR/WA 2001

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I. INTRODUCTION

The BLM OR/WA aviation program was evaluated during the month of April, 2001. A survey was sent to each field office to ask detailed questions regarding the mission, functions and resources inherent to their aviation program. Responses to the survey are compiled and can be found in the appendices of this report.

An evaluation team was formed to conduct the evaluation site visits. The team was lead by Ron Hanks, OAS Aviation Program Evaluation Manager, and included Kevin Hamilton, BLM Aviation Specialist; and Clay Hillin, BLM State Aviation Manager.

Site visits occurred from 4/9 through 4/13/01 that included offices located in Portland, Salem, Medford, Lakeview, Burns, Vale, and Prineville, OR. The out-briefing was conducted at the Portland State Office on Friday, April 13, 2001 to discuss the team's observations and recommendations.

This report provides a brief discussion of the evaluation process in section II. Section III. is an Executive Summary providing a synopsis of the review team's comments and observations. Discussion of recommended program enhancements can be found in Section IV. Finding and Recommendation, Worksheets. Sections V. and VI. of this report include the various scoping information and background data that supplement team findings and recommendations.

The Department encourages program enhancement as the logical conclusion to the evaluation process. The Bureau will be contacted in approximately one year with a request for an update on the progress of their enhancement efforts. More serious and/or unresolved deficiencies may be considered as a material weakness for inclusion in future departmental reports to the Secretary of the Interior and Office of Management and Budget.

II. PROCESS

Program evaluation is a systematic process for analyzing and reporting information with regard to the aviation programs at all levels of the Department of the Interior. It is an essential means of providing feedback about the operations, process, and outcomes while focusing on program enhancement and sharing best practices.

Several federal mandates guide our evaluation process. The Federal Managers Financial Integrity Act (PL 97-255) establishes specific requirements for agency heads to establish management controls safeguarding against waste, fraud and mismanagement. Office of Management and Budget Circular A-123 prescribes appropriate management controls as an integral part of the cycle of planning, budget, management and auditing. The Interagency Committee for Aviation Policy (ICAP) agreement of January 2000 establishes common aviation safety standards and guidelines that prescribe program evaluations for all federal executive department agencies.

In accordance with OPM 01-33 Interior's aviation program evaluations are conducted in each of the Bureau's geographic units (Region, State, Area, etc.) on an interval of approximately every five- (5) years. Follow-up contacts occur on one-year intervals following the evaluation.

Department level Aviation Program Evaluations goals are that:

- Assessments will be conducted in a manner that is objective and independent of internal Bureau inspections, audits, and controls.
- Reliable and timely information is obtained, maintained, reported, and used for decision making.
- Management and program deficiencies are recognized and corrective actions are promptly recommended.
- Findings and recommendations are monitored for corrective action and Bureaus are encouraged to pursue program enhancements.
- Best practices are identified and shared with all aviation programs through the evaluation/oversight process.

A. Responsibility

Office of Aircraft Services: The Director, OAS establishes evaluation criteria and provides leadership in the conduct of aviation program management and aviation safety program evaluations within the Department. (352 DM 1.6A) It is the responsibility of the Aviation Program Evaluation Manager (EM) to develop and maintain an independent assessment program commensurate with Departmental policy, goals and objectives.

Bureau: Bureau Aviation Managers (BAM) are responsible for coordination with the OAS for the conduct of timely program evaluations, facilitating program enhancements, and subsequent follow-up.

Managers: Managers at all levels have the responsibility for implementing prescribed management controls, participating in and/or supporting evaluations of their programs, and for leading efforts toward aviation program enhancement.

B. Planning

Internal or external sources may be used to evaluate department programs, or as resources for gathering and analyzing information. External sources may include the Inspector General (IG) office, Government Accounting Office (GAO), the Interagency Committee for Aviation Policy Aviation Resources Management Survey (ICAP-ARMS), other Federal agencies, or contract resources.

C. Itinerary

The following are dates and places of travel performed during the Aviation Program Evaluation:

Mon 4/9	a.m.	In-Briefing at Portland State Office; travel to Salem
	p.m.	Interview Salem staff; travel to Medford
Tue 4/10	a.m.	Interview staff; travel to Lakeview.
	p.m.	Interview Lakeview staff; travel to Burns
Wed 4/11	a.m.	Interview Burns staff, travel to Vale
	p.m.	Interview Vale staff; travel to Prineville
Thu 4/12	a.m.	Interview Prineville staff;
	p.m.	Travel to Portland; prepare out-brief
Fri 4/13	a.m.	Out-Brief, State Office, Portland
	p.m.	Travel home

III. Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION:

The following section provides a brief synopsis of issues observed by the evaluation team. Section IV. Worksheets discuss Program Enhancements in detail, cite policy and procedure requirements, and include more specific recommendations.

TRENDS:

There are no previous aviation evaluations on record for the BLM Oregon/Washington management area. A fire readiness review conducted in 1998 was reviewed to assess the progress of the aviation program.

Review of the Bureau of Land Management aviation program outcomes shows that the trend in total flight activity in the nineties has decreased approximately 34% from the total accomplished during the previous decade of the eighties. FY 2000 reflects an anomalous spike at 31,422 hours, 30% over the 10 year average at 22,024 hours.

Accident/incident occurrences have increased during the last five years, from an average 2.36 accidents/100,000 hours between 1990 and 1994, to an average of 8.5 by fiscal year 2000.

During 1995 – 1999 BLM OR/WA accumulated 7,625 flight hours. The OR/WA aviation activity represents an average of 6.5% of all BLM flying. Three of eighteen accidents occurred in Oregon, representing 16% of all BLM accidents during the 10 year period reviewed.

COMMENDATIONS:

The team found that all participants were willing to share information and were very cooperative with our efforts.

A great deal of training has been accomplished for the basic safety requirements of aviation operations personnel in all areas of the State.

The team was impressed with the professionalism and positive attitude exhibited by the interagency command center dispatchers in all locations.

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The State Aviation Manager did an outstanding job in coordinating the preliminary work, travel schedule, and logistics for the evaluation.

The team found that safety is a top priority in every location visited and it was evident that management has fostered a healthy safety culture in the organization.

SITE VISITS

Salem Field Office Monday 4/9

The office has light utilization of aircraft primarily for observation and photography of resources programs. Majority of aviation use is accomplished by end product contracts that are not managed by government personnel.

Dispatchers observed that paper copy of the OAS source list was easier to use. The pages found on the OAS website limit the amount of information and cause additional work to find the detail needed.

The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) has responsibility for fire protection under contract with BLM. The District personnel feel that ODF is not well prepared to provide OAS carded aircraft in the event of a large fire occurrence. This would cause problems transporting DOI personnel. BLM participation in the response to the New Carissa oil spill caused concern over interagency coordination. BLM people were transported on non-agency aircraft without PPE, proper training, or management and aircraft were not carded. Better planning for all risk aviation coordination was suggested.

The staff observed that new hires in resources programs are not getting fire training like they used to. Therefore they aren't as familiar with aviation requirements.

Medford Field Office Tuesday 4/10

This office has a light aviation workload and assigns aviation management as a collateral duty. Aircraft use supports resources work, aerial photo, and prescribed fire projects. Some work is accomplished by end product contracts.

The office is forming a central interagency dispatch. Oversight and coordination will be required by all agencies to ensure that project aviation plans, hazard maps and flight information is planned and shared. Project managers currently may have individual hazard maps but do not coordinate with dispatch for planning purposes or risk assessment.

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Line managers and supervisors have not attended required aviation training or are out of date with refreshers.

Calvert Peak Airport is a paved runway on BLM land that has been closed by painting white X's on the approach ends. The airport is depicted on Aviation Sectional charts as open to public use. The airport facilities database correctly describes it as available for BLM use only. The FAA should be notified of the runway closure and the airport depicted on airmen sectionals as RESTRICTED.

Law enforcement anticipates increased aircraft use for patrol of the new BLM monument.

Lakeview Field Office Tuesday 4/10

This is an active interagency unit with a high workload in aviation that includes two contract aircraft and substantial use of rental aircraft. Work is primarily in support of the wildfire program but includes resources work for animal counts and soils.

The program is working smoothly but experiences difficulty with the non-standardization of policy between DOI and Forest service. This is especially evident when maintaining personnel qualifications for various fire/aviation positions. Routine administration of travel and pay are complicated to manage due to different rules and documents.

The office does a good job with training but needs additional qualified trainers to keep up with the growing workload.

They experience some difficulty in coordinating flights and training with the US Fish and Wildlife programs located at Hart Mt. And Sheldon refuges.

Dispatchers agreed that the new automated OAS source list is more up-to-date and more convenient, but is slightly more difficult to use. Prefer paper copy for access to data.

A BLM gravel runway is located 11 miles northeast of the town of Fort Rock. This runway is also intended only for government use but gets the occasional use by private aircraft. It is not depicted on aviation sectionals and should be designated as restricted. The field office should assure that runways are closed by placing a white "X" at each end.

Personnel expressed concern over the addition of new inexperienced personnel to fire crews. They suggested that attention must be given to their training and familiarity with aircraft, both this and next year.

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They experienced severe shortages of qualified aviation managers last year. They feel that the 14 day field assignment (NWCG standard) negatively affects the availability of aviation personnel and should be changed back to the old 21 day standard. This should be referred back to the Fire community for action.

The unit plans to develop a new facility for helicopter and seat operations on the Lakeview airport. New facilities are justifiable and sorely needed. The evaluation team supports the effort and encourages them to proceed.

Burns Field Office

Wednesday 4/11

This is primarily a fire management operation with a light resources workload. The office supports about 250 flight hours per year with a fully integrated BLM and FS staff that supports a helitack crew and one Single Engine Air Tanker. End product contracts are used for horse herding. Managers anticipate an increase in aviation workload in the future due to impacts from wilderness use in the Steens Mt. Area.

Concerns were expressed with cooperative use of a privately owned helicopter and torch to conduct a 30 thousand acre prescribed fire on the Roaring Springs Ranch. The project needs a thorough risk analysis and cost analysis prior to accomplishment. The team recommends that BLM manage all flight operations in accordance with federal standards.

Personnel felt that OAS support is very good. Managers would like to have easier, on-line access to flight and cost data.

The Burns area encompasses a large area of wetlands that pose a hazard in the event of an emergency landing. We recommend that emergency water ditching survival training be provided for all flight crew personnel.

The unit is adding a SEAT contract this season and is in need of a qualified SEAT manager prior to commencing operations.

There is a substantial workload for aviation training in the unit that could be addressed by qualifying an Interagency Aviation Trainer in-house.

The office plans to construct an aviation facility at the Burns airport for helicopter and SEAT operations. The team supports this plan and urges the office to proceed. On-going airport renovations make the current BLM aviation operations areas unsatisfactory.

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Vale Field Office

Wednesday 4/11

The office uses aircraft to support the fire management program with light use of helicopters for resource management. Additional resources are being added this year that have created vacant aviation management positions.

Three positions are vacant: Air Attack Group Supervisor, SEAT Manager, and Unit Aviation Manager. All are critical to the safe operation of aircraft and must be filled prior to season start up.

There is concern with the air attack position being graded at the GS-8 level. This is below the GS-9 standard used in the Forest Service and creates a recruiting problem. The disparity should be addressed by the National Office.

There is confusion with the process for training and carding helicopter pilots for use in aerial firing devices. It is not clear to BLM personnel what their role is in training pilots for this mission. OAS should clarify the procedures and distribute them to the field.

Current ARA and CWN contracts do not include supplemental specifications for use of helicopters in chemical spraying. The district would like to have this added back into all contracts and Type III ARA.

The office is not capturing cooperator flight time. This can be accomplished on an annual summary sheet forwarded via an OAS 23 for non-revenue flights.

The office has an increasing aviation workload that requires aviation training. The workload for aviation training could be addressed by qualifying an Interagency Aviation Trainer in-house.

Supervisors and Line Managers had not attended the aviation training required by DOI policy. There is need for a process for the recurrent refresher training of all managers in the State that can be accomplished in a convenient manner.

Prineville Field Office

Thursday 4/12

The office runs a joint flight operation with the USFS primarily for fire management. There is substantial use of aircraft in support of resource management, WH&B, law enforcement and Search and Rescue missions.

The office is having difficulty maintaining experienced aviation personnel; improvement is needed in developmental training. Similar problems exist with pilot experience levels.

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The Bureau of Indian Affairs added a 70 day exclusive use helicopter contract in Warm Springs that could assist with the Prineville workload. Coordination is needed between BLM and BIA for planning future projects.

They expressed concern with the inspection and carding of vendors last season. Concern was with SEAT pilot proficiency, helicopter pilot long line and bucket proficiency, and support vehicle standards.

The SEAT community needs to organize annual meetings to facilitate discussion of operational issues similar to what occurs in the helicopter function with HOS meetings.

Aviation dispatchers are not getting adequate training for the complexity of their responsibilities and decision-making authority. Some standards are being developed but a national training standard is also needed.

The office needs to capture and report cooperator aircraft use via annual OAS 23 submission for non-revenue flights.

There is substantial activity in the safety system with need for feedback via the SAFECOM report. DOI and FS should combine their hazard reporting systems into a common database.

The field office has need for an air attack aircraft on a rental contract arrangement. The SO should forward an OAS 20 request to have the service provided in time for the fire season.

Line Managers and supervisors have not attended the minimum aviation training required by DOI policy.

Differences in "End-Product/Service" contract policy precludes joint operations between BLM and USFS using this procurement option. The agencies are nearly opposite in their approach to management of end product contracts and this needs to be addressed when interagency personnel will be involved in the project on the ground.

IV. FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

<u>Worksheet No.</u>	<u>Program Enhancements</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
1.	Aviation Safety	BLM
2.	Training	BLM/OAS
3.	Aviation Trainers	BLM
4.	Operations	BLM
5.	Oversight & Administration	OAS
6.	Reporting	BLM

V. AVIATION PROGRAM OUTCOMES

1. SAFETY

a. Bureau Statistics;

5 Year History - Hours, Accidents, and Accident
Rate FY 1996 - 2000

b. Aviation Mishap Information System

FY 1996 - 2000

c. SAFECOM Summary FY 2000

d. Mishaps FY 1991 - FY 2000

2. OPERATIONS

a. Bureau Flight Hours FY 1996 - 2000

b. Actual OAS Costs FY 1997 - 2000

c. Aviation Summary FY 1996 - 2000

MISHAPS FY 1991 - FY 2000

Between 1991 and 2000 BLM accumulated 233,420 flight hours and experienced 18 accidents. The current accident rate per 100,000 hours is 8.5 in BLM compared to a DOI rate of 7.9.

Three accidents are attributed to BLM OR/WA during the period reviewed:

<u>YEAR:</u>	<u>MODEL:</u>	<u>MISSION:</u>	<u>STATUS:</u>	<u>LOCATION:</u>
1991	PA-34	Pax Transport	Rental	Pinedale, WY
1991	Hiller 12E	Horse Gather	Rental	Vernal, UT
1993	Hiller 12E	Timber Inspection	Cooperator	Medford, OR
1994	AS350B2	Ferry	CWN	Carryville, FL
1994	PA23-250	Fire Recon	Fleet	Boise, ID
1995	Bell 206B-2	Cadastral Survey	CWN	Gulkana, AK
1997	OV-10	Training	Fleet	Hollister, CA
1997	Bell 47G	Horse Gather	Rental	Fallon, NV
1998	AC 690	Fire Recon	Fleet	Ely, NV
1998	Cessna 206	Fire Recon	Rental	Vale, OR
1998	Bell 212	Fire Bucket	Contract	Juntura, OR
1998	Hughes 369	Land Survey	Contract	Homer, AK
1999	AT-402	SEAT	Contract	Aztec, NM
1999	Bell 206B-3	Biological Survey	Contract	Deadhorse, AK
1999	AT-802	SEAT	Contract	Elko, NV
2000	Cessna 337	Fire Recon	Contract	Battle MT., NV
2000	Bell 206-L1	Fire	Rental	Montello, NV
2000	Bell 212	Fire Bucket	CWN	Cold Springs, NV

Aviation Mishap Information System

Between 1991 and 2000 BLM forwarded 45.5% of all Safety Communiqués (SAFECOM) and flew 28.5% of all DOI hours.

Between 1996 and 2000 the BLM OR/WA area submitted 3.8% of BLM SAFECOMs (64 of 1678 BLM submissions) and flew 6.5% of all BLM hours (7625 of 118,099 hrs).

Fiscal Year	SAFECOMs Forwarded	% of Total all Bureaus	Total No. all Bureaus	% Hours all Bureaus
2000	198	44.3%	446	34.4%
1999	219	52.1%	420	27.9%
1998	128	47.4%	270	25.5%
1997	110	45.4%	242	29.0%
1996	199	53.9%	369	32.7%
1995	112	41.3%	271	24.5%
1994	226	54.5%	414	31.1%
1993	157	41.1%	382	24.6%
1992	175	39.6%	441	27.0%
1991	154	36.1%	426	28.2%
<hr/>				
Average	1678	45.5%	3681	28.5%

VI. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- A) LIST OF PARTICIPANTS INTERVIEWED
- B) OUTLINE OF SAFETY CULTURE ESSENTIALS
- C) SURVEY RESPONSE

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ATTACHMENT A)

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Salem District

Clark Tiecke
Sam Caliva
Roberta Rundee
Dan Schreindorfer

Burns District

Shad Sitz
Mike Benefield
Steve Morefield
Angie Foster

Medford District

Tom McVey
Tom Murphy
Steve Schrader
Jim Brown
Chris Johnson

Vale District

Sandy Guches
Mike Hartwell
Tracy Skerjanec
Penny Woods
Mike Morcom
Stephanie Brown

Lakeview District

Tom Mathews
David Machado
Ricky Smith
Nicky Smith
Carmen Thomas
Chuck McElwain
Mike Evans

Prineville District

Steve Lent
Tom Mountz
Ron George
Ray Hogue
Chris Hice

AVIATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau: Land Management	Location: OR/WA
Team Lead: Ron Hanks	Date: April 2001
Bureau Rep: Lynn Findley	Worksheet <u>No. 1</u>

Program Enhancement: Aviation Safety

The team found that safety is a top priority in every location visited and it was evident that management has fostered a healthy safety culture throughout the organization.

However, BLM has experienced an upward trend in aircraft accidents during the past five years. Review of the BLM OR/WA history (sec. V) shows three accidents in the previous ten years. While OR/WA flew 6.5% of all BLM flight hours it also incurred 16.7% of BLM accidents. The causes of these accidents were not directly attributed to the actions of BLM personnel, but might have been prevented by them. The aviation safety culture can seek a higher goal, toward the achievement of a zero occurrence record.

The team observed that the fire program has several vacant positions and a significant amount of new personnel involved in air operations functions. Allowing more time for initial hiring, training and familiarity prior to season start-up could have a positive impact on operational safety.

Field personnel expressed concerns with the proficiency of contract pilots due to generally low experience levels being encountered in the industry. Extraordinary efforts may be needed in order to maintain safety practices and to increase risk awareness within the ranks of new hires and contract personnel.

Review of the Aviation Mishap Reporting System (AMIS) shows that the percentage of SAFECOMS (3.8%) submitted by the region is slightly lower than the percentage of flight hours flown (6.5%). (See section V.B Aviation Mishap Information System). The team received several comments regarding the desire for simplification of reporting and sharing of the DOI and USFS aviation mishap databases.

Recommend the Bureau take additional measures to promote aviation safety, risk awareness, standardization, and accident prevention efforts. Suggestions are; for the NAO to schedule field assistance visits to mentor aviation personnel; and field offices request aviation safety assistance teams during peak activity periods.

Organization(s) Assigned to:	State Office	BLM NAO
Individual(s) Assigned:		
Due Date(s): FY 2001	Finish Date:	

AVIATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau: Land Management	Location: OR/WA
Team Lead: Ron Hanks	Date: April 2001
Bureau Rep: Lynn Findley	Worksheet No. <u>2</u>

Program Enhancement: Aviation Training

Department policy in 352 DM 1.9 B states, "Bureau directors are responsible for assuring that all employees involved in the use or control of aviation resources receive an appropriate level of aviation safety training". OPM 01-4 addresses mandatory training for personnel with aviation management responsibilities. The education and training listed is the minimum for promoting aircraft accident prevention awareness and developing operational and management skills.

The team found that most supervisors and managers had not accomplished the prescribed training or had not attended refresher training within the last three years.

Dispatchers have significant responsibility in decision making for aircraft procurement and utilization in all programs. The team found that additional training is needed for dispatchers and detailers in order for the aviation support needs to be adequately staffed.

Several offices work in close proximity to watershed areas that may pose a hazard during an emergency landing. All flight crewmembers should be provided the opportunity to attend emergency water ditching survival training.

Recommend the State Office provide training for managers and supervisors who have aviation responsibilities in accordance with DOI policy.

Recommend that all agency aircrew personnel be provided with emergency water ditching (dunker) survival training.

Recommend that the field offices be canvassed to determine resource personnel and dispatcher aviation training needs and to provide basic training opportunities for them to attend.

Organization(s) Assigned to:	State Office	OAS West Area Office (assist)
Individual(s) Assigned:		
Due Date(s):	Finish Date:	

AVIATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau: Land Management	Location: OR/WA
Team Lead: Ron Hanks	Date: April 2001
Bureau Rep: Lynn Findley	Worksheet No. <u>3</u>

Program Enhancement: Aviation Trainers

Site visits revealed that the Oregon/Washington area has a significant training workload. The workload is somewhat elevated this year with the impact of additional fire suppression positions.

In any event, the effect of adding positions in the fire program has resulted in numerous promotions and other movement of personnel into new responsibilities. Much of the movement involves aviation operations positions that have direct impact on risk management and accident prevent.

For example, Vale District has three vacant positions for Air Attack Group Supervisor, SEAT Manager, and Unit Aviation Manager. This many new positions require a substantial planning and training effort in preparation for the hazardous aviation missions they must supervise.

There is concern in the resources programs that new personnel are not getting training for fire suppression operations compared to what was previously done. Fire training has traditionally included aviation as a core component. Subsequently a large portion of new personnel are not qualified to work around aircraft.

Many of the Districts do not have qualified interagency aviation trainers (IAT) among their staff. Increasing the core team of qualified IAT's would facilitate much of the workload in transitioning new employees to their aviation responsibilities.

Recommend that the cadre of IATs be expanded in the organization and upcoming trainers be identified and cultivated as eventual replacements.

Organization(s) Assigned to:	State Office	
Individual(s) Assigned:		
Due Date(s):		Finish Date:

AVIATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau: Land Management	Location: OR/WA
Team Lead: Ron Hanks	Date: April 2001
Bureau Rep: Lynn Findley	Worksheet No. <u>4</u>

Program Enhancement: Aircraft Operations

Lakeview, Burns and Vale Districts each have expanded their aviation mission capabilities with the addition of contract services for single engine air tankers.

Existing facilities in these locations are not adequate to house the support personnel that will be associated with these new resources. When added to the existing need for space to house the helitack crews based in each location, the need is compounded.

The district offices have submitted requests for funding and the needed capital improvement funds are in various stages of progress. The temporary placement of trailers at the airports work sites will aid in housing personnel. Temporary installation of retardant mixing equipment and tanks may suffice for the 2001 season but permanent installations are needed.

Existing runways located at Calvert Peak (Medford District) and Fort Rock (Lakeview District) are used exclusively by BLM for fire and resources work and runways are not open to public use. Their exclusive government use status is shown in the airport facilities database. However, private pilots commonly use airmen's sectional maps as their primary source of information as to the status of airports and runways. BLM's Calvert Peak is designated as a "private" airport on airmen's sectional charts. The Fort Rock runway is not shown on airmen's sectionals. The correct depiction of these airports as "Restricted" should mitigate the potential for the mistaken use of the airport by the public.

Recommend the State Office and National Office place high priority on gaining the necessary capital improvement funding for the development of aviation facilities in the state.

Recommend FAA be contacted for the purpose of changing the designations for the Calvert Peak and Fort Rock runways on airmen's sectional charts.

Organization(s) Assigned to:	State Office	
Individual(s) Assigned:		
Due Date(s):		Finish Date:

AVIATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau: Land Management	Location: OR/WA
Team Lead: Ron Hanks	Date: April 2001
Bureau Rep: Lynn Findley	Worksheet No. <u>5</u>

Program Enhancement: OAS Oversight and Administration

The Burns and Prineville Districts both indicated fairly substantial workloads in prescribed fire operations that use helicopters with aerial firing devices. There was confusion in the area of pilot qualification, inspection and carding for helitorch operations. The Bureau has responsibility for operational control of the helitorch operation during the initial pilot training. The OAS should, commensurate with the Bureau project, oversee the training operation, provide technical advice, and card the pilot when they satisfactorily accomplish the training.

This process is not readily available to field personnel in a written format and should be issued prior to the 2001 season.

When dispatchers were asked about their interaction with OAS aviation information they generally stated that aircraft information is readily available and that OAS personnel are very supportive. Several dispatchers offered constructive criticism of the formatting of the automated aircraft source list that OAS provides via its web page. They would like to see a format that is easier to use when comparing aircraft data. This information is critical to the efficiency, effectiveness, and timeliness of dispatch aircraft support functions. The OAS IRM manager believes that the situation can be remedied by the IRM personnel working one-on-one with the dispatchers. This would enable programmers to design the source list in an improved format.

Recommend that OAS headquarters issue an Information Bulletin addressing the procedure for initial training and carding of helitorch pilots.

Recommend that OAS work with Lakeview, Burns, or Salem dispatch centers to gather information on the redesign and function of the automated source list. Proposed changes should be presented to the dispatch community, and perhaps all Bureaus for further comment and subsequent action.

Organization(s) Assigned to:	OAS Headquarters	OAS IRM
Individual(s) Assigned:		
Due Date(s): FY 2001	Finish Date:	

AVIATION PROGRAM EVALUATION

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau: Land Management	Location: OR/WA
Team Lead: Ron Hanks	Date: April 2001 Worksheet <u>No. 6</u>
Bureau Rep: Lynn Findley	

Program Enhancement: Reporting Cooperator Aircraft Use

An unknown quantity of aviation work is being accomplished through the use of cooperating agencies. 351 DM 4.1c (amended by OPM 01-38) states "All use of aircraft under the operational control of the Department shall be reported by the using Bureau, utilizing an Aircraft Use Report (form OAS 23)".

There is sporadic use of aircraft procured by the counties during law enforcement activities and occasional resources flights with cooperators that are conducted under BLM operational control.

Field offices told the team that they also use Forest Service aircraft for emergency fire suppression missions. Since there is an equal amount of BLM fire resources provided in exchange it is generally not necessary to account for these emergency use activities.

The policy requiring the reporting of all aircraft use is intended to accurately reflect the activity, management workload, and liability assumed by the department. The Bureau should recognize and take credit for the total workload in the program. In addition, this accounting favorably affects the bureau accident rate that is calculated by the number of accidents that occur per one hundred thousand flight hours.

Reporting this aircraft utilization can be accomplished by grouping such flights on one report form at the end of each fiscal year and labeling the entry "not for payment purposes".

Recommend the state Aviation Manager issue guidance to field offices that will assure they report the use of cooperator aircraft at the end of each fiscal year.

Organization(s) Assigned to:	State Office	
Individual(s) Assigned:		
Due Date(s): FY 2001	Finish Date:	