

EAS Diomedes, Alaska
Docket DOT-OST-2020-0020
Helicopter Transportation
Services



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|--|------------------|
| <i>Cover Letter</i> | <i>3</i> |
| <i>Company Profile</i> | <i>4</i> |
| <i>Safety policy</i> | <i>7</i> |
| <i>Safety Procedures and statistics</i> | <i>8</i> |
| Define the Offer | 9 |
| Aircraft | 9 |
| Rates & Fees | 9 |
| Nome Maintenance | 10 |
| Preflight Procedures | 10 |
| Passenger Manifest | 10 |
| HAZARD AND SAFETY REPORTS | 10 |
| FLIGHT REPORTS | 11 |
| PARTS AND LOGISTICS | 11 |
| Feedback and Continuous Improvement | 11 |
| <i>Community/Social Practices</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>References</i> | <i>12</i> |

COVER LETTER

Mr. Scott Faulk
Transportation Industry Analyst
Office of Aviation Analysis
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Faulk,

Enclosed is Pathfinder Aviation's response to Essential Air Service at Diomedes, Alaska
Docket DOT-OST-2020-0020 Helicopter Transportation Services.

Pathfinder Aviation is proposing direct service to Diomedes utilizing a Bell 212 twin-engine helicopter configured for nine (9) passengers based out of the Pathfinder base in Nome, Alaska. We have been providing helicopter transportation services to Diomedes since 2017 with the Bell 212 since taking the contract over from Erickson Helicopters, Inc. We also provide services to the USPS on Wednesday of each week.

Pathfinder has participated in several conference calls with representatives from Kawerak, Native Village of Diomedes, Norton Sound Health Corporation, and Bering Strait School District to discuss the increasing needs of the citizens of Diomedes. It was determined that 36 trips per year are inadequate to meet their basic life, health, and safety needs. It was also expressed that due to climate change, the ability to harvest walrus has been in decline requiring transportation of more chilled goods. Additional freezers have been provided by Kawerak and are stored in Pathfinder's hangar to accommodate these additional chilled goods. Unfortunately, there isn't enough capacity within the current structure of 36 flights per year to accommodate this additional cargo. It was agreed by all that providing one trip per week would meet the needs of Diomedes thus increasing the current program of 36 trips to 52 trips annually.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit our proposal and are confident we can continue to exceed your expectations for safe, reliable, and efficient helicopter service.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information.

Regards,

Travis Latiolais
Vice President of Business Development
907-317-1476
tlatiolais@pathfinderaviation.com

COMPANY PROFILE

Pathfinder Aviation has been providing helicopter support services to various remote places in Alaska since 2001; having flown over 32,000 flight hours. We currently operate 17 aircraft consisting of two Bell 206's, eight AS 350's, four Bell 212's, one Bell 412, one EC 135 and one Cessna 206. Pathfinder provides support to the oil and gas industry, mining industry, heli-ski, and remote Alaska operations with a principal focus on austere operations and precision external load support. Pathfinder takes pride in providing best value options to our customers as opposed to lowest bidder.

Pathfinder has a 19-year track record supporting aircraft in a field environment while maximizing aircraft availability. A recent inventory expansion, located in Anchorage, brought the total instate parts value to over \$5 million. With this, Pathfinder can provide unparalleled response to unforeseen maintenance.

Pathfinder's experience in maintaining its fleet is second-to-none. Any successful helicopter operator ensures scheduled maintenance is performed in such a manner that it does not interfere with operations and Pathfinder is no different. Pathfinder's experience in aircraft field maintenance prepares us to handle any unscheduled repairs as shown in our past performance.

Pathfinder maintains an FAA Part 145 Repair Station Certificate ensuring our aircraft meet the most stringent requirements. Through our commitment to set a higher safety standard, we have invested in a 24/7 staffed Aircraft Operations Center consisting of trained and qualified Pathfinder personnel. This team is located at our facility in Anchorage and is responsible for flight following all Pathfinder aircraft. Additionally, they provide coordination between customers, pilots, and mechanics to ensure timely dissemination of information. This provides our clients with the confidence that their employees' safety is being looked after continuously while in the air and any customer driven changes to flight plans can be relayed in real time to Pathfinder crews.

Our approach to personnel allows Pathfinder to attract very experienced and versatile pilots and mechanics in addition to a highly qualified management team. We hire pilots and mechanics with specific skill sets and pass them through our all-encompassing training programs. This has created an environment of content employees with very little turn over. We have proved over the last 4 years supporting Diomedes that our team's experience will continue to exceed expectations, both operationally and professionally.

Through the development of strategic partnerships with our clients, Pathfinder plans on continued controlled growth over the next several years. We continue to seek customers requiring remote area support who appreciate the value-add that our safety, training, employees and ability provide. Through transparent and collaborative communication, we will continue our pursuit of exceeding our customer's expectations, meeting their mission requirements, and safely delivering their people and supplies to remote locations.



Pathfinder's highly qualified leadership team consists of:

CEO/Director of Operations – Rogan Parker

In Rogan's well-rounded 6,500 flight hour career he has flown offshore oil and gas support in light and medium helicopters on the North Slope of Alaska; provided search and rescue services with landing altitudes up to 14,000 feet; spent over 1,000 hours flying game survey, eradication, and darting to include polar bear research on the pack ice of the Beaufort Sea; fought forest fires; and provided nearly 1,000 hours of precision vertical reference/long line support for mining and seismic exploration. This background gives Rogan the understanding of the challenges Pathfinder crews face on any given day, which lends to the effective direction provided by our leadership team to our customers and crews.

Vice President/Business Development – Travis Latiolais

Travis' aviation career began as a maintenance technician in 1996. By 2002 Travis was promoted to the maintenance inspection department of the largest helicopter company in the world. With a desire to become more involved in the operational aspect of aviation he transitioned into operations management where he led a team of more than 100 pilots, 35 mechanics and managed 31 helicopters. Because of his balance of maintenance experience and operational understanding, Travis was recruited by Airbus helicopters to manage the oil and gas and utility helicopter market segments. Travis holds an Airframe and Powerplant certificate, Inspection Authorization certificate, fixed wing private instrument pilot certificate, and a Bachelor's degree from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University.

Director of Safety – Mike Inman

Mike began his aviation career with the U.S. Marine Corps on active duty as a helicopter maintenance technician. He went on to serve as active duty in the Alaska Army National Guard where he acquired over 15 years' experience as a battalion and brigade level Safety Officer. Upon retirement from active duty, Mike was a team member for 7 years on the original FAA-sponsored CAPSTONE safety initiative through the UAA Aviation Technology Division which evolved into the national ADS-B program. Mike then served with the Alaska State Troopers Aviation Division as the Aviation Safety Officer, overseeing the aviation safety program and supporting the search and rescue program for the state law enforcement division across Alaska. Mike holds a Master's degree in Aerospace System Safety from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, is a Commercial rated pilot and holds FAA Airframe and Powerplant Mechanics certificates.

Director of Maintenance – Jacob Smith

As a helicopter mechanic in Alaska since 1997, Jacob has supported nearly every type of helicopter operation in the state, including Red Dog Mine. Early in his career, Jacob's knowledge of aircraft systems and natural leadership was recognized, and he was promoted to maintenance supervisor for the largest Alaska helicopter operator. Since then he's been immersed in, and managing the various components involved in remote area helicopter maintenance. At Pathfinder, Jacob leads a team of 12 maintenance technicians averaging over 20 plus years of experience. In 2018 Jacob was named Mechanic of the Year by the Alaska Air Carrier Association.



Chief Inspector – Dave Petrie

With 38 years of helicopter maintenance experience Dave brings a tremendous wealth of knowledge to Pathfinder. Since EC 135 helicopters first came to Alaska Dave has been at the forefront of maintaining and troubleshooting these aircraft and has helped resolve almost every imaginable challenge associated with them. For over 20 years he served as the Shop Foreman of a FAR Part 145 Repair Station where he was responsible for a fleet of over 20 aircraft. Dave is regarded as one of the top helicopter maintainers and managers in the state.

Chief Pilot – Levi Meyer

Since Levi's arrival in Alaska, he has provided over 2,000 flight hours of support to various operations all over the state. Having supported projects ranging from Oil and Gas support on the North Slope to firefighting, telecommunications construction, government resource, powerline inspection and repair, to mining exploration, Levi has become known as one of the premiere utility pilots in the state. Levi spends much of his time focused on passing these skills to Pathfinder pilots and ensuring they are best prepared for every assigned mission.

Director of Training – Brett Ingram

In Brett's 19-year aviation career he has accumulated 9,000 flight hours in various types of helicopters and fixed wing aircraft. Brett holds an Airline Transport Pilot rating as well as Certified Flight Instructor ratings in both Helicopter and Fixed Wing aircraft. During his career he has operated in various environments from the Middle East to Alaska during which he has accumulated 3800+ hours as a flight instructor. Over this 19-year period Brett has been involved in a wide range of helicopter operations ranging from oil and gas, OAS fire relief, powerline and pipeline patrols, human external loads, VIP transport, vertical reference/long line, disaster relief, and medical evacuations. Aviation is Brett's #1 passion and it shows in his everyday life from work to taking his kids out in the airplane on the weekends.

SAFETY POLICY



A. POLICY

PATHFINDER'S SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

Pathfinder Aviation is dedicated to providing a safe work environment and positive culture for all employees and customers. This dedication and passion towards safety starts at the top with the Board of Managers, the Executive Management of Pathfinder Aviation, the Director of Safety and all the way to each employee. The Board of Managers is committed to implementing and maintaining a fully functional Safety Management System (SMS)*, to allow for continuous improvement of safety within our organization.

An effective SMS is vital to the success and longevity of the company. This is not possible without the buy-in, support and commitment from each of us. All personnel are strongly encouraged to report all current or potential hazards, as well as actual incidents and accidents through the company's confidential non-punitive reporting system.* Information collected will be used to identify safety concerns within our operations, analyze and assess the risks associated, and implement controls, as required, to prevent future incidents from occurring.

The following is our standard safety objectives for our SMS:

- Attain the highest possible level of safety through continual implementation of our SMS
- Maintain our SMS and operate under these policies daily
- Give safety the same emphasis as the generation of products or revenues
- Establish specific safety-related objectives, periodically publish & distribute to all*
- Monitor, measure and track overall safety objectives are met*
- Encourage use of confidential employee safety reporting system without reprisal*
- Activities involving intentional disregard for FAA regulations, company policies and procedures, illegal activities, and/or drugs or alcohol may be subject to disciplinary action*
- Actively manage and follow up with identified safety risks
- Provide routine feedback to employees regarding results of safety analyses
- Sustain an Emergency Response Procedure (ERP) to include periodic exercises*

Pathfinder Aviation Board of Managers, in conjunction with the entire management team will convey these expectations to all employees through routine company communication channels. This will ensure employees are aware and knowledgeable of our SMS, their duties, responsibilities, and our safety policy.

This safety policy will be periodically reviewed by the Board of Managers and Director of Safety to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate to the company.

Sincerely,
Pathfinder Aviation



Rogan Parker,
Chief Executive Officer

SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SMS)

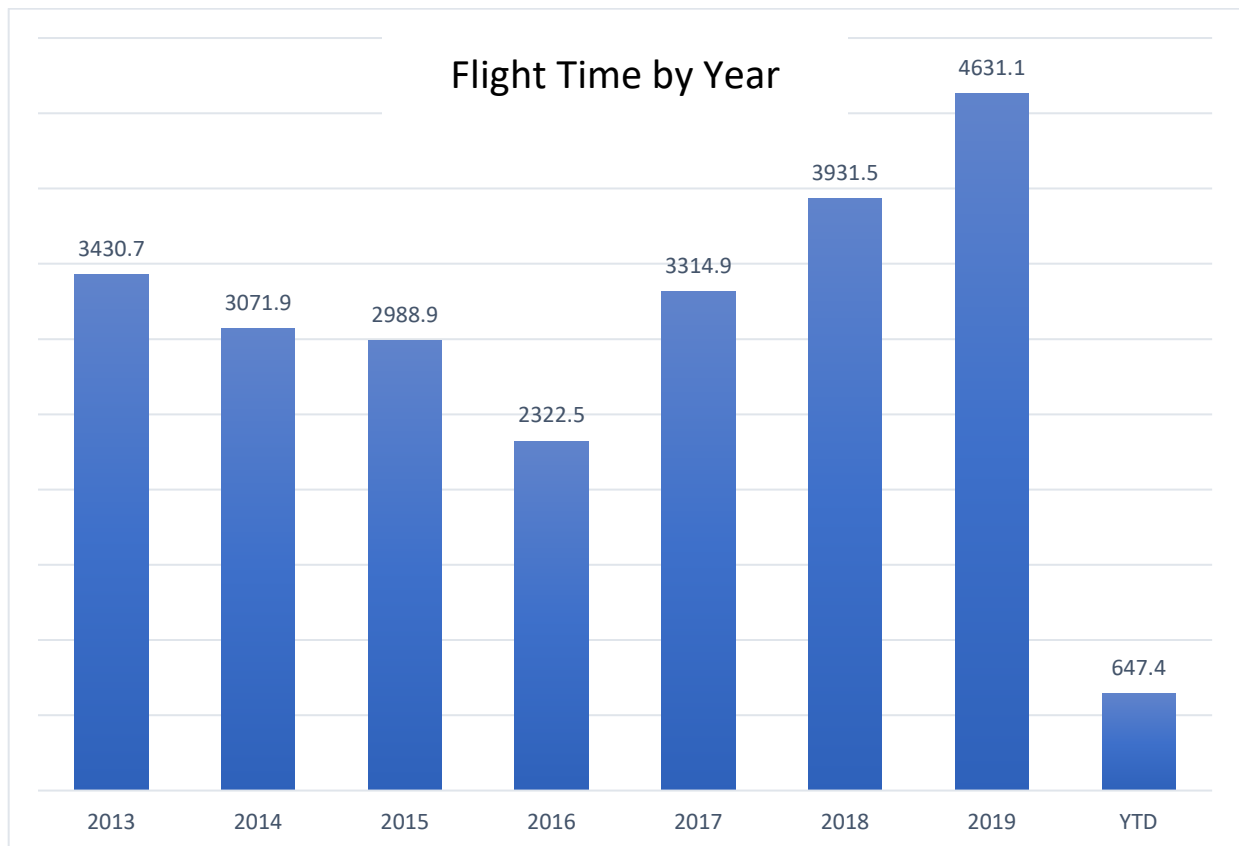
Pathfinder's Safety Management System (SMS) is an organization-wide comprehensive and preventive approach to managing safety. Our SMS is organized in the basic four Pillars/ Components comprising of:

1. Safety Policy and Objectives
2. Safety Risk Management
3. Safety Assurance
4. Safety Promotion

Pathfinder's SMS is integrated into all facets of our operation and business decision making processes. The SMS assists leadership, management team members, and employees in making effective and informed safety decisions. Pathfinder's SMS is a Toolbox that contains a number of smaller systems.

In the chart below, you will see total hours flown since 2013. Hours flown during the previous 11 years is not easily calculated; however, will be made available upon request.

Since its beginning in 2001, Pathfinder has not had any HSE legal non-compliance, incidents, or accidents which resulted in a fatality.



DEFINE THE OFFER

One Bell 212 twin-engine helicopter will continue to provide passenger & cargo support services to the island of Diomedede from our base in Nome, Alaska. The aircraft will be utilized for direct service to Diomedede performing the following route on Monday of each week (52 trips annually): Nome (OME) to Diomedede (DIO) to Nome. In the event of weather delays, we have flexibility to perform the flight later in the week.



Aircraft:

The Bell 212 is a twin-engine medium helicopter produced by Bell Helicopters. Pathfinder Aviation operates four (4) Bell 212s in nine (9) passenger seating configurations. The Bell 212s are supported out of our Headquarters in Anchorage, Alaska.

Pathfinder Aviation proudly supports the Oil & Gas industry in Alaska while meeting stringent Oil & Gas safety policies and practices. We have incorporated these proven requirements into our safety culture as part of our Safety Management System (SMS) which is utilized in supporting the Diomedede operation from our Nome, Alaska base.

Rates and Fees:

Pathfinder has been supporting the current ATNEP contract utilizing a Bell 212 since July 2017 at the current rate of \$380,952 for 36 trips per year. Due to constraints/limitations of the ATNEP program, inflation costs have not been considered during this time. The average cost increase on helicopter parts each year is 2%, which is nonnegotiable by the manufacturers, and insurance premiums are at an all-time high for the industry with some operators experiencing >70% increase this year alone. Our figure below reflects current rates for the service of our Bell 212.



Bell 212 Medium Twin-Engine (Over water equipped)

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Total Subsidy Requested: | \$634,400 |
| July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021* | |
| Roundtrip Flight Price: | \$12,200 |
| Hourly Rate with Fuel: | \$4,880 |
| Nome Fuel Price (gallon): | \$7.00 |
| Trips per year - 1 each week: | 52 |
| Total Flight Time for Routing: | 2.5 Flight Hours |
| Total Fuel Required per Routing: | 300 Gallons (with Reserve) |
| Approximate payload per trip: | 1574 lb. |

*Pathfinder is interested in a multi-year agreement at an increase of 1.5% annually.

Proposed weekly schedule

Dedicated flight day: Monday – Leg 1: Fly Passengers/Cargo from Nome to Diomed.

Leg 2: Fly Passengers/Cargo from Diomed to Nome.

Note: Days delayed due to weather or maintenance will be scheduled for the next day.

NOME MAINTENANCE

In the event the 212 is unavailable for an extended period of time for maintenance, a Bell 212/412 will be provided at no additional cost.

Pathfinder has a full-time technician located at our Nome base to perform daily maintenance and scheduled periodic inspections as to not interrupt the daily work schedule. A spare parts inventory, consumables and tooling, appropriate to the scope of work are also located at the Nome base. Pathfinder's robust spare parts inventory in Alaska, combined with an industry leading supply chain department, yields exceptional uptime on our aircraft.

PREFLIGHT PROCEDURES

Prior to each flight day, the pilot will verify a daily inspection has been completed, all AD's are complied with, and enough time remains before the next scheduled inspection to complete a minimum 8 hours of flight time. The PIC's daily signature in the aircraft logbook will confirm airworthiness of the aircraft.

PASSENGER MANIFEST

Pathfinder will provide Diomed with passenger manifest records upon request.

HAZARD AND SAFETY REPORTS

All Pathfinder crews assigned to this project are responsible to submit hazard and safety reports which will be evaluated to assess risk and establish controls. **ANYONE** involved the helicopter operations is encouraged to exercise stop work authority immediately upon recognizing any situation that is



perceived as dangerous. Should stop work authority be exercised, crews assigned to this project are required to submit a hazard/ safety report and cease work until Pathfinder and Diomedes have assigned a control and re-authorized the work.

FLIGHT REPORTS

At the end of each pilot's shift, a copy of the daily flight report, generated by the electronic flight bag, can be emailed to the appropriate Diomedes representative upon written request.

PARTS AND LOGISTICS

Pathfinder pilots or mechanics will alert the Pathfinder AOC (staffed 24/7) any time an aircraft becomes unavailable due to maintenance. The AOC will coordinate with the supply department (staffed 24/7) and Director of Maintenance the needs of the assigned crews. The most expeditious manner to resolve AOG issues will be used. All AOG related transportation cost will be the responsibility of Pathfinder.

FEEDBACK AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

It is important to Pathfinder to provide Diomedes with the safest and most efficient support possible. This includes being more efficient with time, resources, and how can we become a more valuable asset. We have grown to be one of the most respected helicopter companies in Alaska because of our commitment on consciously providing safe alternatives to the status quo.

COMMUNITY/SOCIAL PRACTICES

Our website states "Global Expertise. Alaskan Spirit" and this is precisely who we are. As an Alaska based company, the majority of our employees are either currently living here or have some deep connection with Alaska. We understand how remote, pristine, and special Alaska truly is and we contribute to keeping it that way!

Our greatest assets are our employees. Many of our employees volunteer within their local community. We support these employees by providing flexible work schedules, monetary or goods contributions and even local sponsorships.

Over the years we have participated in a number of projects that have allowed us to support the Government in protection of our Alaskan assets and also in exploring new Alaska infrastructure which supports new jobs, financial gain, and are also sustainable. We take great pride in seeing the projects we have flown come to fruition and support the Alaska community.

We have participated in the Terra Pass program, buying carbon credits for our flights hours and supported State funded and private sector funded forest inventory projects. This is one way we feel better limiting our carbon footprint produced by the operation of helicopters. Our employees are encouraged to go paperless, reduce waste and recycle. We are conscientious of our utilities and hope that our attention to these details translate to our employees' homes.

We donate flights to employees, friends, and family because there is no greater way to showcase Alaska than from the seat of a helicopter! We know that our employees love aviation and we want them to share these experiences with their friends and family.

Due to our extensive work within the remote villages of Alaska, we “fly neighborly”. Pilots are encouraged to have minimal impact on the community and wildlife. Sometimes the helicopter is the most visible part of a project, as such, we try to be as minimally invasive as possible.

We participate in the communities in which we operate. With bases in Nome, Deadhorse, Anchorage, Kenai and Homer, we are constantly engaged with the residents in these remote parts of Alaska. We understand the unique social and community needs that exist. We are sensitive to local values and by taking a people centered approach, we build trust through relationships and support.

Our partnerships in the region run deep and includes NANA Regional Corporation, Kawerak Corporation, Bering Straits Native Corporation, Bering Straits Health Consortium, Bering Straits School District, The Village of Little Diomed, The Alaska State Troopers and many more. We have a multitude of outreach programs which allows Pathfinder Aviation to strengthen and enhance our overall prosperity.

REFERENCES

These references have all used Pathfinder Aviation services for many years under the most demanding conditions. Please contact them to discuss Pathfinder Aviation’s part in the successful outcome of their work.



Frazer Tabeart, +61 8 6465 5500
 Managing Director, **PolarX Limited**
 One year of core drilling and exploration project support, Alaska Range



Kyle Nergi, 907-242-4364
 Project Geologist, **Millrock Resources**
 One year of core drilling and exploration project support, Alaska Range



Harmen Keyser, 604-484-9402
 Project Manager Bokan Mountain, **Landmark Alaska (Joint Venture between Landmark Minerals and Ucore)**,
 Five years of core drilling and mining project support, Southeast Alaska.



Joe Lucas, 907-276-6868
 Project Manager, **Chuitna Coal Project**.
 Five years of mining project support, Western Cook Inlet.



Bob Mcalpin (Ret.)/Matthew Snyder, 907-521-7046/Don Anderson, 907-451-2629
 Norther Region Air Support Coordinator, **Alaska Department of Natural Resources**

Forestry Division

Thirteen plus years on-call, various projects, 2 years exclusive-use, forest inventory project, one year type II in McGrath and Tok.



Dave Doucet, 907-267-1357
South Alaska Aviation Manager **BLM/AFS**
Thirteen plus years on-call, various projects.



John Paskievich, 907-632-2277
Department Head, **Alaska Volcano Observatory**
Fifteen years of continuous support for AVO's volcano work, including Eastern and Western Aleutians and South Pacific Islands.



Bob Gillis, 907-451-5024
Project Manager, **Alaska Department of Geological & Geophysical Surveys**
11 plus years of continuous helicopter support throughout the state including Western Cook Inlet, the Alaska Peninsula and Eastern Aleutians.



David Houseknecht, 703-648-6466
Project Manager, **USGS**.
Eight years of helicopter support thought the Brooks Range and North Slope.



Stacey Buckalew, 907-717-4583
Project Manager, **Rat Eradication projects**.
Multiple projects, Western Aleutians and South Pacific Islands.



Rick Alexander, 907-283-2339
Operations Superintendent, **Homer Electric Association**.
Six years of helicopter support, Southeast Alaska.



Adam Coe, 832-325-0286
Regional Aviation Advisor, ENI Petroleum
Two years of oil and gas drilling and production support, Oooguruk field, North Slope Alaska.



Kate Dodson, 907-265-6181
Environmental Coordinator, **ConocoPhillips**



Three years of Oilfield support Alpine field, North Slope Alaska and night coverage Cook Inlet.