

HELICOPTER SAFETY NEWS

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The Top 10 Ways You Can Prevent Helicopter Accidents

CHICAGO - The International Helicopter Safety Team (IHST), a worldwide organization leading a multi-year effort to reduce the civil helicopter accident rate, has developed 10 key recommendations aimed at reducing accidents and injuries. These proposals can help owners, pilots, instructors, mechanics, and all members of the helicopter community.

1. Install cockpit recording devices.
2. Improve Autorotation Training.
3. Add Advanced Maneuvers to Simulator Training.
4. Emphasize Critical Issues Awareness in Training.
5. Enhance Aircraft Performance & Limitations Training.
6. Strengthen Emergency Procedures Training.
7. Implement a Personal Risk Management Program.
8. Establish a Mission Specific Risk Management Program.
9. Follow and Confirm Compliance of ICA Procedures.
10. Implement a Strong Quality Assurance Maintenance Program.

EQUIPMENT

Install cockpit recording devices. Develop and install flight data monitoring equipment to record the actions of the flight crew. Data can be used as local immediate feedback to trainers, operators and flight crews. The data also could aid in the event of accident investigation to support a more complete analysis and future safety recommendations.

TRAINING

Improve Autorotation Training. Improve autorotation training in both primary and advanced flight training and develop simulator programs to improve autorotation skills.

Add Advanced Maneuvers to Simulator Training. Incorporate simulator programs into training program that would include dynamic rollover, emergency procedures training, ground resonance, quick stop maneuvers, targeting approach procedures and practice in pinnacle approaches, unimproved landing areas, and elevated platforms.

Emphasize Critical Issues Awareness in Training. Establish training programs that train and evaluate proficiency of critical issues such as systems failures, impending weather concerns, effects of density altitude, and wind and surface conditions that could be critical to safe flight.

Enhance Aircraft Performance & Limitations Training. Operators should provide robust training and continual evaluation of their pilots on aircraft performance. This training should include the effects of density altitude, gross weight and flight manual limitations.

Strengthen Emergency Procedures Training. Encourage the use of emergency procedures trainers with the emphasis on Loss of System, Recognition and Recovery training.

SAFETY MANAGEMENT

Implement a Personal Risk Management Program. Encourage the implementation and use of a personal risk management program and also utilize the IMSAFE personal checklist.

Establish a Mission Specific Risk Management Program. A formal Safety Management System (SMS) requires training for specific missions, the establishment and enforcement of standard operating procedures, provisions and training of personnel to use risk assessment tools, and most importantly, changing the safety culture to ensure that all personnel put “Safety” first.

MAINTENANCE

Follow and Confirm Compliance of ICA Procedures. Ensure that maintainers and operators are aware of the importance of following the manufacturer’s maintenance manuals and practices.

Implement a Strong Quality Assurance Maintenance Program. Encourage operators and maintainers to implement a robust Quality Assurance program that ensures the use of manufacturers maintenance manuals, service bulletins, and procedures.

With a cooperative effort co-chaired by a government member (the FAA) and an industry member, the IHST’s mission is to reduce the international civil helicopter accident rate by 80 percent by 2016. Major industry participants include AgustaWestland, the American Helicopter Society International, Bell Helicopter, Bristow Helicopter Ltd, CHC helicopter, Eurocopter, the Flight Safety Foundation, the Helicopter Association of Canada, the Helicopter Association International, Robinson Helicopter, Shell Aircraft, and Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation.

More information about the IHST, its reports, its safety tools, and presentations from its 2011 safety symposium can be obtained at its web site at www.IHST.org and its Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/International-Helicopter-Safety-Team-IHST/150529738351608>