



GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION**

**AIR SAFETY CIRCULAR 2 OF 2014**

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**Subject: Operation of small aircraft/helicopters – Adherence to Safety Guidelines**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

VIPs, SPG protected persons and other important persons of eminence in public life use air travel frequently for electioneering and other purposes in small aircraft/ helicopters of private/non-scheduled operators. Further, election flying is a highly demanding exercise in terms of skill levels, professionalism and tact. Long flying hours, large number of take-offs and landings, weather changes, lack of proper rest and recuperation arrangements, hurriedly prepared helipads, frequent changes in itinerary, time management, highly stressed security arrangement, crowd control, congested airspace, lack of adequate communication and airspace management, commercial interest and language barrier are some of the challenges of election flying.

Analysis of earlier accidents/incidents associated with small aircraft/helicopter operations from airstrips/temporary helipads and past experience of election flying by the operators has revealed that laid down instructions were violated time and again and safety was jeopardised.

Though number of guidelines and circulars have been issued in the past for ensuring safety of air operations by small aircraft and helicopters, the instructions are thus reiterated so that the same are followed meticulously for ensuring safe operation of small aircraft/helicopters.

**2. REQUIREMENTS**

**2.1 Operational**

2.1.1 All pilots of non-scheduled/private aircraft/helicopter operators shall ensure that their licences and ratings are current and are certified to carry out such operations.

2.1.2 All Non-scheduled/private aircraft/helicopter operators and the pilots shall ensure existence of a suitable helipad in writing with latitude/longitude

reference and/or any other physical reference on the ground from the District authorities (DM/SDM/SSP/ SP/SHO) of the area intended to be used for landing at least 24 hrs prior to commencing flight.

- 2.1.3 Selection of a helipad should be done as per CAR Section 4, Series B Part V. In terrorist infested/hostile area, the same should be selected in a sanitized location.
- 2.1.4 The operator shall ensure adequacy of dimension of the helipad/airstrip for the type of helicopter/aircraft being used.
- 2.1.5 Crew composition shall be in accordance with the provisions of CAR Section 8, Series A, Part I; Air Safety Circular 2 of 1981 and MHA guidelines.
- 2.1.6 The flight crew shall google helipad coordinates to check their correctness, suitability and other flying aspects like obstacles (like tall trees, high tension wires), landing, take-off directions, etc.
- 2.1.7 The flight crew shall carry local and million maps during flight for navigation and shall not rely on GPS only.
- 2.1.8 The flight plan should be filed with complete details to the nearest ATC unit, indicating the exact number of passengers and load.
- 2.1.9 Route planning should be done in a manner so as to avoid terrorist infested/hostile areas and areas which impede search and rescue operations.
- 2.1.10 The flight crew shall ensure strict compliance of weather minima and proper weather briefing before commencement of flights as per Operations Circular 12 of 2011.
- 2.1.11 The flight crew shall either divert or carry out precautionary landing in case of encountering bad weather during the flight.
- 2.1.12 The flight crew should adhere to the flight level/ AGL clearance as per flight plan.
- 2.1.13 The flight crew shall avoid mixing of VFR and IFR conditions as it leads to CFIT.

## **2.2 Safety**

- 2.2.1 The requirements contained in CAR Section 5, Series F, Part III regarding pre-flight medical examination shall be strictly adhered to.
- 2.2.2 The flight crew/operators should ensure strict adherence to proper loading of aircraft/helicopter in accordance with CAR Section 2, Series X, Part II. At no stage, there should be any excess passenger/load.

- 2.2.3 Prior to the flight, passengers should be briefed on safety aspects like fastening of seat belts, no smoking, evacuation procedures, etc.
- 2.2.4 The flight crew should ensure complete stoppage of helicopter rotors/aircraft propellers before permitting embarking/disembarking of passengers.
- 2.2.5 After arrival at the destination as per coordinates, if the landing zone/helipad cannot be located, the flight crew should contact district authorities with available mode of communication for an alternate secured landing site, if available, or proceed to the next destination. The crew should immediately inform telephonically followed by written report to concerned regional Air Safety Office and the Director Air Safety, DGCA, Hqrs.
- 2.2.6 The flight crew/operators should ensure strict adherence to FDTL requirements.
- 2.2.7 The operator shall ensure that adequate safety measures are taken during landing/take-off.
- 2.2.8 The operator/flight crew shall ensure that the capabilities and limitations of the helicopter/aircraft are not exceeded.

### **2.3 Airworthiness**

- 2.3.1 The aircraft/helicopters hired for such purposes should be airworthy and meet all mandatory requirements before flying.
- 2.3.2 In case of refueling, the quality of fuel should be ensured. Adequate fuel should be uplifted for the flight as planned including contingencies.
- 2.3.3 Before departure from base, the operator should ensure that the aircraft/helicopter is free from any defect and proper rectification/maintenance procedures have been followed.

### **2.4 General**

- 2.4.1 Accountable Managers of all operators and Civil Aviation Department of State Government undertaking VIP flying/election flying should ensure that regular briefing session, with regard to instructions contained in this circular as well as ASC 02 of 1981 and MHA Guidelines, is carried out with the following:
  - a) Pilots
  - b) Personnel engaged in engineering, operation, helipad owner/operator, Chartering agencies, etc.
- 2.4.2 Civil Aviation Department of the State Government shall ensure compliance of all DGCA requirements and instructions contained in this circular when chartering aircraft for VIP/State Government operations.
- 2.4.3 The helicopter/aircraft should be endorsed on the AOP of the operator.
- 2.4.4 Type of aircraft/helicopter for carriage of VIPs shall be in accordance with Air Safety Circular 2 of 1981 and MHA guidelines.

- 2.4.5 The temporary helipad should not be in close proximity of any assemblage of persons.
- 2.4.6 The operator shall ascertain from District Administration that the surface of temporary helipad is level and does not have loose soil which might raise a dust with rotor downwash cutting down visibility at the time of landing which may lead to disorientation.
- 2.4.7 It should be ensured that the temporary helipads/airstrips have minimal ground markings for identification purposes and means to detect the wind direction as viewed from the air.
- 2.4.8 The helipads/airstrips should be guarded by police/security personnel to check movement of unauthorized persons/restrict movement of persons to close proximity of the helicopter/aircraft.
- 2.4.9 The operator shall ascertain from District Administration regarding adequacy of firefighting and rescue services at the destination before undertaking operations.
- 2.4.10 The Aerodrome Operator shall ensure adequacy of parking space for aircraft/helicopters to avoid ground incidents.
- 2.4.11 Airports Authority of India shall ensure proper air traffic management to avoid traffic congestion.
- 2.4.12 The operator/flight crew shall ensure that proper passenger manifest is made. In case of any change in passengers during flight, a new manifest should be made.
- 2.4.13 The operator shall ensure that no unplanned landing is made.
- 2.4.14 Company representative shall monitor every leg/ sortie and take overdue action if aircraft does not land within 45 minutes of scheduled arrival.
- 2.4.15 In case of emergency/unscheduled landing, the flight crew shall ensure the following:
- a) Seek police help.
  - b) Inform company representative, WSO, regional air safety office and DGCA, helicopter division and act as per company operations manual.
  - c) Arrange security.
  - d) Arrange technical help.
- 2.4.16 It shall be the responsibility of the operator to file following returns:
- a) To Election commission (as per their requirement)
  - b) Details of each flight undertaken along with passenger manifest, observation made by District Authorities/Election Commission (if any) and FDTL/FTL return (to Helicopter Division DGCA on every Monday)
  - c) Incident/Accident reporting (as per Air Safety Circular 06 of 2013)
- 2.4.17 Each Operator shall nominate responsible person for managing election flying who will be accountable for ensuring compliance of all instructions issued by DGCA, AAI, BCAS & Election Commission and his particulars be submitted to the Helicopter Division, DGCA before commencement of election flying.

2.4.18 Operator/flight crew shall ensure that no unauthorised cash, arms, ammunitions, narcotics or illegal items are carried on board the aircraft/ helicopter as laid down in the guidelines issued by the Election Commission / MHA/ BCAS.

2.4.19 Before operating to/from remote/uncontrolled airports/helipads, the operator shall inform the District Authorities regarding landing at various places.

2.4.20 The operator/flight crew shall ensure that baggage is properly screened before loading into the aircraft/helicopter.

## **2.5 Action for Non-compliance**

Non-compliance of the above instructions shall be viewed very seriously by DGCA, which may lead to even suspension of operations or pilots licence for specified period. Depending on the severity of violation, following actions shall be taken:

- a) Caution/warning to the operator/pilot/ AME/accountable per son.
  - b) Suspension of licence of pilot/AME
  - c) Suspension of operations for a specified/entire period of operations.
  - d) Suspension of AOP with endorsement.
  - e) Cancellation of AOP
- 2.6 All stakeholders are hereby advised to strictly adhere to above safety guidelines for ensuring safety of helicopter/small aircraft operations.

This circular supersedes Air Safety Circular 02 of 2014.



(B.S. Bhullar)

Director General of Civil Aviation

- To:
1. All Non Scheduled Operators
  2. Private Operators
  3. Airports Authority of India
  4. Election Commission of India
  5. Chief Electoral Officers
  6. PS to Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation
  7. Internal distribution as per list