

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**  
**OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION**  
**AIR SAFETY DIRECTORATE**

**AIR SAFETY CIRCULAR NO. 5 OF 2008**

**Subject: Operation of Small Aircraft/Helicopters – Adherence to Safety Guidelines**

Air-traveling of VIPs, SPG Protected persons and other important persons of eminence in public life is performed these days frequently for electioneering and other movement purposes in helicopter/small aircraft of private operators/non-scheduled operators. For ensuring adequate safety, such operators should ensure that whenever their Aircraft/Helicopters are hired for such purposes, it should be airworthy and meet all mandatory requirements before flying and their flying crew are certified for carrying out such flights. Though a number of guidelines and circulars have been issued in the past for ensuring safety in air operations by small aircraft and helicopters, following guidelines are reiterated so that the same are followed meticulously for ensuring safe operation of small Aircraft / Helicopters.

1. All Non –Scheduled /Private helicopter operators and their pilots when engaged in flights carrying VIPs/ SPG Protected Persons and other persons of eminence in public life are advised to ensure that at least 24 hrs. prior to commencing flight, the existence of a suitable helipad should be confirmed 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.
2. The adequacy of dimension of the helipad/airstrip for the type of helicopter/aircraft being used, and approach and take off areas being clear of obstacles like tall trees, high tension wires etc. and that adequate safety measures during landing/take-off should be ensured. The improvised helipad/airstrip as viewed from air should not be in close proximity of any assemblage of persons. It should be ensured from District Administration that the surface of improvised 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. Also prior to take off, the crew should ascertain prevailing weather condition from the district authorities at the intended place of landing.
3. After arrival at destination as per the coordinates if the landing zone/helipad cannot be located, the crew should contact district authorities with the 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 Director Air Safety(Hqr.)
4. The flight crew should ensure Helicopter rotors / Aircraft propellers should come to complete stop before permitting Embarking/Disembarking of passengers.
5. It should be ensured that the improvised helipads/airstrips have minimal ground markings for identification purposes and means to detect the wind direction as viewed from the air. 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.

6. The flight crew/operators should ensure strict adherence to FDTL requirements, weather minima compliance and proper weather briefing obtained before commencement of flights. The flight plan should be filed with complete details to the nearest ATC unit, indicating the exact number of passengers and load.
7. The flight crew/operators should ensure strict adherence to proper loading of Aircraft / Helicopter and there should be no excess passenger/load.
8. The flight crew/operators should ensure deactivation of duplicate controls, in case passengers are accommodated on co-pilot's seat, as per the instructions in vogue. Prior to the flight, passengers are to be briefed on Safety aspects like fastening of seat belts, no smoking etc.
9. The quality of fuel in case of re-fuelling is to be ensured and adequate fuel is to be uplifted for the flight as planned including contingencies.
10. The flight crew/operators should ensure that prior to departure from base, the aircraft/helicopter is free from any defect and proper rectification/maintenance procedures are followed.

Analysis of earlier accidents/incidents associated with helicopter/small aircraft operations from improvised helipads/airstrips revealed that laid down instructions were violated time and again and safety was jeopardised. All non-scheduled/private operators are hereby advised to strictly adhere to all safety guidelines for ensuring safety of helicopter/small aircraft operations.

*This circular supersedes ASC 5 of 2004*

Dated 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2008

(Bir Singh Rai)  
Director Air Safety  
For Director General of Civil Aviation

To: All Non Scheduled Operators  
Private Operators  
Internal distribution as per list.