
IRELAND

SAFETY REGULATION DIVISION
IRISH AVIATION AUTHORITY
THE TIMES BUILDING
11/12 D'OLIER STREET
DUBLIN 2

AERONAUTICAL NOTICE

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Helicopter Flights for the Inspection, Repair or Maintenance of Overhead Electricity Power Lines.

The Irish Aviation Authority, in pursuance of Article 7(2) of the Irish Aviation Authority (Operations Order) Order, 2006, (S.I. No. 61 of 2006), hereby directs that helicopter flights carried out for the purpose of inspecting, repairing or maintaining overhead electricity transmission lines and their supporting structures shall be classified as flights carried out for the purposes of Aerial Work.

An Aerial Work operator is required to provide an appropriate Aerial Work Operations Manual, or supplement to an AOC Manual and the content of this Aeronautical Notice list the information which must be included in such Manuals submitted by both initial applicants and current holders of Aerial Work Permits in respect of power line inspection operations:-

- a) Flights shall not be made over or in close proximity to the congested area of any city, town or settlement nor any assembly of persons unless complying with the requirements of Performance Class 1.
- b) Flights shall be conducted by day under VFR only.
- c) A helicopter shall not approach closer than 500 feet to any person, vessel, vehicle or structure, other than those directly concerned with inspection, repair or maintenance, or closer than 500 feet to any building or structure occupied, or likely to be occupied. Unless in accordance with the conditions as set out in a Low Flying Permit issued by the Irish Aviation Authority.
- d) Such flights shall not be commenced or continued unless the helicopter can alight without undue danger to persons or property on the surface in the event of a critical power-unit failure.
- e) Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment is to be worn on all power line inspection flights, however, where the helicopter is operated in Performance Class 3, each occupant must be equipped with the following:-
 - i) a helmet providing substantial head protection in the event of an accident.
 - ii) protective overalls or outer clothing manufactured in a fire-retardant material.
 - iii) footwear of a substantial nature.

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- f)** The helicopter shall be equipped with a safety harness for each aircraft occupant or, in the case where that is not reasonably practicable, with at least a safety harness comprised of a safety belt with one diagonal cross-over shoulder strap.
- g)** A flight shall not be commenced or continued when the prevailing meteorological conditions are:
- i) in-flight visibility less than 1,500 metres;
 - ii) cloud base below 600 feet above ground level;
 - iii) mean wind speed is in excess of 25 Knots; or
 - iv) precipitation restricts in-flight visibility,
- h)** Power line operations impose an exceptional workload on pilots. Accordingly, the Operations Manual must contain specific Flight Time and Duty Limitations applicable to power line operations taking account of the following:
- i) a daily maximum duty period not exceeding 9 hours.
 - ii) a maximum total flight time not exceeding 5 flight hours per day.
 - iii) a maximum single patrol sortie duration not exceeding 2 hours and 30 minutes.
 - iv) a minimum rest period of 15 minutes between patrol sorties.
 - v) a minimum rest period of 30 minutes between any patrol sorties after 2 hours and 30 minutes of patrol hours have been flown by a pilot in any one day.
- i)** Power line operations shall be conducted in accordance with any conditions specified in the associated Irish Aviation Authority 'Aerial Work' and/or 'Low Flying' Permissions. Applications for Aerial Work and Low Flying Permissions must be submitted to the Flight Operations Department, together with full details of the planned power line operation programme.
- j)** Additional information required to be included in the Operations Manual is as follows:-
- i) The provision, function and use of working maps used to be used by power line patrol observers.
 - ii) Contents of the pre-flight brief and debrief procedures, including procedures for ensuring inclusive briefing/debriefing of the helicopter crew, power line patrol observers and associated ground support staff.
 - iii) Patrol planning considerations.
 - iv) Minimum patrol heights and clearances from power lines and supporting structures.
 - v) Function and responsibilities of observers as Aerial Work crew members.

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- vi) Observation techniques.
 - vii) Routine patrols.
 - viii) Storm damage and emergency 'short notice' patrols.
 - ix) Non-patrolling operations such as maintenance.
 - x) Aircraft incident/accident/overdue procedures.
 - xi) Minimum pilot qualification/experience requirements including role currency.
 - xii) Training and checking requirements.
 - xiii) Procedures for promulgation of advance public notification of power line operations in the vicinity of noise sensitive areas.
 - xiv) Fuelling procedures and safety precautions, including in-field procedures.
 - xv) Helicopter in-field security and maintenance arrangements.
- k)** The conduct of power line patrols shall be included in the Quality System and the Safety Management System.
- l)** The operator shall carry out a risk assessment of the proposed operations prior to commencement and shall continue to review the associated risks throughout the operating period.

Operations Advisory Memorandum OAM 04/03 is hereby cancelled.

Director, SRD
Irish Aviation Authority