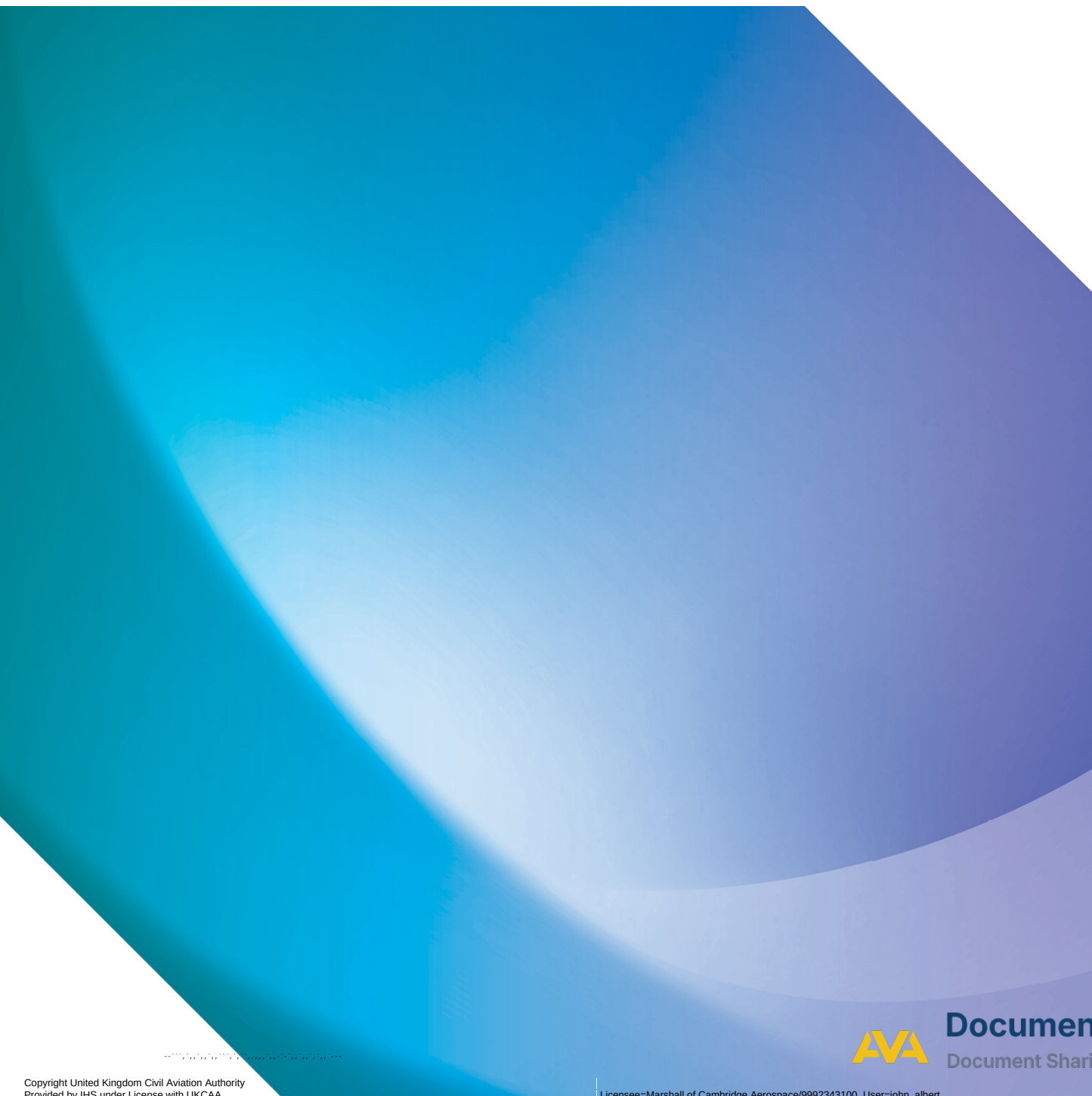


Consultation: The CAA's intention to assume responsibility for the certification of UK helidecks

CAP 1295



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Executive Summary

During the CAA's Strategic Review of Offshore Helicopter Operations (i.e., CAP 1145), action A13 was raised notifying CAA's intention to assume responsibility for the certification of UK helidecks and to consult with industry to achieve this (Delivery 1Q 2015). A paper (attached) is drafted to examine how the present industry arrangements can be modified to a CAA-directed certification process which reflects the EASA Qualified Entity model described in the Basic EASA Regulation (EC) No 216/2008.

The paper examines in detail how a formal MoU could empower one or more qualified entities to act on behalf of the CAA for the certification of helidecks on the United Kingdom Continental Shelf (UKCS). The proposed arrangement gives a framework to provide a robust and legally enforceable system for the certification of over 300 helidecks operating on the UKCS, which delivers tangible enhancements in safety standards but with minimal bureaucratic impact to the CAA.

To address weaknesses in the present arrangement, in particular the lack of across-the-board enforcement of sanctions where a helideck has been found to have significant non-compliances, there needs to be a legally binding directive in place whereby CAA is empowered to prevent an operation should the helideck fail to achieve a minimum level of compliance. The proposal would be for CAA to underwrite a qualified entity's approvals system by issuing an operational directive under article 15 of the ANO (and article 6(4) of the Air Operations Regulation 965/2012) requiring helicopters operating to offshore installations and vessels on the UKCS only to do so if facilities have been approved /certificated by a Qualified Entity (or Entities) acting on behalf of the NAA (UK CAA).

To address standard non-compliances, which are not ordinarily 'no-go' items, the qualified entity will develop and promulgate a set of Agreed Procedures (APS) in an Operations Manual, which is acceptable to the CAA. To process specific non-standard operational issues, these will be subject to continuous scrutiny from operational pilots at quarterly steering meetings. These meetings will be chaired by a qualified entity and include representation from the CAA, i.e., Flight Operations (Helicopters) and/or Intelligence, Strategy and Policy (ISP) as a minimum.

To ensure the management, training and competency standards and record keeping of the qualified entity are maintained 'fit for purpose' the CAA will undertake periodic audits of qualified entity (at the cost of the entity). The cost of audits could be offset against revenue generated from the certification of each helideck given that such activities fall outside areas captured by the CAA Official Scheme of Charges.