



Civil Aviation Authority

SAFETY AND OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVE

Number: SD-2018/003



Issued: 1 June 2018

Offshore Helicopter Operations – Vibration Health Monitoring

This Safety and Operational Directive contains mandatory action that is required to restore an acceptable level of safety. It is issued in accordance with Articles 17(1) and 248 of the Air Navigation Order 2016 and in accordance with Article 14.1 of Regulation (EC) No. 216/2008.

Applicability:	
Aerodromes:	Not primarily affected
Air Traffic:	Not primarily affected
Airspace:	Not primarily affected
Airworthiness:	Not primarily affected
Flight Operations:	All AOC Helicopter Operators Conducting Offshore Operations
Licensed Personnel:	Not primarily affected

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Safety and Operational Directive contains mandatory action that is required to retain an acceptable level of safety by operators of helicopters registered in the United Kingdom conducting commercial air transport (CAT) offshore operations.
- 1.2 The Operational Directive at [Annex A](#) is issued under article 248 and 17(1) of the Air Navigation Order 2016 and subject to, and in accordance with, Article 14.1 of Regulation (EC) No. 216/2008 (the Basic Regulation) and replaces the Operational Directive promulgated by SD 2015/002 - Offshore Helicopter Operations – Vibration Health Monitoring - which is hereby revoked.
- 1.3 Recipients must ensure that this Directive is copied to all members of their staff who need to take appropriate action or who may have an interest in the information (including any 'in-house' or contracted maintenance organisation and relevant outside contractors).

2 Background

- 2.1 [Commission Regulation \(EU\) No. 965/2012](#) (the Air Operations Regulation) came into force for CAT operations in October 2012 but did not have any specific approval arrangements for offshore helicopter operations. Article 6(4) of the Air Operations Regulation provides Member States with a derogation to continue to impose additional national requirements for such offshore operations including equipment requirements until 30 June 2018. In accordance with the Air Navigation Order 2016 (ANO) article 119 and Schedule 6 Part 1, operators of UK registered helicopters conducting Public Transport operations with a maximum approved passenger seating configuration of more than nine and operating in a hostile environment have been required to fit a Vibration Health Monitoring (VHM) system since 2007. Such systems must also be operated in accordance with procedures approved by the CAA and are particularly relevant to offshore operations. However, these ANO requirements do not apply to aircraft



Documents

Document Sharing Hub

Page 1 of 1

operating as CAT and therefore the CAA issued SD 2015/002 to continue to mandate them under the provisions of the derogation.

- 2.2 An amendment (Commission Regulation (EU) 2016/1199 of 22 July 2016) to the Air Operations Regulation has now introduced a new Specific Approval (SPA) for the operation of helicopters to offshore locations including helidecks, ships and windfarms. This new approval, Helicopter Offshore Operations (HOFO), has been incorporated into Annex V (Specific Approvals), Subpart K of the Air Operations Regulation and comes into effect on the 1 July 2018. The amendment includes a requirement for approved VHM equipment and operating procedures in accordance with SPA.HOFO.155 to be in effect by 1 January 2019.

3 Reason

- 3.1 This Safety and Operational Directive is made in the interest of assuring continued safe operations by helicopters registered in the United Kingdom when conducting offshore operations by retaining the requirement to fit and operate VHM equipment. Without this Direction, there would be the potential for an unacceptable regulatory gap and consequential loss of safety before SPA.HOFO.155 becomes fully applicable for approved VHM equipment and operating procedures on 1 January 2019.
- 3.2 SD 2015/002 was previously issued to direct the fitment of VHM equipment and use of approved procedures to certain helicopters operating offshore CAT but would not be applicable after 30 June 2018. This SD replaces SD 2015/002 and has been issued by the CAA to fill the regulatory gap referred to at 3.1 until 1 January 2019.
- 3.3 The OD will not apply to those operators who are in compliance with the requirements of SPA.HOFO.155 and who are in receipt of the specific approval for offshore operations between 1 July 2018 and 1 January 2019.

4 Queries

- 4.1 Any queries or requests for further guidance from AOC holders as a result of this communication should be addressed to the assigned Flight Operations Inspector in the first instance.
- 4.2 Otherwise, queries should be addressed to the ISPTechnicalSupportTeam@caa.co.uk.

5 Coming into effect and Cancellation

- 5.1 This Directive comes into effect on 1 June 2018 will remain in force until 1 January 2019.

Signed: Neil Williams

for the Civil Aviation Authority

Date: 1 June 2018