



HSAC-RP

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HELICOPTER SAFETY ADVISORY CONFERENCE-RECOMMENDED PRACTICE

Offshore (VFR) Operating Altitudes For Helicopters

Background

To enhance safety through standardized vertical separation of helicopters when flying in the offshore environment, the following is recommended (weather permitting):

Recommended Practice:

1. Field Operations

Without compromising minimum safe operating altitudes, helicopters working within an offshore field "constituting a cluster" should use altitudes not to exceed 500 feet.

2. Enroute Operations

- (a) Helicopters operating below 750' AGL should avoid transitioning through offshore fields.
- (b) Helicopters Enroute to and from offshore locations, below 3000 feet, weather permitting, should use enroute altitudes as outlined below:

<u>Magnetic Heading</u>	<u>Altitude</u>
0° to 179°	750' 1750' 2750'
180° to 359°	1250' 2250'

3. Area Agreements

See HSAC RP 2010-1 High Density Traffic Area Procedures for operating within onshore high-density traffic locations.

Recommended Procedures (RP's) are published under the direction of the Helicopter Safety Advisory Conference (HSAC), P.O. Box 60220, Houston TX. 77205 as a medium for discussion of Gulf of Mexico aviation operational safety, pertinent to the energy exploration and production industry. RP's are not intended to replace individual engineering or corporate judgment nor to replace instructions in company manuals or government regulations. Suggestions for subject matter are cordially invited.

NOTE: Helicopters operated VFR above 3000 feet should refer to guidelines published in the applicable regulations and the Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM).

4. Landing/Pulse Lights

Aircraft landing/pulse lights should be on to enhance aircraft identification:

- (a) during takeoff and landings,
- (b) in congested traffic areas
- (c) during reduced visibility,
- (d) or anytime safety could be enhanced.