

HSAC Recommended Practice (RP) # 2004-07

Helideck Hazards

Background

To reduce accidents and incidents involving helicopters at offshore helidecks, it is important to develop an understanding what constitutes a hazard and to encourage reporting of these hazards to facility owners who should provide timely remedy and elimination of these defects.

Training: Operators are encouraged to provide periodic training to pilots on the identification and reporting of helideck hazards.

Examples of Helideck Hazards: (Note, the obstacle heights were obtained from API RP2L, May 1988. This information is an extract and not encompassing of all helideck requirements)

(1). Landing gear hazards include anything that could snag the aircraft landing gear. This could be anything that is raised above the helideck landing surface to a maximum height of 6 inches; any gear hazard should be painted red (8-inch radius circle outside the obstacle). Examples:

- raised tie-down points
- deck plates with raised edges
- uneven helideck surfaces
- obstructions around the helideck perimeter exceeding 2 inches in height, but less than 6 inches
- fuel system hoses that are not properly relocated off the helideck or pipes to hold fuel system nozzles

(2). Tail rotor hazards include anything above 6 inches in height to a maximum height of 4 feet. This typically would be anything outside the helideck surface perimeter such as lights, safety fence, etc.; any tail rotor hazard should be painted red with a 3-foot rectangular shape. Examples:

- sections of safety fence that may be well above helideck level
- fire extinguishers, or fuel system containers, etc above deck level.
- raised stairwell handrails (some installations have railings/handrails that can be raised/lowered).
- obstructions around /outside the helideck perimeter exceeding 6 inches in height, but less than 4 feet.

(3). Main rotor hazards include anything above 4 feet in height that does not provide 1/3 rotor diameter (RD) clearance from the helideck edge. If main rotor obstacles exist, the helideck surface should be marked with a 6 inch red arc (centered from the obstacle) that would provide the 1/3 RD for the largest aircraft approved for use at the facility, if no portion of the aircraft passes the line. Examples:

- wind indicator masts
- crane booms
- obstructions outside the helideck perimeter exceeding 4 feet in height

(4). Inadequate surface friction contact for the landing gear. This can be caused by any of the following:

- excessive bird droppings causing the helideck to be slick
- inadequate grit in surface paint
- worn metal surfaces

(5). Lack of markings, non-standard markings, or obscured/faded markings for providing adequate visual cues or hazard warning. API RP 2L provides details on the recommended markings.

Reporting and Eliminating Helideck Hazards: Please refer to HSAC RP 2004-01 for procedures.

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