



ASSEMBLY — 39TH SESSION

Agenda Item 35: Aviation safety and air navigation standardization

UAE HELIPORT / HELIDECK REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

(Presented by the United Arab Emirates)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This working paper presents the United Arab Emirates (UAE) framework for the regulation of heliports (including off-shore helidecks). It describes the certification / acceptance processes and the risk-based approach with regards to regulatory oversight.

It also expands on the contribution made to the Heliport Design Working Group (Job card ADOP 010-01) from the UAE pertaining to the implementation of heliport certification with reference to ICAO Annex 14 *Volume II – Heliports*.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper;
- b) encourage States and international organisations to adopt similar measures in relation to the regulation and safety oversight of heliports; and
- c) invite States and international organisations to provide comment in relation to their own processes and issues.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This paper relates to the Safety Strategic Objective.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	
<i>References:</i>	Doc 10046, <i>Report of the Second High-Level Safety Conference (2015)</i>

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In order to ensure the safe operations of heliports in compliance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) (ICAO Annex 14 Volume II), the UAE's General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) developed a framework for implementation and safety oversight through the publication of regulations and guidance material in June 2014. Implementation of this framework commenced in December 2014.

1.2 The introduction of the process for "Certification" and "Landing Area Acceptance" was presented as an ICAO WP in February 2015 to the "Second High-Level Safety Conference 2015 (HLSC 2015)". This WP expands on the implementation process with specific reference to the application of a risk-based approach for continued safety oversight.

1.3 The positive response by the aviation industry has encouraged the UAE GCAA to share the work, processes and implementation framework with the ICAO HDWG, in particular Job card ADOP 010-01 (Provisions on the Certification of Heliports including Implementation of Safety Management Systems (SMS)).

1.4 The UAE GCAA has taken measures to broaden regulatory oversight to include off-shore helidecks; a measure taken to enhance safety within the expanding industry of oil and gas in the UAE.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Heliports (on-shore)

2.1.1 The UAE GCAA publication for heliports is "CAAP 70 Heliports: Air Service and Private Use (Not Air Service)".

2.1.2 Experience has highlighted the need to provide applicants with all information within one document; this has resulted in a re-issue of CAAP 70, which now provides applicants with details of the application and regulatory oversight processes, regulations and guidance material.

2.1.3 With an expanding aviation industry, the process of regulatory oversight has focused the UAE GCAA to develop a risk-based approach to safety oversight.

2.1.4 The risk-based approach consists of the following risk profile:

- a) the level of compliance with the physical characteristic requirements of CAAP 70 (based on the SARP's of ICAO Annex 14 Vol II);
- b) the suitability of the existing markings, lighting and RFFS equipment provided;
- c) the number of helicopter movements expected over the busiest three month period;
- d) the types of operations i.e. surface level, elevated, hospitals, major tourist attractions etc.;

- e) the management structure in place including processes and procedures;
- f) the level of training provided for heliport personnel;
- g) the number of incidents or accidents within the previous two years; and
- h) the location of the heliport with regards to congested or non-congested areas, surrounding terrain and obstacles etc..

2.2 **Helidecks (off-shore)**

2.2.1 The UAE GCAA publication for helidecks is “CAAP 71 Helidecks: Off-Shore”. This provides helideck specifications and guidance material, and includes the framework for the regulatory oversight of oil/gas organisations.

2.2.2 In order to aid the prioritisation process for compliance with UAE GCAA regulations, primary Accountable Organisations, helideck operating companies and helideck operators are required to undertake a safety assessment based on a safety risk management model of the facilities for which they are responsible for.

2.2.3 UAE GCAA regulatory oversight is focused on the primary Accountable Organisation, which is conducted through an auditable approach with priority on regulatory compliance and effectiveness of the Safety Management System and Quality Assurance processes.

2.2.4 The priority elements required from the Accountable Organisation are:

- a) a safety management structure – which is required to include a risk profile for the safety oversight and planning process for helideck operating companies and helideck operators; and
- b) policy and procedures for the safety oversight of helideck operating companies and operators for whom they are responsible for.

2.2.5 Once the UAE GCAA is satisfied that the Accountable Organisation meets the extensive requirements listed in CAAP 71, then an approval is issued to the Accountable Organisation.

2.2.6 As part of the regulatory oversight process, the UAE GCAA reserves the right to review all safety related documents of the Accountable Organisation, helideck operating companies and helideck operators. The UAE GCAA also reserves the right to access any helideck for inspection purposes.

2.2.7 It is recognised by the UAE GCAA, that implementation of regulatory oversight for off-shore helidecks is in its infancy. With an excessive number of facilities within UAE waters, this approach forms a structured foundation upon which regulatory oversight can build.

3. **SAFETY PROMOTION**

3.1 In December 2015 the UAE GCAA in partnership with ICAO held an ICAO Heliport Seminar in Dubai, UAE, to promote safety awareness to heliport operators with regard to regulation,

safety oversight processes and in addition, to provide an opportunity to discuss issues and topic across the heliport spectrum.

3.2 Within the scope of regulatory oversight, safety promotion currently exists within the Aerodrome Operations Technical Committee (AOTC); it is the intention of the UAE GCAA to expand upon this technical committee, to create a specific committee for heliport operators and operating companies. The aim being to enhance safety and strengthen communications within the UAE aviation industry.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 In partnership with the aviation industry, the UAE GCAA has adopted a proactive approach to the formulation and introduction of UAE national regulations applicable to heliports/helidecks. This approach has gained the support of stakeholders, which has been an essential element in the process, particularly in a region where aviation growth continues at a rapid rate. This illustrates commitment to the promotion of a safe aviation infrastructure and to the principles of the State Safety Programme.

4.2 With this approach and framework, the UAE encourages States and international organisations to review the model adopted by the UAE GCAA for the regulatory oversight of heliports.

4.3 With specific reference to the provision of regulation for helidecks (off-shore), the UAE GCAA encourages States and international organisations to consider a regulatory model utilising the UAE processes and best practices, with the aim of continuing the commitment to aviation safety oversight.

4.4 The UAE GCAA continues to work closely with ICAO through the ICAO HDWG, where discussions continue with strong input from the UAE, based on the experiences gained from the provision and implementation of the regulatory model.

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