



DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION-MIDDLE EAST REGION

Third Meeting (DGCA-MID/3) (Doha, Qatar, 27-29 April 2015)

Agenda Item 11: Any other Business

REGULATORY AND SAFETY OVERSIGHT OF HELIPORTS

(Presented by the United Arab Emirates)

SUMMARY

This information paper presents the introduction of UAE national regulation of heliports and the implementation of “Certification” and “Landing Area Acceptance”, which aims to promote safety in a rapidly growing aviation sector.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Through regulation (UAE Civil Aviation Regulation (CAR) Part IX), the UAE ensures compliance of aerodromes aligned with ICAO standards and recommended practices (ICAO Annex 14, Volume I).

1.2 In order to ensure the safe operations of heliports in compliance with ICAO standards and recommended practices (ICAO Annex 14 Volume II), the UAE’s General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) has developed a framework for implementation and safety oversight through regulations and guidance publications.

1.3 The GCAA published Civil Aviation Advisory Publications (CAAPs) in June 2014, with the first Heliport Certificate successfully awarded to the iconic Burj Al Arab elevated heliport in December 2014.

1.4 All UAE GCAA regulation and guidance material referred to in this Information Paper are available on the UAE GCAA website: www.gcaa.ae or available on request by email: ana@gcaa.gov.ae.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 UAE GCAA publications for heliports are:

2.1.1 CAAP 70 Heliports: Air Service and Private Use

2.1.2 CAAP 71 Helidecks: Off-Shore. (Regulatory oversight of oil/gas organisations will focus on safety management systems and their safety programmes directed toward regulatory compliance).

2.2 The UAE GCAA requires that all heliports apply for either “Certification” or “Landing Area Acceptance”.

2.2.1 **Certificate:** This applies to facilities conducting an Air Service, which is a service open to the public and performed by aircraft for the public transport of passengers, mail or cargo for remuneration or hire.

2.2.2 **Landing Area Acceptance:** This applies to facilities, which are not intended for Air Service operations and are essentially for private use.

2.3 The UAE GCAA has re-issued CAAP 30 (The Issue and Verification of an Aerodrome Certificate and Landing Area Acceptance), which provides information and processes applicable to heliport Certification and Landing Area Acceptance, as follows:

2.3.1 Applications are provided through an automated e-Service platform.

2.3.2 The process to obtain a Certificate requires compliance with GCAA Regulations, with close regulatory oversight (audits and inspections), based on the following stages:

Stage 1: Submission of an application

Stage 2: Heliport applicant’s self-assessment against applicable civil aviation regulation

Stage 3: Heliport applicant’s confirmation of self-assessment regarding regulatory compliance and completion of any outstanding actions

Stage 4: UAE GCAA pre-certification safety oversight audit, resulting in a GCAA Audit Report

Stage 5: Submission of the heliport applicant’s action plan, stating actions required to rectify or mitigate findings to a level acceptable to the UAE GCAA

Stage 6: Following confirmation of completed actions, the Heliport Certificate can be issued

2.3.3 **The process** to obtain a Landing Area Acceptance requires compliance with GCAA Regulations, which is based on a self-assessment process with the submission of a “Helicopter Landing Area Acceptance CAAP 70: Self-Assessment Safety Matrix”, based on the following stages:

Stage 1: Application – detailing a planning and compliance assessment

Stage 2: Acceptance of proposed facilities, based on regulatory compliance

Stage 3: Operational acceptance, concluding with the issue of a Landing Area Acceptance

2.3.4 A safety management systems (SMS) framework, based on UAE CAR Parts IX and X, is required for both Certification and Landing Area Acceptance; however the content will be assessed against the complexity of operations.

2.4 As part of the Certification and Landing Area Acceptance process, and for on-going regulatory surveillance, the UAE has expanded the assessment process to include the following Inspection Checklists dedicated to heliports:

- 2.4.1 Elevated Heliport Inspection Checklist.
- 2.4.2 Surface Level Heliport Inspection Checklist.

3. SCOPE OF REGULATORY OVERSIGHT

- 3.1 The implementation of regulation requires that:
 - 3.1.1 From 1st January 2015 new construction and operations shall conform to the published documents, CAAP 70 and CAAP 71.
 - 3.1.2 From 1st January 2015, established heliports are required to be compliant with regulation within a three-year period. Heliport operators are requested to submit an action plan for achieving compliance during this period.
- 3.2 For Certification, the framework for regulatory oversight will be consistent with the procedure currently adhered to for the certification of aerodromes (airports) with the added flexibility of adjusting the periodicity of scheduled surveillance audits. Priority for audits will be assessed against the complexity of the facility and frequency of use, through a risk-based assessment process.
- 3.3 For Landing Area Acceptance, a risk-based assessment procedure will be implemented, which involves a self-assessment process and declaration statement.
- 3.4 For helidecks (off-shore), focus will be directed towards the effectiveness of the operator's SMS, which will be subjected to UAE GCAA auditing procedures.

4. SAFETY PROMOTION

- 4.1 With the implementation of heliport regulation, workshops will take place during 2015 to promote and education heliport operators with regard to regulation, safety oversight and the implementation and application process. The first interactive workshop was held in April 2015.
- 4.2 Within the scope of regulatory oversight, safety promotion currently exists within the Aerodrome Operations Technical Committee (AOTC), the purpose being to strengthen the UAE GCAA communication and coordination with the UAE Aviation Industry. Technical committees will be expanded to include heliports and off-shore helidecks.
- 4.3 Additionally, both regionally and internationally, it is proposed that ICAO forums and seminars will act as the vehicle to focus on heliport safety oversight and safe operations on a global platform, with the support of the UAE.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 In partnership with the aviation industry in the UAE, the GCAA has adopted a proactive approach to the formulation and introduction of UAE national regulation applicable to heliports. 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.

6. ACTION BY THE MEETING:

- 6.1 The meeting is invited to note the information contained in this paper.