

APPROVED: SIGNATURE ON FILE IN EMS OFFICE
Executive Director

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Medical Director

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EMS AIRCRAFT LANDING SITES

I. AUTHORITY

Division 2.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, Section 1797.220; Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 8; Prehospital EMS Aircraft Regulations, Title 21, Public Works Chapter 2.5 Division of Aeronautics (Department of Transportation), Public Utilities Code Section 21662.1 and 21662.5; and Federal Aviation Regulations

II. DEFINITIONS

Refer to the "EMS Aircraft Policy Definitions" for definitions of terms in this policy.

III. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to specify the requirements for landing site selection, scene safety and landing site training standards.

IV. POLICY

A. EMS Aircraft Landing Site Standards

1. EMS Aircraft landing sites shall conform to pertinent regulations and safety guidelines including; Federal Aviation Regulations 91.3, California Code of Regulations Title 21 Public Works Chapter 2.5 Division of Aeronautics (Division of Transportation) Code Section 21662.5, National EMS Pilots Association Landing Site Guidelines and EMS Landing Site Safety Standards.
2. Landing sites to be utilized by EMS Aircraft shall be selected based upon scene safety and logistics. These sites include:
 - a. heliports and/or airports meeting Title 21 requirements;
 - b. Agency designated Landing Sites; and
 - c. sites chosen at or near the scene of an incident (emergency helispot) meeting National EMS Pilots Association Landing Site Guidelines.

B. Ground/Air Ambulance Landing Site Operations

1. Selection of an emergency helispot shall be made by the "Incident Commander" (IC) of the incident, or be delegated by the IC to qualified personnel performing "Air Operations" (Helispot Manager) duties as specified in the Incident Command System.
 - a. The "Pilot in Command" of the air ambulance has ultimate authority to refuse to land at any site.
 - b. The helispot manager has the authority to prevent an air ambulance from landing at any site.
2. The decision to complete a mission that requires an air ambulance, including landing at the incident, shall be based solely on safety. The pilot is not to be notified of patient age (e.g., pediatrics) or severity of patient condition.
3. Communications shall be established and maintained with First Responder/helispot manager (if available) during landing and take off.

C. Training Standards and Curriculum for Ground Personnel

1. The training curriculum for ground personnel as set forth in NEMSPA guidelines shall be provided by the local Air Ambulance service providers in an on-site training session.
2. This training shall be made available to all first responder and ground ambulance provider agencies that regularly respond to rural areas within the Region at least every eighteen months.

V. PROCEDURE

- A. The Incident Commander, or delegated Helispot Manager, should select an emergency helispot using the following criteria:
1. Ensure that approach, departure and landing area is clear of overhead obstructions such as wires, trees and light poles, etc. Site should also be clear, with a low angle, into the wind for both approach and departure path.
 2. Minimum size of 75 X 75 feet during daylight, to 125 X 125 feet during darkness.
 3. The surface must be a firm, relatively flat surface, free of debris. All gravel, sand, and dirt are to be well watered.
 4. At night a minimum of four flashing or steady burning lights should be used to mark boundaries of the helispot. No lights should point in the direction of the aircraft.

- B. Management of the landing site shall include adherence to the following guidelines:
1. Control pedestrian and vehicular traffic to immediate area. Deny access of all pedestrian and vehicular traffic to within 100 feet from the aircraft.
 2. Radio contact between the helicopter and "Air Operations" should include description of location, winds, surface, obstructions, and HAZMAT.
 3. When the Helispot Manager is ready for the helicopter to land, the helicopter crew should be notified by radio, and the helispot manager should stand with back to the wind, arms outstretched pointing to the helispot.
 4. The Helispot Manager shall maintain the helispot until the helicopter departs, and communicates to "Air Operations" they are clear of the helispot.
- C. Helispots at higher altitudes should be given special consideration for density altitude limitations of the helicopter. The Pilot in Command, after considering these limitations, will have final authority to decide if the helispot is acceptable for safe landing.

--- END OF POLICY 447.00---