UK Civil Aviation Authority

Consultation: Policy framework for Heliport Certification and Safety Management Systems

CAP 3199

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Executive summary

The UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is seeking views on proposed changes to the regulation and oversight of heliports. These changes aim to improve safety, align with international standards, and prepare for future developments in vertical flight, including Powered-Lift and Non-Conventional Helicopters.

The proposals respond to amendments to ICAO Annex 14 Volume II (Heliports), recommendations from the Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB), and broader safety and better regulation objectives from the CAA and Department for Transport (DfT). The changes focus on introducing Certification and Safety Management System (SMS) requirements for heliports, improving regulatory oversight, and harmonising requirements with aerodromes and future vertiports.

Collectively, these policy proposals aim to deliver a coherent regulatory framework for existing helicopters and new types of aircraft that delivers safety for the public and passengers, while supporting growth and innovation of emerging sectors.

This consultation invites stakeholders to provide feedback on the scope, impact, and implementation of these proposals.

The CAA is seeking responses to this consultation by 27th of January 2026. Following this consultation, the CAA will consider all consultation responses and publish our final decisions in a Comment Response Document. We expect that further consultation may be required to gain feedback on further policy developments and proposed changes to technical legislative text. After these consultations have concluded, we will provide our final opinion and instructions to Department for Transport, who will consider whether to progress with our proposals in a statutory instrument.

Chapter 1
Introduction

Context

Helicopter operations in the UK play a vital role in transport, emergency services, offshore activities, and access to remote areas. However, heliports currently operate under a lighter regulatory framework than fixed-wing aerodromes, despite often being located in urban areas or near public infrastructure.

Following ICAO amendments to Annex 14 Volume II, and other safety reviews, the CAA proposes a new regulatory framework for heliports. This framework will introduce certification and SMS requirements, improve safeguarding options, and enable advanced operational capabilities.

The proposed changes will also support the integration of future vertical flight technologies and ensure consistency across Helicopter, Powered-Lift, Remotely Piloted Helicopter and Non Conventional Helicopter operations.

Our objectives

The CAA aims to recommend the regulatory framework and implement operational systems required to enable the beginning of a two-year regulatory implementation of Heliport Certification by mid-2027.This includes applicability for carrying fare paying passengers or cargo, emergency services, high intensity operations and other helicopter operation types. While we expect other forms of innovative aviation to emerge, in the near term we expect alternate power sources, and automation assisted operations, and in the future remotely piloted or fully autonomous aircraft. These are not the focus of the current consultation but we aim for the framework to be appropriate to allow such innovation.

The CAA's primary objective is safety – specifically, to ensure public and passenger safety through establishing regulations that allow safe flights and safe integration within the wider aviation ecosystem. In developing our proposals, we have also considered the following objectives:

- **Proportionality:** Ensuring that what we ask of industry is reasonable, appropriate and scalable to achieve our aims.
- **Sector Growth:** In support of the CAA's Growth Duty contained in Section 108 of the Deregulation Act 2015 , propose a regulatory framework that can enable aerospace and the growth of the helicopter sector, promoting investment and job creation in the UK.

- **Support for UK's Net Zero target:** Enable the utilisation of electric, hybrid-electric, and hydrogen aircraft that may contribute to the reduction of transport-related carbon emissions.
- **Innovation:** Propose regulatory frameworks that allow and accommodate innovation in technology, while preserving safety.
- **International compatibility:** Ensure regulations are compliant with ICAO SARPs, and are compatible with other international frameworks so we remain harmonised with the international system where it is in the UK's interest to do.

The regulatory framework

The regulatory frameworks that are being consulted on within this document are:

- Air Navigation Order 2016 (as amended)
- UK Regulation (EU) No. 2018/1139 – i.e. the Basic Regulation
- UK Regulation (EU) No. 965/2012 – i.e. the Air Operations Regulation
- UK Regulation (EU) No. 139/2014 – i.e. the Aerodromes Regulation
- UK Regulation (EU) No. 373/2017 – i.e. the Air Traffic Management & Air Navigation Services Regulation

The primary Civil Aviation Publications that will be affect by this consultation are:

- CAP168 Licensing of Aerodromes
- CAP1264 Standards for Helicopter Landing Areas at Hospitals
- CAP3043 Helicopter Off Airfield Operating Sites
- CAP1096 Guidance to crane users on aviation lighting and notification
- CAP2543 Helicopter Pleasure Flying and Feeder Sites
- CAP1054 Aeronautical Information Management
- CAP232 Aerodrome Survey Information
- CAP1732 Aerodrome Survey Guidance

Any changes to these regulations will need to be coordinated with other interdependent rulemaking tasks and consultations. These include but are not limited to:

- **Future of Flight** – In line with the UK Government "Future of Flight" Programme, and Future of Flight Action plan (March 2024).
- **Ground Handling** - In line with ICAO State Letter pertaining to ICAO Annex 14

- **Safety Management Systems** – In line with ICAO State Letters pertaining to Annex 19 – Safety Management Systems, which includes introduction of Heliport SMS requirements.
- **RPAS at Aerodromes** – In line with ICAO State Letter pertaining to Annex 6, 14 and 19.

Other relevant work

The policy proposals included in this consultation have also been informed by a number of research projects commissioned or conducted by the CAA. These include:

- **Systems Theoretic Process Analysis (STPA) based Safety Analysis of eVTOL Operations (August 2025)** – a systems-thinking based safety analysis of risks and mitigations needed for eVTOL operations, completed by Warwick Manufacturing Group[i]
- **Research Assessment of Transitory Helicopter Downwash (RATHD) project (April 2025)** – Verification and validation of downwash simulations of eVTOL aircraft[ii]
- **Noise measurements from eVTOL aircraft: A review of available data** (June 2025) – A review of literature on noise emissions from eVTOL aircraft.[iii]
- **CAP1864 Onshore Helicopter Review:** Providing an assessment of safety performance for UK onshore helicopter operations and to set actions or make recommendations to improve safety.

In addition, our proposals have been informed by industry engagement conducted through stakeholder working groups in place for Flight Operations, Heliports, and Aerodrome Operators.

The CAA established a Heliport Rulemaking Task Working Group in order to engage with individuals and organisations across the heliport industry, this was primarily made up of aerodrome operators both licensed and unlicensed. The CAA also engaged with an existing working group established under the Future of Flight programme for the establishing of Vertiports, intended for Powered Lift aircraft.

Due to an initial assessment that this rulemaking programme would have a high level of involvement with bodies commonly described as the National Health Service we engaged with both the headquarters and operational sectors of; Department for Health & Social Care, NHS England (dissolved), NHS Scotland, NHS Wales and Department for Health Northern Ireland.

Document summary

This consultation document takes the following structure:

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Chapter 2 – Definitions

Chapter 3 – Summary of Proposal

Chapter 4 – Legislative Proposal

Chapter 5 – Non Legislative Proposal

Chapter 6 – Case Studies

Chapter 7 – Other Issues

Chapter 8 – Next steps

Appendix A – Heliport Declaration System

Appendix B – Definition of Hospital Landing Sites

How to respond

The CAA is seeking feedback from both the general public and stakeholders across the Heliport sector. This includes but is not limited to heliport operators, helicopter operators, pilots, aerodrome operators, ground handling service providers, air navigation service providers, and academics.

Responses must be provided by January 27th 2026. Responses should be provided on Citizen Space, using the link provided on the CAA website.

Following the close of the consultation period, the CAA will consider all consultation responses and publish our final decisions in a Comment Response Document. We expect that further consultation may be required to gain further feedback on proposed changes to technical legislative text. When these consultations have concluded, we will provide our final opinion and instructions to Department for Transport, who will consider whether to progress with our proposals in a statutory instrument.

Chapter 2
Definitions

All definitions exist in either current ICAO or CAA documentation. We do not propose any definition changes for the purpose of this consultation:

- **Heliport**: ICAO Annex 14 Volume II defines as “an aerodrome or a defined area on a structure intended to be used wholly or in part for the arrival, departure and surface movement of helicopters.”
- **Vertiport**: Currently defined by the CAA as “an aerodrome or a defined area on a structure intended to be used wholly or in part for the arrival, departure and surface movement of Powered-Lift aircraft.”
- **Certification**: A formal process by which a heliport is assessed and approved to meet regulatory standards, including infrastructure, safety procedures, and operational oversight.
- **Safety Management System (SMS)**: ICAO Annex 19 defines as “A systematic approach to managing safety, including organisational structures, accountabilities, policies, and procedures.
- **Point in Space (PinS) Approach**: ICAO Doc 8168 Volume I defines as “An approach procedure designed for helicopters only that includes both a visual and an instrument segment.”
- **Point-in-space (PinS) Departure:** ICAO Doc 8168 Volume I defines as “A departure procedure designed for helicopters only that includes both a visual and an instrument segment.”
- **Helicopter**: A heavier-than-air aircraft supported in flight chiefly by the reactions of the air on one or more power-driven rotors on substantially vertical axes
- **Powered-Lift:** Currently defined by the CAA as “a heavier-than-air aircraft capable of vertical take-off, vertical landing, and low-speed flight, which depends principally on engine-driven lift devices or engine thrust for the lift during these flight regimes and on non-rotating aerofoil(s) for lift during horizontal flight.”
- **Non Conventional Helicopter (NCH):** Currently defined by the CAA as “a helicopter that is not capable of autorotation or equivalent alternative in the event or power failure or depletion”
- **Remotely Piloted Helicopter (RPH):** A helicopter that also meets the ICAO definition within Annex 2 for Remotely Piloted Aircraft: “an unmanned aircraft that is piloted from a remote pilot station”

Chapter 3

Summary of Proposal

Proposal Focus 1: All types of aerodrome that host aircraft which use their own power for lift would be considered under a singular regulatory structure, including future aerodrome types. This would include the merging of ‘heliport’ and ‘vertiport’ terms. For the purpose of this document the term ‘heliport’ will be used.

Proposal Focus 2: A wider range of VTOL operations would be considered as in-scope for heliport certification, this is detailed in Chapter 4.

Proposal Focus 3: The CAA will introduce a scaled heliport certification system for heliports which incorporates a Safety Management System. This is scaled from a self-declaration certificate through to a certificate that reflects current approval standards from CAP168 and UK Reg (EU) No.139/2014.

The proposal comes in two parts, a Certification Basis and a supporting component. Both elements are explained in this document. The supporting components will be subject to further industry engagement, including consultation to present the technical wording in advance of publication for comment.

Legislation is required in order to make an activity mandatory, it is likely that some of the non-legislative options will be published prior to the legislative which allows for the industry to use the new rules but does not enforce that they must be used. An initial proposal is contained in Appendix A for early implementation during 2026.

Question 1*: Do you have any comments about our overall proposals and concepts regarding Heliport Regulation? Please explain your answer.*

Chapter 4

Certification Basis

Certification Requirement

We have used the text from ICAO Annex 14 Vol II as the basis of our certification system:

"*1.4.3 As part of the certification process, States shall ensure that a heliport manual which will include all pertinent information on the heliport site, facilities, services, equipment, operating procedures, organization and management including a safety management system (SMS), is submitted by the applicant for approval/acceptance prior to granting the heliport certificate.*

Note 1.— Guidance on the contents of a heliport manual, including procedures for its submission and approval/acceptance, verification of compliance and granting of a heliport certificate, can be found in the Heliport Manual (Doc 9261).

Note 2.— Annex 19 — Safety Management contains SMS provisions applicable to certified heliports. Overarching guidance on SMS is contained in the Safety Management Manual (Doc 9859) with sector specific guidance found in the Heliport Manual (Doc 9261)."

This is alongside the information contained within Doc9261 "Heliport Manual"

"3.1.2 The scope of certification covers all the specifications established in the regulatory framework, and should include at least the following subjects:

a) compliance of the heliport infrastructure with the applicable specifications (Standards and Recommended Practises) for the operations the heliport is intended to serve;

b) the heliport organisation and management;

c) the heliport operational procedures; and

d) the heliport SMS

3.1.3 The heliport operations manual contains all the information of the certified heliport according to the above scope, including the heliport site, facilities, equipment, operating procedures, organisation, management and SMS.

3.1.4 Once the State has granted the heliport certificate, continuous oversight should be established to ensure ongoing compliance of the heliport with the regulations and the certification conditions."

CAA Proposal

We propose in response to the heliport certification requirement to utilise four tiers of regulatory response:

- **Licensed or Certificated Aerodrome:** This retains an existing aerodrome under its current licence or certificate, this may necessitate the moving of aerodrome regulation boundaries to incorporate the heliport areas.
- **Certificated Heliport:** A heliport of sufficient complexity and risk to require a heliport certificate. This will have an audit schedule and be subject to a proportionate ruleset for the heliport type.
- **Declared Heliport:** A smaller, less complex heliport or national infrastructure heliport where the heliport operator regularly reviews and confirms its compliance with regulations. The heliport is subject to audit at any time but may not be on a audit schedule.
- **Unlicensed:** Subject only to Flight Operations Regulation. Best practice should be followed where practicable.

To create this certification basis, we propose to amend the Air Navigation Order 2016, and UK Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 "Basic Regulation" (BR) to achieve the following:

- **Changes of requirements on Air Operators:** We seek to recommend the merging or alignment of the requirements for Fixed Wing and Rotorcraft, changing the requirement for a Heliport Certificate within Article 208 of the Air Navigation Order 2016 to helicopter passenger or cargo transport and removing reference to scheduled or public transport of passengers. This would include the removal the 3,175kg threshold for certification.
- **New requirements for Heliport Operators:** Currently there are no requirements on the heliport operator within the Air Navigation Order 2016 or UK Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 the Basic Regulation. We propose an addition whereupon heliports in the vicinity[1] of a public assembly are required to offer a certified service regardless of operation type, or aircraft types. We would also propose to add a requirement for heliports with significant daily movement numbers to be certified. We will engage with industry on our proposal on daily movement numbers and seek feedback prior to finalising our position.
- **Role of the CAA:** We seek to retain some discretion to decide, on the basis of safety, that the certification requirement does not apply or an alternate (potentially lower) requirement such as a specific approval under the Flight Operations regulation may be more appropriate on a case by case basis.

[1] Within 305m (1000ft) of an organised Air Assembly of 1,000 people or more

- **Heliport Location:** We propose to require that for heliports a Heliport Certificate or Flight Operations approval for elevated heliports[2] or heliports within a congested area.
- **UK Regulation (EU) 139/2014 the Aerodrome Regulation:** We will improve CS-HPT-DSN[3] to better provide regulatory information with regards to physical characteristics. The CAA will add a new section to contain operational regulation for heliports.
- **CAP168 Licensing of Aerodromes:** We will add a complete section in CAP168 providing for heliport design and operations in line with UK Regulation (EU) 139/2014 the Aerodrome Regulation.

The CAA proposes to recommend a two-year regulatory implementation period for Conventional Helicopter operations to allow for business change and financial planning. For Powered Lift and Non-Conventional Helicopters, we propose a shorter implementation period. This is intended to minimise impact to existing helicopter service contracts and allow for a reasonable period of time for businesses to adapt, we recommend early adoption as soon as business requirements allow.

***Question 2**: Do you have any comments about our proposals regarding the Certification Basis? Please explain your answer.*

***Question 3**: Do you have any comments on the duration of the proposed implementation periods? Please explain your answer.*

[2] 3m or more above the surrounding ground level

[3] Certification Specification - Heliport Design

Chapter 5
Implementation

The CAA is proposing the following steps to support the effective implementation of the regulatory changes proposed above:

- **Reform Heliport Guidance**: The CAA will provide a new Civil Aviation Publication (CAP) which is a cross sector manual for onshore heliports. This would include information for small unlicensed heliports through to large complex certified heliports as well as information for heliports at aerodromes. There would also be a best practice section for Helicopter Operating Sites (HOS) which sit under the Flight Operation regulation.

- **Scalability**: Within the new heliport document we will clearly show multiple options for each section where possible, with an explanation of rationale so that a heliport can opt for the appropriate level of guidance to follow in a clear manner with backing from CAA documentation.

- **Urgent Proposal (Appendix A)** – In 2026 the CAA intends to introduce a self-declaration heliport protocol in advance of the primary heliport regulatory package proposed within this consultation document. This would initially be a voluntary scheme aimed predominantly at National Health Service operations. We anticipate making this activity mandatory in line with the proposed timelines of the wider regulatory package described in this consultation.

Application Process

Note - For existing licensed or certificated aerodromes no further applications will be required. For future aerodromes, the existing process should be used.

For heliports a five stage process will be used:

1. **Initial Application**: The applicant will submit relevant forms and a justification for the regulation they deem suitable, and proportionate for the heliport to follow. Examples will be provided by the CAA to applicants.

2. **Review**: The CAA will review the application, and either agree; or propose amendments to the application to progress to the next stage. This may include deffering to “unlicensed” status if appropriate.

3. **Confirmation**: The certificate will be in force as soon as it is confirmed, which may or may not require an audit prior to this date depending on the complexity of the heliport and type of certificate or declaration.

4. **Audit**: Based on safety intelligence, or other metrics, the heliport will be audited. For declared heliports this is likely to be a non-routine audit, for certified heliports an audit interval will be agreed.
5. **Routine**: Routine audits and oversight will commence commensurate with the type of heliport.

Heliport data

The provision of aerodrome data is proposed to align with existing Aeronautical Information Management policy and to be presented in the Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP). The type and amount of information will be presented in the same way as for existing aerodromes, or heliports as today although we will consider a reduced scheme for smaller heliports.

It will be required that any aerodrome with VTOL operations that is published in the AIP has the suitable data assurance processes, and a suitable aerodrome survey. Should future aircraft autonomy systems, or proceed visual PinS approaches be introduced, an enhanced level of data provision will be required.

The CAA will consider whether to split heliports across AD.3 (existing) and AD.4 (proposed new section) of the AIP, or whether to consolidate all types of heliport in one location, in AD.3.

Airspace Provision

The CAA is reviewing the application of airspace around heliports and how it could be scaled in size, restriction level and control levels based on the heliport category. At this point no indicative options have been produced, the CAA will determine if it is possible to apply a scaled airspace provision to some heliport categories which may comprise of, as an example, restrictions of UAS in the near vicinity of the heliport (Flight Restriction Zone). We seek to review existing provisions to include the ability to make restrictions of complex shapes, for example rectangular along the common approach/departure path, and of appropriate size to protect VTOL below 500ft in normal operations.

***Question 4**: Do you have any comments about our rationale to condense heliport guidance into a singular document where possible?*

***Question 5:** Do you have any comments about our methodology and how we propose to achieve a heliport certification system?*

***Question 6**: Do you agree with the Declared Heliport concept and process found in Appendix A?*

Chapter 6

Case Studies

The following case studies have been provided in order to allow for better understanding of the impact of changes if adopted in full.

Note – Definitions relating to “complexity” and “risk” are yet to be defined and will be subject to future consultation.

Existing Certified or Licensed Aerodrome

The aerodrome regulated area may be required to change, and new audit questions focused on the helicopter operations will be added. No substantive change to the licence or certificate required.

Existing Licensed Heliport

At the earliest opportunity a transition will be made to the new scheme, and where possible amendments to the level of oversight will be introduced.

Unlicensed Large Heliport

Heliports with a high level of complexity to their operation will be required to submit to the full heliport certification protocol.

Unlicensed Small Heliport

Small heliports – likely one or two stands may either sit in the full heliport certification, or the declared protocol based on the risk profile of the heliport.

Unlicensed Public Service Heliport

Heliports in public service, predominantly medical, rescue or law enforcement would largely be within the declared protocol. Unless A: They require a higher status due to other factors (such as instrument approaches) or B: a lower status – unlicensed - due to their locale and use type (such as remote landing sites).

Temporary Use Heliport

Heliports that either have significantly high movements, or are within the vicinity of an open air assembly would require at minimum a declared heliport status.

A heliport at any time can ask for a review of its status, and may at any time volunteer for a higher band of oversight in order to enable new heliport operations.

Chapter 7

Other Issues

Deviation and Acceptance Documents

The CAA has previously consulted on the future of Deviation and Acceptance Documents (DAAD). References to DAAD will be removed as part of this task within Regulation 139/2014 (Aerodromes); ADR.AR.B.020, AMC1 ADR.AR.B.020(C), ADR.AR.C.035.

Aviation Security

The existing regulatory requirements for Aviation Security, under the National Aviation Security Programme (NASP), have been reviewed in order to assess their applicability to VTOL operations. Most Aviation Security Regulations do not apply to smaller aircraft under 10,000kg, however, we are aware of a small number of helicopters which are subject to the NASP.

Physical characteristics

We do not anticipate having to change requirements set out in regulation from existing standards. However, additional guidance may be drafted especially in regards to high intensity operations, wake turbulence separation, and the safety of third parties from Downwash and Outwash.

Obstacle environment

Obstacle Limitation Surfaces (OLS) and helicopter slopes will remain in use, noting upcoming changes to OLS regulation prior to the delivery of this rulemaking task. We intend to have provision for both performance based OLS and for VTOL aircraft a more flexible OLS including for example multiple turn options and double angle approaches.

Visual aids and lighting

Visual Aids will remain largely unchanged, only with added flexibility and guidance applied. We have determined this as both the safest option, and lowest cost for industry. Guidance will be provided for more scenarios than in current regulation, such as off airfield operating sites or complex aerodrome designs.

Safety Management System

An active Safety Management System (SMS) and heliport manual will be required for certified heliports. As with the aerodrome certification, the SMS is to be scaled based on the complexity and type of operations undertaken at the heliport.

Ground Handling

Heliports will align with aerodrome Ground Handling policy currently under development. These services may be provided (and thus responsibility held) by the aircraft operator itself (self-handling), by the aerodrome operator, or by independent ground handling companies.

Emergency Procedures and Rescue and Firefighting Services

Regulation and guidance for helicopters will not be substantially changed from current policy. Current policy only accounts for aircraft fires with internal combustion engines using hydrocarbon fuel. Additional guidance will be published for the management of battery fires post thermal runaway and other fuel types as required.

Scheme of Charges

As part of the Scheme of Charges public consultation 2026 any additional fees will be published for consultation.

***Question 7**: Do you have any comments about our approach to other heliport regulation issues? Please explain your answer*

***Question 8**: Do you have any comments about Heliport Scheme of Charges ahead of the Schemes of Charges Consultation?*

Chapter 8

Next Steps

Once feedback has been gained from this consultation we will respond to comments via a Comment Response Document and propose our policy concept to the Department for Transport. We expect that the implementation of this policy proposal will be phased starting with the technical drafting of all of our future documents. This will detail the mechanisms, structures and rules for future certification and SMS. We will consult on this work prior to publication.

We will seek to publish our certification protocols in advance of legislative change to allow for voluntary applicants to all of our heliport certification schemes. We will request that an implementation period is provided for existing heliport operations to allow for businesses to plan for the new regulatory system.

Chapter 9

How to respond

This consultation seeks views from the public and industry stakeholders on our policy proposals. Responses must be provided by [insert date]. Responses should be provided on Citizen Space, using the link provided on the CAA website.

Following the close of the consultation period, the CAA will consider all consultation responses and publish our final decisions in a Comment Response Document. We expect that further consultation may be required to gain further feedback on proposed changes to technical legislative text. We will then provide our final opinion and instructions to Department for Transport, who will consider whether to progress with our proposals in a statutory instrument.

ANNEX A

Summary of Questions

Question 1*: Do you have any comments on our overall proposals and concepts regarding Heliport Regulation? Please explain your answer.*

Question 2*: Do you have any comments about our proposals regarding the Certification Basis? Please explain your answer.*

Question 3*: Do you have any comments on the duration of the proposed implementation periods? Please explain your answer.*

Question 4*: Do you have any comments about our rationale to condense heliport guidance into a singular document where possible?*

Question 5: *Do you have any comments about our methodology and how we propose to achieve a heliport certification system?*

Question 6*: Do you agree with the Declared Heliport concept and process found in Appendix A?*

Question 7*: Do you have any comments about our approach to other heliport regulation issues? Please explain your answer*

Question 8*: Do you have any comments about Heliport Scheme of Charges ahead of the Scheme of Charges Consultation?*

Question 9*: Do you have any other comments, or observations you would like to make about the future of heliport regulation?*

Question 10: *Do you have any comments about the publication of this definition of Hospital Helicopter Landing Sites?*

Appendix A

Declared Heliport Proposal

In order to achieve a Declared Heliport Certificate the following must exist:

- **Accountable Manager**: A named accountable manager will be required with sufficient authority, responsibility and financial resource to manage safety at the heliport.
- **Heliport Training**: All employees working on the heliport must be competent and trained to undertake their duties.
- **Heliport Operations Manual**: A heliport operations manual will be required. This is to be scaled to the complexity and risks of the heliport.
- **Safety Management System**: An SMS, which in its basic form consists of a safety manager and a method of reporting safety incidents should exist. This includes knowledge of the CAA Mandatory Occurrence Reporting system.
- **Physical Infrastructure**: The physical infrastructure should be sufficient to enable the design helicopter(s) to operate safely, in the case of congested area operations the infrastructure must be suitable for Performance Class 1 operations of all helicopter users as per existing regulation. All reasonable effort should be made to adhere to best practise heliport guidance.

A similair type of existing guidance can be found in CAP1264 Annex A. New guidance would be formed based on the proposal to aide applicants.

Application Process

The CAA will produce and publish a system to allow eligible heliports to apply for certification on the CAA website. This system is proposed to have five stages:

1. **Initial Application**: The applicant will submit relevant forms and a justification for the regulation they believe is suitable, and proportionate for the heliport to follow. Examples will be provided by the CAA to applicants.
2. **Review**: The CAA will review the submission, and either agree; or propose amendments to the application to progress to the next stage.
3. **Confirmation**: The submission will be confirmed, and enter use with any relevant conditions applied. The certificate will be in-force as soon as it is confirmed, which may or may not require an audit prior to this date.

4. **Audit**: Based on safety intelligence, or other metrics the heliport will be audited. For declared heliports this is likely to be a non-routine audit.
5. **Declaration**: The declaration will remain in place unless a major change occurs at the heliport requiring a re-declaration.

Heliport Data

Declared heliports will have a basic information provision in the AIP, primarily the location and elevation of the heliport with a unique designator. We will consider the expansion of this dataset in future.

Appendix B

Definition of Hospital Helicopter Landing Sites

Introduction

Following the publication of CAP1264 “Standards for Helicopter Landing Sites at Hospitals” Edition 2 and 3, there has been a request from helicopter operator providers to better understand the intent of key components within CAP1264, specifically relating to the ownership and safety management of hospital helicopter landing sites (HHLS).

The intention of this CAP is to address one of those questions and to provide a means of publication to the UK Helicopter Industry.

Background

CAP1264 was initially written as a heliport design document to replace Health Building Note 15:03 in 2016, with minimal operational guidance. Post the G-MCGY accident, additional sections and guidance were published in Editions 3 and 4, with high level operational objectives as well as the inclusion of “Accountable Manager” and “Responsible Person” roles.

A description was provided explaining how a hospital is responsible and should provide a safety assurance for helicopter operations undertaken on its behalf. This definition is clear when applied to a traditional hospital setting, such as a Major Trauma Centre that likely has a “primary” HHLS near the Emergency Department, and a “secondary” HHLS – often located nearby on non-hospital estate.

This CAP is applicable to all helicopter operations that operate “HEMS”, “Air Ambulance”, “Search and Rescue” or other “MEDEVAC” capabilities.

Definition of Hospital Helicopter Landing Sites

The CAA interprets a 'Hospital Helicopter Landing Site' as being any surveyed HLS which is used for the transport of medical personnel, supplies or ill or injured persons.

Two types of HHLS exist:

Primary HHLS – A location, usually on the hospital estate itself, whereupon patients may be brought to the hospital or medical crew can be reconciled with the helicopter. This location should have an active safety management system, where helicopter safety can be assured and proactive measures taken to protect third parties.

Secondary HHLS – A location that may be on the hospital estate, or in the locale which can be used to increase capacity at the hospital, add resilience, or to allow for multiple helicopters to use the same hospital. A Secondary HHLS is afforded the same standards and protection as a Primary HHLS as described below.

Where a HHLS is used by helicopter operations, either self-selected by the NHS Trust, AOC holder, or provided by the local community independently of the medical facility, the CAA considers it best practice that an equal level of safety is provided for both the aircraft, third parties and property in the vicinity of the HHLS. This would be considered an equivalent level of safety to a Primary HHLS, whilst recognising the scalability of HHLS in terms of physical characteristics, the HHLS operation and safety management should always remain appropriate to the level of risk presented to the helicopter and third parties. This may be undertaken by the medical facility, helicopter operator, local provider or a combination thereof.

Where a patient transfer service is provided from a medical facility, to another medical facility, an equivalent level of safety should be provided and be assured by the helicopter operator in accordance with the AOC approvals with which the flight is undertaken.

It is for the AOC holder to be assured that a HHLS is appropriate for their aircraft type, meets their helicopter performance criteria, and protects members of the public from the risks of helicopter operations in accordance with their AOC manuals, UK aviation regulation, CAA guidance and other non-CAA regulatory obligations. The AOC holder therefore retains the authority to approve or refuse service to a HHLS as a part of its safety management and risk assurance systems.

Question 10: *Do you have any comments about the publication of this definition of Hospital Helicopter Landing Sites?*

[i] STPA-based Safety Analysis of eVTOL Operations: https://www.caa.co.uk/our-work/publications/documents/content/cap3141/

[ii] Protecting the Future: Trials and Simulation of Downwash and Outwash for Helicopters and Powered Lift Aircraft https://www.caa.co.uk/our-work/publications/documents/content/cap3075/

[iii] Noise measurements from eVTOL aircraft: A review of available data https://www.caa.co.uk/our-work/publications/documents/content/cap2506/