

Purpose: To provide guidance on the safe management of Helicopter landing, approach and take-off.

Preparing for Helicopter Landing

Preparing for a helicopter landing includes the following:

- Assign a STARs trained landing zone coordinator (LZC) to control ground operations.
- The LZC will prepare the landing area and clear non-essential personnel from the vicinity of the landing pad.
- The LZC must don appropriate personal protective equipment (i.e., helmet (with earmuffs), goggles, reflective gloves, reflective vest).
- In addition to basic PPE, personnel in proximity and assisting with helicopter landing must wear hard hat chin straps and appropriate hearing protection.
- The LZC should stand upwind facing in the direction of the wind.



WARNING: Do not smoke within 152 m (500 ft.) of the helicopter

Landing Zone


For the safety of helicopter and ground crews, prepare a landing zone as follows:

- Pre-designate landing zone(s) when possible.
- Do not locate the landing zone near overhead obstructions or on ground where the slope is >15 degrees.
- Size the landing zone at least 30.5 by 30.5 m (100 by 100 ft.) and establish a touchdown area at the center measuring 18 by 18 m (60 by 60 ft.).
- Mark the touchdown zone prominently.
- Keep the area free from trash or debris.
- Provide a minimum of two 30 lb. dry chemical fire extinguishers.
- Turn-off all non-essential lights.
- Point all spotlights, floodlights, and flashlights at the ground – never towards a helicopter and pointing upwind.
- A landing zone may be illuminated using vehicle lights on low beam.

Helicopter Safety Zones

The following figure identifies safe and unsafe areas of approach for most common use helicopters:



 **NOTE:** Approach zones vary based on helicopter types. Ensure that the approach zones used are appropriate to the helicopter type.

Approaching a Helicopter

Authorized personnel approaching a helicopter will do the following:

- Approach the helicopter only when signaled by the pilot or crew.
- Approach from the front and maintain eye contact with pilot.
- Maintain a crouched position as the main rotor may dip lower under certain circumstances.
- Be aware of flying dirt and debris and wear goggles as necessary.

Loading and Unloading

When loading and unloading helicopters, personnel will:

- Not assist in opening or securing doors or hatches on the helicopter.
- Follow the direction of flight crew regarding patients or equipment.
- Carry longer equipment parallel and close to the ground.

Helicopter Take-off

In preparation for helicopter take-off, the LZC will complete the following:

- Clear the landing zone of non-essential personnel.
 - Notify the pilot when the landing zone is clear of personnel, equipment, and is safe to perform take-off.
 - Secure the landing zone for 5 minutes after helicopter departure and maintain emergency equipment on hand in case an in-flight emergency requires return of the helicopter.
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