

INTERIM POLICY & PROCEDURES BULLETIN

Effective Date: June 30, 2007

HELICOPTER OPERATIONS Class 'D' Fixed Line Human External Cargo

OBJECTIVE

This policy provides direction to Public Safety Lifeline Volunteers and Volunteer SAR Organizations in the use of the Human External Transportation System (HETS) to support and assist Search and Rescue operations.

This interim policy and procedures bulletin supersedes Provincial Emergency Program Policy 02.15, Helicopter Sling Rescue System.

GENERAL

The Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) recognises that the use of HETS resources for search and rescue operations can be highly effective. The provision of shortened response and transportation times and the ability to provide an aerial rescue platform make helicopters a key search and rescue resource.

Unless otherwise specified in a sub-section, the Public Safety Lifeline volunteers affected by this policy are Search and Rescue volunteers registered with the Provincial Emergency Program.

The following terms shall be considered synonymous for the purpose of this policy: Helicopter Flight Rescue System (HFRS); Helicopter Sling Rescue System (HETS); Human External Cargo (HEC); short haul; and long lining.

POLICY

PEP recognizes Transport Canada approved, Class 'D', Fixed Line, Human External Cargo helicopter rescue systems, referred to as Human External Transportation System (HETS) and will permit volunteers to utilize this technique when the following conditions are met:

1. A risk analysis is conducted prior to each HETS operation.
2. Personnel participating in HETS operations are trained according to the standard identified in the Canadian Air Regulations (CAR's) and Air Rescue Association of Canada (ARA) Best Practices.
3. Operations are conducted in accordance with established training standards, specific standardized operational guidelines and in compliance with any applicable regulations.
4. The provision of HETS service is coordinated on a regional basis
5. Individual records of training and responses are maintained and provided to PEP staff upon request.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Provincial Emergency Program

The Provincial Emergency Program will:

1. Provide support by way of provision of WorksafeBC Insurance, third party liability coverage, and reimbursement of expenses according to PEP policies for volunteers engaged in HETS operations while under an approved task number.
2. Provide response support and coordination when required.
3. Confirm that a specific risk analysis has been completed and documented
4. Provide approval by issuance of a task and Air Services Emergency number when the required conditions are met.

Helicopter Service Providers

Helicopter Service Providers will:

1. Be registered with the Province of BC
2. Establish a Memorandum of Understanding with the respective volunteer search and rescue organizations proposing to conduct HETS operations.
3. Follow the Helicopter Association of Canada outline for pilot training programs and the best practice guidelines of the Air Rescue Association of Canada.

4. Maintain flight following, resource tracking, and communications at all times during aerial operations.

Volunteer SAR Organizations

Volunteer Search and Rescue Organizations will:

1. Be registered with the Province of BC.
2. Have standard operating guidelines that meet ARA best practices and provide a copy to PEP upon request.
3. Have an MOU with the Air Carrier in regard to the provision of HETS and provide a copy of the MOU to PEP upon request.
4. Request approval through the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) as soon as HETS utilization is considered and not less than 30 minutes prior to deployment.
5. Perform a risk analysis of all activities prior to and during HETS operations.
6. Provide 30 minute updates to PEP ECC.
7. Inform ECC on conclusion of operations.
8. Maintain and document HETS equipment, provide access to records to PEP staff upon request.

Volunteers

Search and Rescue volunteers will:

1. Provide proof of training certification upon request.
2. Achieve and maintain required standard of training and experience in HETS operations.
3. Have required standard of training and experience to conduct ground rescue operations applicable to terrain within the area of HETS operation.
4. Be equipped and trained to survive for a minimum of 24 hrs in the type of terrain and conditions that the operation is being conducted.
5. Follow existing best practices of the Air Rescue Association of Canada and adhere to the WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.

APPROVAL

HETS approval will be considered if:

1. The volunteer SAR organization requesting authorization is a recognized HETS provider.
2. The Command staff agree that it is a component of the Action Plan.
3. A HETS specific risk analysis has been completed and documented.
4. Information from the tasking agency indicates imminent threat to lives of the subjects and at least one of the following is true:

- a. The subjects' medical condition requires expedient extrication.
- b. HETS is a component of a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) and is being made available for volunteer safety.
- c. Terrain or environmental hazards are likely to put responders at undue risk.
- d. Surface travel time would likely cause a negative outcome for the subject and/or rescuers.

HETS Approval will not be granted if:

1. No tasking agency is identified.
2. Sufficiently trained personnel are not available to conduct the operation.
3. Any of the requirements above are not met.

Exception from Policy

Any exceptions from this policy will require authorization from the PEP Duty Manager upon advice from the Regional Manager and the PEP Search and Rescue Specialist.

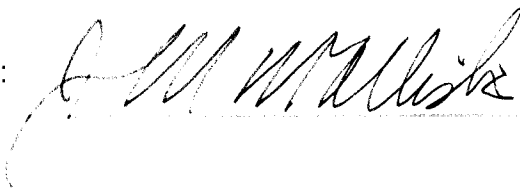
Effective Date

This interim policy and procedures bulletin will be in effect for all operational or training tasks initiated on or after June 30, 2007.

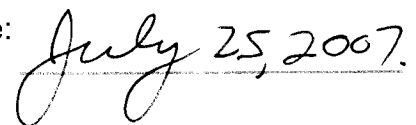
Approved by:

Jim McAllister
Director of Management Services and Programs

Signature:



Date:



¹ The corporate registry provides the legal framework within which all business, not-for-profit societies, cooperative associations and financial institutions operate in British Columbia.