Civil Aviation Authority

SAFETY DIRECTIVE

Number: SD–2014/003

Issued: 15 October 2014

Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) Operations at Night in Accordance with a HEMS Approval

At Annex 1 to this Safety Directive is an Operational Directive mandating action that is required to restore an acceptable level of safety. The Operational Directive is issued in accordance with Article 15 of the Air Navigation Order 2009 and is made subject to and in accordance with Article 14(1) of Regulation (EC) No. 216/2008.

Recipients must ensure that this Directive is copied to all members of their staff who need to take appropriate action or who may have an interest in the information (including any 'in-house' or contracted maintenance organisation and relevant outside contractors).

Applicability:	
Aerodromes:	Not primarily affected
Air Traffic:	Not primarily affected
Airspace:	Not primarily affected
Airworthiness:	Not primarily affected
Flight Operations:	All Helicopter AOC Holders
Licensed Personnel:	Not primarily affected

1 Introduction

1.1 This Safety Directive promulgates the Operational Directive (see **Annex 1**) issued by the CAA on 14 October 2014 and is applicable to operators conducting night Commercial Air Transport (CAT) HEMS operations within the UK in accordance with a HEMS approval, to direct them to comply with additional requirements.

1.2 This Safety Directive will supersede SD-2012/004 on 28 October 2014 and incorporates several changes to reflect the applicability within the UK of Commission Regulation (EU) No. 965/2012 (Air Operations Regulation).

2 Reason and Explanation

2.1 This Directive is issued to lay down minimum safe operating requirements to be met by operators conducting night HEMS operations within the UK to HEMS operating sites as it is considered that the requirements provided previously by JAR-OPS 3 and now by the Air Operations Regulation SPA.HEMS.100 for such operations should be enhanced.

2.2 Following earlier notification to EASA of the contents of the previous SD, an ongoing Rule Making Task (RMT.0325 & RMT.0326) into 'HEMS performances and public interest sites' was extended to cover 'HEMS flights at night'. This RMT is developing changes to SPA.HEMS to address UK concerns and will produce a Notice of Proposed Amendment in due course for

public consultation. Until any agreed change has been adopted and applied to remove the perceived inadequacies of SPA.HEMS.100, the CAA intends that this SD will remain in force.

3 Queries

3.1 Any queries or requests for further guidance from AOC holders as a result of this communication should be addressed to the assigned Flight Operations Inspector in the first instance.

3.2 Otherwise, queries should be addressed to the **FOD.Admin@caa.co.uk** e-mail address.

4 Cancellation

4.1 This Safety Directive will come into force on 28 October 2014 and will remain in force until revoked by the CAA.

4.2 Safety Directive SD-2012/004 is revoked with effect from 28 October 2014.

Annex 1 Operational Directive

1 The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), on behalf of the United Kingdom, in exercise of its powers under article 15 of the Air Navigation Order 2009, directs the operator of any helicopter flying in the United Kingdom on a commercial air transport operation at night in accordance with a specific approval issued in accordance with the Air Operations Regulation (see **Note 1**), Annex V, SPA.HEMS.100 (a HEMS approval) to comply with the requirements set out in paragraph 5.

2 This Directive reacts to a safety problem and is made in the interests of safe operations.

3 This Directive is made in accordance with Article 14 of EU Regulation No. 216/2008 and will be notified to the Commission, the European Aviation Safety Agency and the other Member States.

4 This Directive lays down minimum safe operating requirements to be met by operators conducting night HEMS operations within the UK to HEMS operating sites as it is considered that the requirements provided by the Air Operations Regulation SPA.HEMS.100 for such operations should be enhanced.

5 The operator must, in addition to complying with the terms of its HEMS approval:

a) hold and operate under the terms of a Night Vision Imaging System (NVIS) approval issued in accordance with the Air Operations Regulation, Annex V, SPA.NVIS.100;

b) ensure that when operating with a single pilot and HEMS technical crewmember, the pilot holds a valid instrument rating;

c) provide a means for observing and recording local weather conditions including cloud base and visibility (see **Note 2**) prior to take-off from the HEMS operating base;

d) conduct and provide a risk assessment acceptable to the CAA for the intended operations (see **Note 3**); and

e) ensure that the helicopter is equipped with a suitable means of illumination (see **Note 4**) acceptable to the CAA to enable the pilot:

i) when landing, to identify the landing area in flight, to determine the landing direction and to make a safe approach and landing; and

ii) when taking off, to make a safe take-off.

6 This Directive comes into force on 28 October 2014 and remains in force until revoked by the CAA.

7 The Operational Directive published through Safety Directive SD-2012/004, dated 29 October 2012, is revoked with effect from 28 October 2014.

Notes:

1) The Air Operations Regulation is Commission Regulation (EU) No. 965/2012.

2) A suitable means of provision would be a cloud base recorder or an automatic meteorology station.

3) The risk assessment must include, but is not limited to, the following considerations:

   a) Terrain and obstacle awareness.

   b) Inadvertent entry into Instrument Meteorological Conditions (IMC) at low level.

   c) Pilot disorientation / loss of situational awareness.

   d) HEMS operating base and en-route weather information.

   e) Ground risks to personnel at the HEMS operating site.

   f) Pilot NVIS-related fatigue.

   g) Illumination of Final Approach and Take-Off area (FATO) for departure.

4) A suitable means of illumination would be a white light that is trainable and which enables the pilot to locate and identify obstacles on the ground, on the approach and the departure route, from a height of at least 500 feet.