



SAFETY ALERT 15/2016

Issued: 28th December 2016

SUBJECT:

HELICOPTER DOWNWASH IN THE VICINITY OF PERSON, OBJECT OR PROPERTIES

REFERENCE PUBLICATION:

UAE Civil Aviation Law Article 24
CAR-OPS 3
CAR Part III Chapter 2
CAR X

CATEGORY:

Recommendation/Attention

REASON:

Observed Helicopter noise, vibrations and downwash damage.

APPLICABILITY:

Helicopter Operators certified in accordance with CAR-OPS 3
Helicopter Pilots licensed by the GCAA

DESCRIPTION:

Recently, the GCAA received a report of a helicopter involved in an incident that resulted in damage of property during the approach with the following consequences:

- Losing objects was projected into the air being a potential danger for people and for the helicopter itself.
- Trees were ripped off and unlocked gates destroyed.

Recommendation 1:

Helicopter Operators should continuously re-assess the risk level of their operations when operating in the vicinity of a person or property and update their operation manuals and SOPs accordingly.



Recommendation 2:

Helicopter Operators should review their SOPs to ensure effective compliance of requirements with:

- CAR-OPS 3.235 to minimise the effect of helicopter noise.
- Negative safety or noise impact of rotor downwash taking into account helicopter types, wind conditions and FATO location.

Recommendation 3:

Helicopter Operators should enhance their Safety Assurance to ensure effective:

- adherence with the established SOPs by its Flight Crews to minimise the effect of helicopter noise and damage to person and property;
- implementation of their Safety Policy with the aim to stop any reckless deviation with SOP and report to the GCAA (Refer to CAR X, UAE Civil Aviation Law Article 24(3), and CAR Part III-General Regulation -Chapter 2) any such intentional violation.

Recommendation 4:

As per CAR-OPS 3.085(a), the pilot of a Helicopter is responsible for the proper execution of his duties that: (1) Are related to the safety of the helicopter and its occupants; and (2) Are specified in the instructions and procedures laid down in the Operations Manual. Consequently, Pilots should be reminded that they are the ultimate decision makers for the conduct of safe flight operations and should avoid any flight procedure if rotor downwash is likely to cause potential damage caused by the dynamic forces exerted by the helicopter's downwash over person, unsecured objects and property.

CONTACTS:

fops@gcaa.gov.ae