

Follow-up Action on Occurrence Report

ACCIDENT TO SIKORSKY S61N, G-BDOC, NEAR SULLOM VOE, SHETLAND ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2004

(HELICOPTER BLADE STRIKE DURING SHIP WINCHING OPERATION)

CAA FACTOR NUMBER : F24/2005
FACTOR PUBLICATION DATE : 07 June 2005
OPERATOR : Bristow Helicopters
CAA OCCURRENCE NUMBER : 2004/06638
AAIB REPORT : Bulletin 5/2005

SYNOPSIS

(From AAIB Report)

During a winching operation, the rotors of G-BDOC struck the top of a mast on the deck of the receiving ship. The helicopter recovered safely to Scatsta Aerodrome. The investigation revealed some misunderstandings between the helicopter operator and the maritime operator about the winching deck markings on the ship. Accordingly, recommendations have been made to the CAA and to The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) to ensure that aircraft and ship crews are aware of the information required before undertaking winching operations. Shortly after the accident, the helicopter operator instituted revised rules to clarify the information required before any winching operation.

FOLLOW UP ACTION

The four Safety Recommendations, made by the AAIB following their investigation, are reproduced below, together with the CAA's responses.

Recommendation 2005-27

The Civil Aviation Authority should establish clear guidance for companies operating both Search and Rescue (SAR) tasks and Commercial Air Transport (CAT) tasks to ensure that current and future operators have clear regulations for crews involved in both types of task during one period of duty.

CAA Response

CAA fully accepts this recommendation.

The current published guidance to operators covering Commercial Air Transport (CAT) winching operations to ships has been reviewed and the CAA is satisfied that it is clear. To conduct winching operations (not just to ships), AOC Holders require an Exemption from certain Rules of the Air. The wording of the current Exemption to permit winching operations, will be revised to amplify the CAP 437 guidelines that must be applied to CAT winching operations. In addition, the sole operator currently conducting both Search and Rescue (SAR) and Commercial Air Transport tasks will be reminded by letter before 31 May 2005, of the need to provide clear guidance to crews, to

ensure that no confusion exists between the requirements and regulations applicable to CAT operations and those applicable to SAR operations. Any further operator wishing to conduct both types of operation will have to submit an operations manual to the CAA. At that time the CAA will ensure that the guidance for both types of operation is appropriate and that it clearly differentiates between SAR and CAT operations.

CAA Status - Closed

Recommendation 2005-28

The International Chamber of Shipping should review the current 'Guide to Helicopter/ Ship Operations' to ensure that it is accurate and includes information on all current helicopters.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

CAA Status - Closed

Recommendation 2005-29

The International Chamber of Shipping should encourage the practice of holding a current copy of the 'Guide to Helicopter/ Ship Operations' by all ships that may be involved in helicopter operations.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

CAA Status - Closed

Recommendation 2005-30

The International Chamber of Shipping should review the deck markings on ships involved in winching operations with the aim of including a requirement to clearly display the dimensions of the 'manoeuvring zone', such that it can be clearly seen by the helicopter crew.

CAA Response

This Recommendation is not addressed to the CAA.

CAA Status - Closed