

Definition of Helicopter Take Off and Landing Phase of Flight

Introduction

AAIB Bulletin 08/2021 G-LAWX AAIB-26196 published a number of Safety Recommendations including 2021-25 as reproduced below.

The intention of this CAP is to address that recommendation and to provide the means of publication to the wider UK Helicopter Industry.

Background

AAIB Safety Recommendation 2021-25

It is recommended that the Civil Aviation Authority publish guidance on the meaning and intention of the phase of flight alleviations in UK SERA where detailed as “except for take-off and landing” to better enable pilots to plan and act on minimum height requirements for safe operations.

Background to the Definition

The current exemption in SERA has to cover a wide number of different approach and departure scenarios and so there is no ‘one size fits all.’

In consultation with the CAA Rotary Wing Section and other Subject Matter Experts, the CAA Guidance and Interpretation for Helicopter ‘Take off and Landing’ is stated below.

This is applicable to all Helicopter operations (CAT and non-CAT).

AOC holders and Training Organisations should take note and action as appropriate.

Definition of Helicopter ‘Take Off and Landing’ Phase of Flight

The CAA interprets the Helicopter Take Off and Landing phase to mean the final stages of an approach or the initial stages of a departure, whereby the aircraft is in a stable flight configuration at or below 500’agl and the area surrounding the Final Approach and Takeoff Area (FATO) is clearly visible.