BCTS Provincial Safe Work Procedure #9
Using Fixed Wing Aircraft and Helicopters

**Key Hazards**
- Poor weather conditions (visibility, icing, etc)
- Mechanical failure
- Improper cargo storage or overloading
- Improper refuelling techniques

**Applicable Safety Equipment**
- Survival Kits and Gear
- Fire Extinguishers/Tools
- Emergency Locator Transmitter
- PFD’s
- Natural Fibre clothing

**PRIOR TO DEPARTURE**

1. Confirm carrier adequacy in accordance with Wildfire Management Branch aviation manual.
2. Inspect personal survival gear and communication equipment:
   - Survival gear should include emergency rations, fire starters, signalling tools, heat retention covers, etc.
   - Test portable radios and phone/repeater systems.
   - Based on location and risk, determine frequency of check in process and notify appropriate personnel.
3. Check weather conditions and reports in advance of the trip.
4. Ensure load levels of passengers and equipment are discussed with the pilot ahead of time.
5. Ensure all staff have the required training or OJT for boarding and exiting aircraft and for storing equipment and supplies and, if necessary, using slings below a helicopter.
6. Be familiar with the Wildfire Management Branch Aviation Safety Manual [click here for Weblink].
7. Terminate any trip or portion if unsafe or uncomfortable with the hazards or risk.

**OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

1. Be a professional passenger.
2. Aircraft pilots will provide direction and a safety briefing before the trip commences and may provide direction for staff to use on pick-up.
3. Keep all landing sites free of loose articles such as paper, hardhats (hold on to them or use chin straps), tarps, and clothing, plywood and signal or lunch fires.
4. Protect your eyes and exposed skin from dust and debris as the helicopter is landing.
5. Wait for the pilot of the aircraft to signal that it is safe to approach the aircraft to board. Always approach the aircraft from the side on a level path in view of the pilot.
6. On exit, wait for the pilots notice to release seat belts and move away from the machine to the side on a level path as directed by the pilot. No smoking near or in the aircraft.
7. Inform pilot of dangerous goods, hazardous material including firearms, bear spray, etc. Firearms are to be transported empty of ammunition.
8. Dangerous goods including bear spray & bear bangers must be transported in an outer protective container and clearly labelled with the product name and TDG number.