



2.10 CLASS 'D' HELICOPTER RESCUE

2.10.1. GENERAL

This policy provides direction in the use of Class D Helicopter Rescue (Fixed Line (CDFL) or Helicopter Hoist/Winch Rescue (HWR)) to support and assist search and rescue operations.

Related Policies: N/A

2.10.2. DEFINITIONS

Class D Helicopter Rescue is used to define both Fixed Line and Hoist/Winch Rescue and are regulated through Transport Canada Aviation regulations (CARs 722.21). This policy includes systems that may be referenced by other names - Human External Cargo (HEC), Helicopter Flight Rescue System (HFRS), Helicopter Sling Rescue Systems (HSRS), and Helicopter External Transport System (HETS).

2.10.3. POLICY STATEMENT

- (1) EMBC recognizes Transport Canada approved Class D Fixed Line and Hoist/Winch, and will permit GSAR volunteers to utilize this technique when the following conditions are met:
 - a. GSAR Personnel participating in Class D Helicopter Rescue operations are trained in accordance with the standard identified in the Canadian Aviation Regulations (CARs) and completed the relevant sections of the EMBC approved Helicopter Operations Training Program ;
 - b. Equipment used in Class D Helicopter Rescue operations meets Transport Canada CARs regulations;
 - c. Operations are conducted in accordance with Transport Canada CARs regulations and standards;
 - d. Where Class D operations utilize hoist/winch, the Hoist/Winch Operator must be provided by the Air Carrier and shall not be a SAR Volunteer;
 - e. A risk analysis is conducted using the SAR response assessment and decision making support (RADeMS) tool, prior to each Class D Helicopter Rescue operation and submitted on request of EMBC; and
 - f. Individual records of training and responses are maintained and provided to EMBC staff upon request.

- (2) A GSAR group or groups who wish to form a Class D Helicopter Rescue capability and are not already approved by Emergency Management BC (EMBC) to conduct Class D Helicopter Rescue operations must complete the Class D Helicopter Rescue application/needs analysis form. A joint committee with representation from EMBC, the BC Search and Rescue Association (BCSARA) and other stakeholders, will review applications. EMBC will notify the applicant when the review is complete.

2.10.4. CONDITIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES

(1) Emergency Management BC:

- a. Will provide authorization by issuance of task and Air Services Emergency (ASE) numbers when the conditions outlined in the policy statement are met.
- b. Will provide support by way of provision of workers' compensation and liability coverage and reimbursement of expenses according to EMBC policies for a volunteer engaged in Class D Helicopter operations while under an approved task number.
- c. Will provide response support and coordination when required.
- d. Will confirm with the SAR Manager that a specific risk analysis has been completed and documented.

(2) Air Carriers:

- a. Will follow the current Transport Canada regulations;
- b. Will establish an MOU with the respective volunteer search and rescue organizations proposing to conduct Class D Helicopter Rescue operations; and
- c. Will maintain flight following, resource tracking, and communications at all times during aerial operations.

(3) Ground Search and Rescue Groups and/or Regional Class D Helicopter Rescue teams conducting Class D Helicopter Rescue:

- a. Must be recognised by EMBC as having Class D capability;
- b. Must be in full compliance with Transport Canada regulations regarding Class D equipment, training, and operations;
- c. Must have a current MOU with the Air Carrier including guidelines for training, operations, and maintenance of proficiency as set out in EMBC approved Helicopter Operations Training Program in regard to the provision of Class D Helicopter Rescue and provide a copy to EMBC; and
- d. Must, upon request, provide copies of training and equipment records to EMBC.

(4) SAR Managers:

- a. Must request authorization through the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) as soon as a Class D Helicopter Rescue operation is being considered;



- b. Must ensure that all personnel are in conformance with standards set out in the EMBC approved Helicopter Operations Training Program.
- c. Must perform a risk analysis using the SAR Response Assessment and Decision Making guide, of all activities prior to and during Class D Helicopter Rescue operations and provide to EMBC on request;
- d. Must provide updates to the ECC every 30 minutes; and
- e. Must inform ECC at the conclusion of Class D Helicopter Rescue operations.

(5) SAR Volunteers:

- a. Will be responsible for the maintenance of training records and provide proof of training upon request.
- b. Must achieve and maintain required standard of training and experience in Class D Helicopter Rescue operations.
- c. Must have required standard of training and experience to conduct ground rescue operations applicable to terrain within the area of Class D Helicopter Rescue operation.
- d. Must be equipped and trained to travel in the type of terrain and conditions that the operation is being conducted.
- e. Must follow the Search and Rescue Provincial Operating Guidelines.

(6) AUTHORIZATION

- 1) Class D Helicopter Rescue authorization will be considered for approval by the EMBC Regional Duty Manager (RDM) or Provincial Duty Manager (PDM) if:
 - a) The volunteer GSAR group requesting authorization is approved for Class D Helicopter Rescue operations;
 - b) The Incident Command staff agrees that it is a component of the Incident Action Plan;
 - c) A Class D Helicopter Rescue specific risk analysis has been completed and documented;
 - d) Information from the requesting agency indicates imminent threat to the lives of the subjects or at least one of the following is true:
 - i. The subjects' medical condition requires expedient extrication,
 - ii. Class D Helicopter Rescue is a component of a Rapid Intervention Team or 'RIT TEAM' and is being made available for volunteer safety,
 - iii. Terrain or environmental hazards are likely to put responders at undue risk, or
 - iv. Surface travel time would likely cause a negative outcome for the subject and/or rescuers.



- 2) Class D Helicopter Rescue authorization will not be granted if:
- No requesting agency is identified;
 - Sufficiently trained personnel are not available to conduct the operation; or
 - Any of the requirements above are not met.

(7) Exception from Policy

Any exceptions from this policy will require authorization from the EMBC Regional Duty Manager in consultation with the EMBC Search and Rescue Specialist or Provincial Duty Manager.

2.10.5. AUTHORITIES

[Emergency Program Act](#)

[Canadian Aviation Regulations \(CARs\)](#)

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2.10.6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 2.10 Class D Human Cargo - Class D Fixed Line (CDFL) Application
- 2.10 Class D Needs Assessment – Hazards and Activities