



2.11 HELICOPTER USAGE

2.11.1 GENERAL

Related Policies:

- [2.02 Task Authorization](#)
- [2.04 PEP Air Service](#)
- [2.10 Class 'D' Fixed Line Human External Cargo](#)
- [2.12 Search and Rescue](#)
- [5.02 Expense Reimbursement](#)

2.11.2 DEFINITIONS

See [Terms and Definitions](#)

2.11.3 POLICY STATEMENT

- (1) In specific circumstances, EMBC may authorize the use of a helicopter in support of SAR or other emergency management activity.

2.11.4 CONDITIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES

The use of a helicopter for SAR or other emergency management activity may be authorized under the circumstances detailed below.

EMERGENCY RECONNAISSANCE

- (1) Reconnaissance of potential emergency areas (flood/landslide) or surveying damaged areas to determine what action should be taken.

- (2) Search and Rescue (SAR): Criteria used in the decision to authorize helicopter usage include:

- a. Deploying a search team to an operation where the destination would require surface travel in excess of two hours.
- b. Exchanging SAR teams engaged in a search, when surface travel would exceed two hours.
- c. Retrieval of search parties and/or equipment:
 - On completion of a SAR when surface travel would exceed two hours.
 - Where weather conditions would cause distress or discomfort to SAR members.



- Where searchers would otherwise be required to remain overnight or have been out all night or be forced to travel at night.
- d. The SAR Manager may, subject to weather conditions, request a helicopter in the following situations:
- Subject has entered a fast-moving river or large body of water.
 - Weather conditions are likely to cause severe hypothermia.
 - Subject is located in potential avalanche terrain.
 - SAR volunteers with advanced medical training are requested by the B.C. Ambulance Service (BCAS) to perform a medical rescue in a known or reported off-road/wilderness incident requiring the matching of pre-hospital medical skills with specialized rescue skills to affect a safe and expeditious rescue of an injured or ill person.

(3) MVA Casualty Extrication: When travel time for an extrication team to the accident scene is in excess of one hour and the police or ambulance in a life or death situation has made the request.

HELICOPTER SUPPORT THROUGH OTHER AGENCIES

- (1) Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP): The police force having jurisdiction is responsible for all aspects of land and inland water SAR. RCMP helicopters with Forward Looking Infra-Red (FLIR) capability should be utilized when available. The RCMP within the limits set in RCMP policy may hire civilian helicopters.
- (2) British Columbia Ambulance Service: The BC Ambulance Service is responsible for patient transport when a helicopter can land and shut down (rotors stopped) close enough to a patient that ambulance crews through normal training techniques can load the patient into the helicopter for transport. The operational coordination of such missions is the responsibility of the Provincial Air Ambulance Coordination Centre (PAACC).
- (3) Class 'D' Fixed Line: Government and commercial helicopter operators with Transport Canada – Aviation (TCA) approved equipment capable of providing helicopter sling rescue support include:
- a. Commercial helicopter services.
 - b. BC Wildfire Service.
 - c. Parks Canada.
 - d. Canadian Forces 442 Search and Rescue Squadron. Under extenuating circumstances and for humanitarian reasons, EMBC, the RCMP, or BCAS may call upon 442 Squadron,



through Victoria Rescue Coordination Centre, for the provision of SAR services.

NOTE: The ECC, on approval by either the applicable RDM or PDM, will arrange the use of any of the above on EMBC approved tasks.

2.11.5 AUTHORITIES

N/A

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Duffy", written over a horizontal line.

Chris Duffy
A/Assistant Deputy Minister
Emergency Management BC

August 4, 2016

2.11.6 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [2.11 Helicopter Usage Procedures](#)