DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE MANUAL

TRANSMITTAL SHEET

Release No. 62 July 2, 1985

SUBJECT: Administrative Series
Part 485 Safety and Environmental Health Management Program
Chapter 5 Helicopter Safety

EXPLANATION OF MATERIAL TRANSMITTED:

This chapter defines general policy and responsibilities for an effective Helicopter Safety Program.

Acting Director

FILING INSTRUCTIONS:

Remove:

None

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Part	Chapter	Pages	Release
485	5	1-4	62

OPR: Procurement and General Services Division
Office of Administration

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1. Purpose. This chapter defines the policy and responsibilities of the Minerals Management Service (MMS) Helicopter Safety Program.

2. Scope. This chapter applies to all MMS employees involved in charter, contract, or other MMS-controlled helicopter operations.

3. Authority.

A. 5 U.S.C. 7902.

B. P.L. 91-596 sections 6 and 19.

C. Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.

D. 29 U.S.C. 651 et seq.

E. 29 CFR 1960.

F. Executive Order 12196.

G. Departmental Manual (485 DM 1-7, Safety and Environmental Health Management Program and 110 DM 19, Office of Aircraft Services).

4. Policy. It is the policy of the MMS to provide training for all MMS employees who participate in helicopter operations. Employees will be trained to handle helicopter ditching, water survival, at sea recovery methods, and basic safety for helicopter use. Training will vary with the frequency of helicopter use.

5. Responsibilities.

A. The Assistant Director for Administration is responsible for assisting in the development, documentation, implementation, and monitoring of the Helicopter Safety Program.

B. The Deputy Associate Director for Offshore Operations is responsible for the management of a helicopter safety program and designating a responsible Region official to ensure scheduling and participation of water survival training. This should not be lower than the Regional Supervisor for Field or District Operations.

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C. Chief, Offshore Inspection and Enforcement Division is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Helicopter Safety Program for the Petroleum Engineering Technicians (PET's) to include:

(1) Ensuring that the requirements of this chapter to provide helicopter ditching and water survival training are met by providing funding for the training fees, transportation, and per diem of the PET's.

(2) Ensuring that PET personnel are furnished personal protective equipment as required herein.

(3) Coordinating the scheduling of PET personnel to receive applicable training in order to recognize and cope with hazards associated with helicopter operations in the event of a ditching.

D. Managers and Supervisors of employees using helicopters are responsible for:

(1) Complying with the standards for training and use of protective equipment.

(2) Ensuring the PET personnel receive and complete training in recognizing and coping with hazards associated with helicopter operations in the event of a ditching.

(3) Ensuring that personnel other than PET's receive applicable training in recognizing and coping with hazards associated with helicopter operations in the event of a ditching.

(4) Ensuring that all PET's and others, as appropriate, receive the prerequisite training that is required for those who are scheduled to receive water survival training at the Pensacola Naval training facility.

(5) Ensuring that all PET's and others, as appropriate, have the Department of Interior's medical clearances necessary for receiving the prerequisite training and the Pensacola Naval water survival training.

E. Employees participating in helicopter operations are responsible for complying with all requirements specified in this chapter.

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6. Personal Protective Equipment. All MMS employees will wear all protective or safety equipment including, but not limited to, life preservers and aviator protective helmets when flying in helicopters on official duty, unless an exception is granted in writing by the Deputy Associate Director for Offshore Operations when other protective equipment takes precedence.

7. Employee Training. The MMS will provide employees involved in frequent helicopter operations with helicopter water ditching, survival, and recovery training to be taken once every 4 years.

A. Course Description. The minimum training requirements for the helicopter water survival training include:

Aviation Life Support Equipment (Prop/helicopter)
Liferafts and Contents
Extended Sea Survival
Rescue Devices
Extended Sea Survival/Liferaft Operation
Underwater Egress Training (Helicopter)
Helicopter Hoist Training
Live Helicopter Rescue Training
Survival Swim Skills

B. Participation.

(1) New Employees. Participation in the helicopter ditching and water survival training will be mandatory for all employees in the GS-0802 series (PET) hired after January 1, 1986. Employees hired in this series after January 1, 1986, will be given 1 year from entering on duty to successfully complete the training set forth in 485.5.7A. Since this training is a condition of employment, employees in these positions will be separated if they fail to complete the training or do not complete it successfully, unless the employee's qualifications and skills can be used by reassignment to another position.

(2) Current Employees. Employees in the GS-0802 series who entered on duty prior to January 1, 1986, and who are certified medically fit are required to successfully complete the training set forth in 485.5.7A by January 1, 1988, with the exception of Underwater Egress Training (Helicopter), Live Helicopter Rescue Training, Helicopter Hoist Training, and Survival Swim Skills. These four exempted courses are optional to this group of employees. However, employees opting not to complete these four exempted courses are required to sign a liability waiver form by January 1, 1988.

(3) Employees Not in the GS-0802 Series. Employees not in the GS-0802 series, but those determined to be frequent flyers offshore, are subject to the same conditions as set forth for new and current employees in the GS-0802 series based on their date of employment. Frequent flyers, as used herein, is an employee who flies offshore an average of once a week.

(4) Infrequent Flyers. The helicopter safety briefing for infrequent flyers will be certified and is good for a period of 1 year at which time the person must again attend the briefing prior to commencement of a helicopter trip.

C. Managers and Supervisors. All MMS personnel whose assignments require the management/supervision of helicopters require training to familiarize them with departmental aviation policies, management/supervision responsibilities, and mishap notification and reporting. This training can be provided by the Department's Office of Aircraft Services.

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