



**Marine Notice 6/2010
Supersedes 7/2006**

Introduction of Issue 3 of Marine Orders Part 57 - Helicopter Operations

Purpose

The purpose of this Marine Notice is to advise ship owners, operators and Masters, shipping agents, port authorities, pilotage providers, and helicopter operators that Issue 3 of *Marine Orders Part 57 Helicopter Operations* (MO 57) will come into effect on 1 June 2010.

Background

Ship helicopter operations, for a variety of purposes, are becoming increasingly commonplace in Australian waters. In response AMSA has revised MO 57 to ensure that these operations in Australian waters continue to be conducted with very high standards of safety and operational awareness. AMSA has accepted, as best practice, the International Chamber of Shipping's *Guide to Ship Helicopter Operations*, 4th Edition as it is the most up-to-date guide promoting standardised procedures for helicopter/ship operations worldwide.

Part 57 Issue 3

Issue 3 of MO 57 contains several changes, some of which will require action by Australian flagged ships and by other ships intending to conduct helicopter operations (including all marine pilot transfers) within Australian waters. These changes are:

- the Australian Code of Safe Practice for Ship Helicopter Operations is replaced by the International Chamber of Shipping's *Guide to Helicopter/Ship Operations*, 4th Edition (2008);

- a requirement is added to demonstrate that a ship's arrangements, equipment, crew training and drills for helicopter operations are included in the safety management system onboard and that the master has provided instructions to the crew;
- a requirement is added for documentary evidence to be carried onboard regarding the deck strength of any intended helicopter landing/operating area;
- an increased emphasis on detailed communication between the ship and helicopter operator/pilot regarding the location, size and any obstacles in the intended helicopter landing/operating area; and
- the inclusion of a provision for the conduct of emergency operations such as medical evacuations.

Safety Management System

Ships that conduct helicopter operations must have within their safety management systems, all the relevant helicopter operation procedures, emergency procedures, drills, training and equipment lists for conducting these operations.

Communication

Effective communication between ship and helicopter, in preparation for and during helicopter operations, is essential to ensure safety. This applies to messages passed between the ship operator, the ship's agent and the helicopter operator as well as between the helicopter and the ship.

Before the operation can be agreed it is essential that ship's masters and agents ensure that correct and detailed information concerning a ship's helicopter facilities are provided to the helicopter operator and that this is acknowledged.

Helicopter operators must ensure they communicate all important helicopter specific information, including helicopter weight, landing gear type and rotor diameter to the ship and the master should reply with formal acknowledgment.

Deck Surface Information

It is a fundamental safety requirement that the intended helicopter landing area is physically capable of withstanding the forces of a helicopter landing on it. MO 57 now requires that the documentary evidence regarding deck strength be available on board. This information must include the maximum helicopter weight (tonnes) that can be landed on the nominated helicopter landing area. This information may be provided by the classification society that conducts the ship's surveys.

Introductory Arrangements

The commencement date for Issue 3 of MO Part 57 will be 1 June 2010. Before this date ship owners, operators and masters, shipping agents, port authorities, pilotage providers and helicopter

operators should assess their compliance with this new Marine Order and, in particular, the documentation required onboard.

The International Chamber of Shipping's *Guide to Helicopter/Ship Operations*, 4th Edition (2008) is published by:

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