



Safety Alert No. 481

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Hazardous Helideck Conditions Result in Near Miss Incident



Figure 1. Damaged helideck skirting.



Figure 2. Damaged skirting substructure.

A recent near miss is among a series of safety incidents involving unsafe helideck conditions and points to an ongoing trend of poor adherence to established procedures. This safety alert aims to prevent aviation mishaps due to complacency by highlighting negative behaviors surrounding procedures and emphasizing the need for continuous vigilance and adhering to safety protocols.

The following incident serves as a precautionary example of potential hazards associated with helideck operations and conditions.

Loose Helideck Skirting with Damaged Support Structure (Jan. 30, 2024):

After receiving clearance for landing at an offshore helideck, the aircrew noticed upon landing that a section of the helideck's safety skirting was not properly secured to the support structure and was blowing upward and downward due to the helicopter's rotor downwash. This created an imminent hazard to safe helicopter operations with potentially catastrophic results (Figures 1 and 2).

BSEE recommends that operators and their contractors, where appropriate, consider doing the following:

- Ensuring personnel are aware of and understand related policies and procedures to prevent incidents during helideck operations. This includes verifying the condition of the helideck structure and the potential impacts of simultaneous operations prior to giving clearance to land or takeoff.
- Ensuring proper notifications are made for out-of-service helidecks to the appropriate BSEE District Office and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for Notice to Air Mission (NOTAM).
- Ensuring proper markings to identify out-of-service helidecks are clearly visible from the air.
- Ensuring safety-critical operations are well planned with the proper controls in place for flawless execution.
- Monitoring operations for signs of weakness or noncompliance, implementing specific actions to correct any identified issues.
- Developing and implementing facility-specific helicopter operations procedures to eliminate uncertainties and enhance safety protocols.
- Ensuring proper helideck management principles for pre-arrival briefings and toolbox meetings.

Additionally, BSEE reminds industry to review the following helpful information to minimize risks to passengers, helideck crews, and workers involved in offshore helideck operations:

- [HSAC RP 163](#) *Inspection, Maintenance and Operations of Offshore Helidecks.*
- [HSAC RP 165](#) *Air Operator Guidelines for Offshore Helicopter Operations – 1st Edition.*
- [BSEE Safety Alert No. 322](#) */ Helideck Obstructions and Compounding Procedural Errors Contribute to Five Near Misses on OCS.*
- [BSEE Safety Alert No. 413](#) */ Hazards Identified in Level I Surveys not Communicated to Affected Personnel.*
- [BSEE Safety Alert No. 479](#) */ Lack of Adherence to Helideck Safety Procedures Results in Series of Near Miss Incidents for additional information.*

- BSEE Notice to Lessees (NTL), [NTL-2021-N03](#)/*Helideck Closures and Markings*.
- [30 CFR 250.890](#) – Records. (c) You must submit to the appropriate district manager a contact list for all facilities at least annually or when contact information is revised. The contact list must include: (6) Facility helideck rating and size.

– BSEE –

A **Safety Alert** is a tool used by BSEE to inform the offshore oil and gas industry of the circumstances surrounding a potential safety issue. It also contains recommendations that could assist avoiding potential incidents on the Outer Continental Shelf.

Category: Aviation