



Helicopter Safety

What you need to know

Cyclone Gabrielle 2023

Helicopters carry high level of H&S risk

Any time MPI staff are using helicopters it will be high risk. It's vital that every staff member who uses helicopters during this response understands our policy and always adheres to the H&S procedures.

When planning MPI activities, consideration should first be given to the use of alternative work methods that avoid the use of helicopters, where practicable.

Before you engage in any activity involving the use of helicopters **you first must** understand MPI's:

[Helicopter Safety Policy](#)

[Helicopter Safety Policy – FAQs](#)

It's also **mandatory** for all staff who are passengers, and all staff who are otherwise involved in the use of helicopters in this response complete this training:

[Helicopter Awareness - Passenger](#)

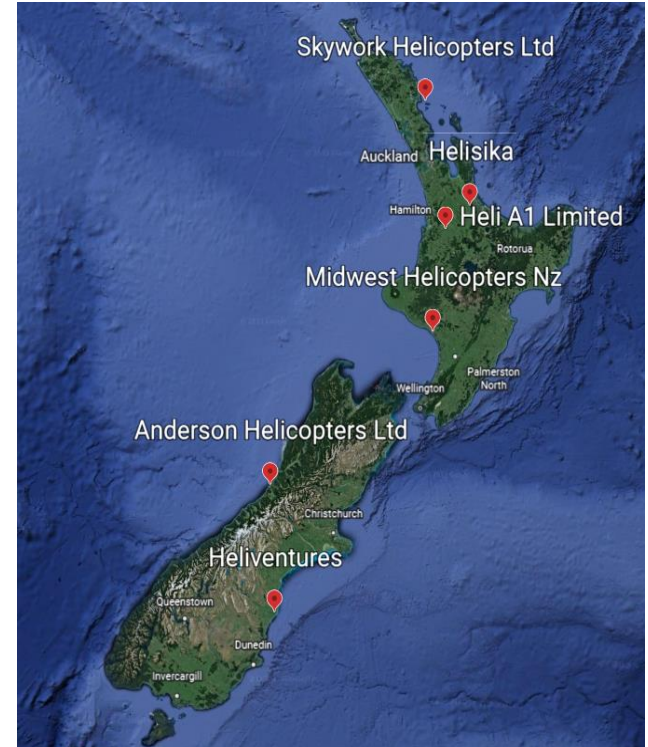


Helicopter companies approved for MPI use

All helicopter companies directly engaged by MPI for our use **must** meet our health and safety prequalification requirements before any helicopter operations can take place.

These companies [MPI approved helicopter list](#) have met MPI's criteria. (See map too)

If you need to directly engage another helicopter company, please contact the HSW Directorate SafetyAndWellbeing@mpi.govt.nz who will assist you with the prequalification process.



NZDF helicopters

For MPI operations with the NZDF helicopters their Aviation Safety Programme, regulations, rules, Standard Operating Procedures, risk management plans, flight manuals, and Defence Aviation Safety Assurance Manual apply.

(NZDF do not use a single doc e.g. HSMP)

Helicopter operations carried out by MPI with the NZDF will use a work planning system involving:

- An operational briefing outlining the goals of the operation, plan B if relevant, and how the tasks are expected to be achieved
- A debrief on completion of the tasks, or at a refueling period, so that personnel have an opportunity to discuss any issues that have occurred

A post-operational report that formalises what occurred, provides feedback and identifies any lessons learned.



Passengers

MPI helicopter passengers* **must**:

1. Be **trained** in [Helicopter Awareness - Passenger](#)
2. Have received the prescribed health/safety **briefings**.
3. Be aware of the **risks associated** with the specific flight.
4. Follow **all** directions given in safety briefings, and by the pilot.
5. Advise the pilot if they have any hazardous substances/dangerous goods with them.
6. Raise any health and safety concerns they have.

Any person may **refuse** to fly in a helicopter being used if they feel an **unsafe** condition exists.

*(*Passengers in helicopters include MPI staff/contractors/volunteers/and staff from other govt agencies/orgs and Ministers of the Crown.)*



Manager/leads involved in helicopter operations

MPI managers/leads involved in helicopter operations **must ensure**:

- All passengers have been **trained** in [Helicopter Awareness - Passenger](#)
- The tasking is understood by all personnel involved in the helicopter operation, and
 - they receive a helicopter safety briefing
 - it's recorded and signed off by all parties
 - it includes emergency procedures, from the pilot/other suitably qualified person before going up in the air, and (if relevant) by the operations manager in charge of ground-based activities associated with the helicopter operation before carrying out the operation.
- Ensure radio communications/hand signal systems are in place prior to undertaking any operation.



Reminder: Do not become the emergency

Your work is important, but **do not become** the emergency.

At all times **follow** helicopter procedures.

Always inform the pilot if you see something that looks wrong, as it maybe and the pilot may not have seen it.

Always ensure **equipment is secured** during loading/unloading. (You must be trained if you are going to help load/unload.) **Pilot must be informed** if you are transporting any hazardous substances/ dangerous goods i.e. firearms, chemicals, chainsaws, fuel.

All passengers must receive a **Pilot briefing**, or if a NZDF Helicopter - the Loadmaster's.

Never **approach** a helicopter without receiving a **visual signal** from the pilot, and always stay where the pilot can see you.

Always follow the *safety around helicopters* poster.

Never board a 3rd party helicopter. Only fly in an approved helicopter. No exceptions.



Ngā mihi

Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua

