

# INDUSTRY STANDARD

## NO. 19

# Alerting Service for Offshore Helicopters

**7 December 2023**

## Index

Document Control Sheet .....	3
Terms and definitions.....	4
Legal Requirements .....	5
Related Standards .....	5
Important Nomenclature used in this Standard .....	5
1. Scope and application .....	6
2. Procedure .....	7
2.1 General rule.....	7
2.2 Landing on a platform/rig.....	7
2.3 Flying between platforms/rigs (shuttling).....	7
2.4 Take-off from a platform/rig and leaving the HPZ .....	8
2.5 When radio coverage is not available .....	8
2.6 Record flight information .....	8
3 Overdue Helicopter .....	9
3.1 General rule.....	9
3.2 Overdue action .....	9
4 Training.....	9

## Document Control Sheet

Control Sheet	
Responsible Committee	OPCOM
Title Document (UK)	Alerting Overdue Offshore Helicopters
Type Document (UK)	Industry Standard
Control Number:	
Control Status:	Uncontrolled when printed
Issue Status	[draft]

Document update timeframe	C3	
C1 - 12 Months	C2 - 24 Months	C3 – 36 Months

Endorsed by		
Operations Committee	Name	B. Smits
	Date:	
Legal Committee	Name	S. Tates
	Date:	
Health, Safety and Environment Committee	Name	E. Dorenbos
	Date:	
Approved by		
Executive Committee	Name	
	Date:	

Revision History					
Rev	Date	Description	Author	Reviewed	Approved
1	15-04-2021	Converted Guideline 19 into Standard 19	LVNL	WG Aviation	LVNL NOGEPA
1.1	19-06-2023	Implementation of EU 2021/1296 (49d) 'Flight Following', deleting 'flight watch'.	MO/PB	LVNL/ WGA	LVNL: P. Beekman NOGEPA: Arendo Schreurs

This document will be controlled in accordance with the NOGEPA Industry Standard No. 80 on Standards and Document Control.

## Terms and definitions

Amsterdam FIC	Amsterdam Flight Information Centre: FIC offers traffic information to uncontrolled traffic in the NSAA.
Amsterdam FIR	Amsterdam Flight Information Region
AIP	Aeronautical Information Package ( <a href="https://en.lvn.nl/information-for-airmen/publications-for-airmen">https://en.lvn.nl/information-for-airmen/publications-for-airmen</a> )
ATA	Actual Time of Arrival
ATD	Actual Time of Departure
DEP	Departure
ATC	Air Traffic Control (offers separation, flight information and alerting service to controlled traffic)
ATS	Air Traffic Service
ANSP	Air Navigation Service Provider
DEST	Destination
ETA	Estimated Time of Arrival
ETD	Estimated Time of Departure
Flight Following	The recording in real time of departure and arrival messages by operational personnel to ensure that a flight is operating and has arrived at the destination aerodrome or an alternate aerodrome.
Flight Following Service	A service whereby the tasks related to Flight Following are provided to a pilot by a Radio Operator during a flight.
HLO	Helicopter Landing Officer
HPZ	Helicopter Protection Zone
North Sea Operators	All organisations which operate a platform (either fixed or mobile e.g. on a ship) within the NSAA, and whose operations require helicopter transport to and from those platforms.
NSAA	North Sea Area Amsterdam
OIM	Offshore Installation Manager
POB	Persons on Board (NB! The total of passengers and pilots)
Radio Operator	Duly trained operational personnel (working for North Sea Operators) who provide Flight Following to helicopters when radio and radar coverage is insufficient to allow LVNL to see and contact them.
SERA	Standardised European Rules of the Air

## Legal Requirements

ICAO Annex 11	Air Traffic Services
Regulation (EU) 016/1185	Air and operational provisions regarding services and procedures in air navigation

## Related Standards

Standard 100	Helicopter Operations
--------------	-----------------------

## Important Nomenclature used in this Standard

In the context of this Standard and when so used to describe a method or practice:	
'shall'	means that such method or practice reflects a mandatory provision of law (in Dutch: <i>dwingend recht</i> ). Such method or practice is mandatory for those who are the addressees of such provision (mostly the operators). A Standard can describe or quote, but not amend, mandatory provisions. When an operator in exceptional cases for technical, operational or HSE reasons cannot comply, exceptions shall be documented and reported, and risks mitigated. Please note that this does not release the operator from the obligation to comply with the law. *
'should'	means that such method or practice reflects a Good Operating Practice. An operator is generally expected to apply such method or practice, but a specific situation may require a specific alternative. In other words: the operator complies or explains, and documents the explanation. *
'could'	means that such method or practice is of an advisory nature or mentioned by way of example. An operator is not obliged to comply and is not obliged to explain if he does not comply.
* Please refer to paragraph 2.3 of Standard 80 (Standards and Document Control), for further explanation on an exception of a 'shall' provision, or on a comply-or-explain of a 'should' provision.	

## 1. Scope and application

The procedure described in this Standard aims to ensure the provision of Alerting Service to helicopters operating in the North Sea Area Amsterdam and the North Sea Area V on behalf of North Sea Operators. This commitment is based on the following regulation.

SERA.10001, Regulation (EU) 2016/1185

- a) Alerting Service shall be provided by the air traffic services units:
  1. for all aircraft provided with air traffic control service;
  2. in so far as practicable, to all other aircraft having filed a flight plan or otherwise known to the air traffic services; and
  3. to any aircraft known or believed to be the subject of unlawful interference.
- b) Unless otherwise prescribed by the competent authority, aircraft equipped with suitable two-way radio-communications shall report during the period 20 to 40 minutes following the time of the last contact, whatever the purpose of such contact, merely to indicate that the flight is progressing according to plan, such report to comprise identification of the aircraft and the words 'Operations normal'.
- c) The 'Operations normal' message shall be transmitted air-ground to an appropriate ATS unit.

SERA.10001(b), ED Decision 2016/023/R

The absence of an 'operations normal' message does not constitute a situation of urgency. In the absence of such a report, ATS should endeavor to contact the aircraft on available frequencies. A failure to contact the aircraft could lead to any type of measure including the declaration of 'uncertainty phase'.

Alerting Service aims to ensure that the location and status of the helicopter is monitored during all stages of the flight. Appropriate action shall be initiated if:

- Contact is lost for a period longer than 20 minutes;
- No contact is established within 10 minutes after ETD;
- A helicopter has not landed within 10 minutes after ETA.

Alerting Service is an ATC service assigned by law to an ANSP. Within the Netherlands North Sea area Amsterdam (NSAA), this task is delegated to LVNL/Amsterdam FIC. However, LVNL cannot guarantee radio coverage on all altitudes in the North Sea area, especially on lower altitudes. In these cases, Flight Monitoring provided by Radio Operators (working for North Sea Operators) can aid the ANSP (i.e. LVNL) to provide Alerting Service. To this end, the Dutch AIP legally defines the role of the Radio Operator and the procedures they should adhere to. . With regard to the delegation of this element/task of Alerting Service, LVNL and NOGEP A will enter into an agreement. In this way the legal, procedural and functional requirements for the Alerting Service are met.

## 2. Procedure

### 2.1 General rule

Flight Information and Alerting Service in the NSAA are responsibilities of Amsterdam FIC. However, radio coverage may be insufficient at low altitude. This necessitates other procedural solutions so the pilot is still provided with alerting services. This can be achieved by temporarily delegating radio communication, allowing to monitor the flight safety and arrival on the destination. This process is called Flight Following and may be tasked to the Radio Operator. This delegation is activated by the pilot before entering the HPZ of the platform/rig. The Radio Operator shall not accept this duty unless he is qualified to do so. If the pilot cannot obtain Flight Following service, he shall report this to Amsterdam FIC.

Note 1:

If Flight Following service cannot be obtained from the Radio Operator, it might lead to a lower level of safety in case radio contact with Amsterdam FIC is lost. This should be prevented by all parties concerned.

Note 2:

For readability purposes of this Standard, only the term Radio Operator is used. The Radio Operator in this respect is the nominated person performing Flight Following and if necessary, is responsible for informing LVNL (who is still responsible for Alerting Service). This can also be the HLO, OIM, or any other person on site or remote as long as he is qualified and able to do so.

### 2.2 Landing on a platform/rig

Before descending into an HPZ, the Helicopter Pilot shall:

- Establish two-way radio communication with the appropriate Radio Operator.
- Report the ETA, POB and endurance.
- Formally request the Radio Operator to provide the Flight Following Service.
- Inform Amsterdam FIC that two-way radio communication with the Radio Operator has been established and that the Flight Following Service is accepted by the Radio Operator.

No later than ETA + 10 MIN, the Helicopter Pilot shall contact the Radio Operator to report the ATA.

### 2.3 Flying between platforms/rigs (shuttling)

Before take-off for shuttle flights (< 10 MIN) between platforms/rigs, the Helicopter Pilot shall:

- Establish two-way radio communication with the appropriate Radio Operator.
- Report the Destination, ETA, POB and endurance.
- Formally hand over the Flight Following task to the Radio Operator.

No later than ETA + 10 MIN, the Helicopter Pilot shall contact the Radio Operator to report the ATA.

#### **2.4 Take-off from a platform/rig and leaving the HPZ**

Before take-off the pilot shall:

- Establish two-way radio communication with the appropriate Radio Operator.
- Report the Destination, ETA, POB and endurance.

Within ATD +10min the Helicopter Pilot shall:

- Establish two-way radio communication with Amsterdam FIC.
- Make a position report to Amsterdam FIC.
- 
- Confirm to the Radio Operator that the Flight Following task has ended.

#### **2.5 When radio coverage is not available**

When radio communication is not possible, the Helicopter Pilot reports his information to Amsterdam FIC or the Radio Operator by telephone or relay.

#### **2.6 Record flight information**

- All aircraft movements and communications between the Radio Operator and the Helicopter Pilot shall be accurately recorded (as required by law per the Flight Following definition).
- The exact method of recording is up to the Radio Operator. He should be able to reproduce a timeline with the above mentioned data as a minimum. Records should be kept for up to 1 (one) month.



## 3 Overdue Helicopter

### 3.1 General rule

An Overdue Helicopter is a helicopter which has failed to establish contact within 10 minutes after the ETA/ETD given or 20 minutes since last contact, whichever is the least. See also chapter 2.

The Overdue Action described in this Standard shall be initiated by the Radio Operator if a helicopter is overdue. However it is recommended to commence the Overdue Action if the helicopter has failed to establish contact within 5 minutes after ETA/ETD.

### 3.2 Overdue action

When a helicopter is overdue the Radio Operator shall:

- Try to establish contact with the helicopter on the allocated work and emergency frequencies.
- If contact cannot be established:
  - Call Amsterdam FIC by telephone on +31 20 406 2192
  - Report an Overdue Helicopter together with the following info
    - Flight number
    - Call Sign
    - Destination
    - ETA
    - POB
    - Endurance
    - Last contact
    - A direct telephone number on which the Radio Operator can be contacted

Amsterdam FIC will now take further action.

Amsterdam FIC shall initiate the Alert Phase and inform the Coastguard .

The Distress Phase will be initiated by the Coastguard.

If an Overdue Helicopter re-establishes contact, or lands, the Radio Operator shall inform Amsterdam FIC immediately.

## 4 Training

The Radio Operator tasked with the duties described in this Standard shall be trained in helicopter traffic monitoring (NOGEP A Standard 001 on Training – course 1.11).