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Safety Services for the Broadcast, Television and Film Industry


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Hazards and Risks

- **Crash/ Impact due to:**
 - Mechanical or electrical failure
 - Pilot error e.g. poor communications, inadequate operating procedures, etc.
 - Falling from aircraft when flying in open aircraft or with doors removed - cameramen / women particularly at risk
 - Production items falling from helicopter when airborne onto persons below
 - Being struck by flying debris

Control Measures

- Aircraft to have valid Certificate of Airworthiness (attach copy to risk assessment)
- Pilot confirmed to have valid Commercial Pilot's Licence for the class of aircraft
- Discuss and agree requirements with pilot prior to aerial filming commencing
- All landing / take-off areas and flight paths agreed with Air Operator prior to day of filming
- Aircraft Operator has adequate Public Liability and Passenger Liability insurance (see attached certificates)
- Production to liaise with Aircraft Operator in the days running up to the day of filming with regard to expected weather conditions Aircraft Operator / Pilot's decision is final if they consider the weather is not safe for aerial filming

- All production crew / contributors to receive safety briefing by Air Operator / Pilot prior to approaching the aircraft
- Crew / contributors to follow Pilot's instructions when gaining access to or leaving the aircraft.
- All persons in aircraft to be securely fastened at all times, either by seat-belts or fitted harness with safety line – all belts, harnesses and fastenings to be confirmed as suitable, in good condition and their fitting supervised by a competent person. Pilot to approve all fastenings prior to commencing flying
- Prior to flight, the production to confirm that Aircraft Operator / Pilot has obtained relevant permissions from appropriate aviation authority to operate aircraft with any doors / windows removed
- Number of production crew to be minimised at all times
- Any equipment mounted to the external surfaces of the aircraft (e.g. cameras on hot-head mounts) to be secured by a competent person (i.e. Grip) and in agreement with the Aircraft Operator / Pilot
- Whenever the doors of the aircraft are removed for filming purposes, all items (production equipment / personal effects) to be securely stowed or fastened by means of safety lines.
- No items or equipment to be held outside of the aircraft during the flight

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Flying

[Click here](#) for hazards/risks and control measures

Competence

Checks should be made on the competency of the aircraft operator which have been vetted to ensure that they are competent. The Production should ensure that the aircraft operator:

- meet the relevant CAA requirements and hold a valid AOC
- have adequate insurance

Additionally there are specific requirements which apply to helicopters.

The Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) provides for worldwide recognition of flight crew licences issued by any Contracting State of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

Checks should be through the Licensing Authority of the country in which the licence is issued. The relevant Licensing Authority can be established through Consulate or Embassy for that country.

Pilots in the emergency and armed services are professional, also their aircraft are professionally maintained. For the purposes of these requirements they are deemed to be approved.

Private Pilots Licence

The holder of a Private Pilots Licence may not fly passengers or undertake aerial work for "valuable consideration" (hire or reward for money or otherwise).

Where an aircraft is to be filmed from the ground then, provided the aircraft is taking off, flying and landing in accordance with normal aviation practice, and there is no "valuable consideration", a commercial pilots licence may not be necessary.

Productions may wish to take part in a Press Day or to do a story involving a personality flying where commercial licences are not held. In certain circumstances and providing there is no "valuable consideration" this may be possible, but productions must consult

with the safety department at the earliest opportunity.

Briefing

Before the aircraft take-off there should be a thorough safety briefing of all present. Prior to the commencement of any flight operations the pilot or operators representative will brief all personnel who need to be closer on the ground than 150 metres to the aircraft involved at any stage in the operation. No one should change their position or the position of any equipment, props or sets etc. without informing the pilot or operators representative. If the flight takes place over a large expanse of water, the pilot will require you to wear a life jacket.

It is the responsibility of the pilot to ensure that before the aircraft takes off on the flight all passengers are made familiar with the position and method of use of emergency exits, safety belts (with diagonal shoulder strap where required to be carried), safety harnesses and (where required to be carried) oxygen equipment, life-jackets and the floor lighting systems and all other devices required by the CAA.

It is for the pilot to decide if the requirements are practical and safe and the pilot has the right to refuse to carry out any particular manoeuvre on the grounds of safety. This is especially important in light aircraft, where any unrehearsed movement within the cabin should be avoided. Before the flight, it is essential to agree single words of instruction or signs to enable the pilot to position the aircraft as necessary without any possibility of misunderstanding. The dialogue should be confined to two persons - pilot/camera(wo)man or pilot/director - at any given time.

Once in the air, a pilot has to carry out many operations simultaneously - including flying the aircraft, keeping a look-out, positioning for the filming, navigating and communicating with Air Traffic Control agencies, and it is essential that all concerned should keep to the planned brief. Any changes to the planned brief may require the aircraft to return to base, or designated landing zone, for a re-briefing.

No one may enter within 150 metres of the aircraft at any stage in the operation without permission.

Aircraft structures can be damaged easily while on the ground. Never push, handle, sit on or in, or lay objects of any kind on an aircraft without the pilot's permission.

The seat belt or safety harness must be fastened as soon as you get in and kept fastened until the pilot signals that it is safe to release it.

No person may fly or be carried except in that part of the aircraft designed for the purpose. Dangerous goods may not be carried.

Insurance

The aircraft operator must hold insurance to cover all liabilities arising out of the operation of the aircraft, for personal injury to or damage to the property of any third party or passenger, including personnel.

Formation/Stunt Flying

Certain low level flying, stunt flying, flying over built up areas, formation flying and display flying will require special permission and/or exemption from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). In all cases, Productions must ask if it has been necessary to apply for exemptions and/or permissions and seek written confirmation from the operator.

Before any stunt or special effects sequence is to be performed, all persons involved shall be thoroughly briefed as to any potential hazards and safety questions prior to the filming. Any changes to the required action must be the subject of a re-briefing and the aircraft must land if necessary.

A representative of the operator must be on hand with the Production Manager at all times when stunt or low flying operations take place.

Action vehicle drivers must not change their agreed route or speed without informing the pilot.

It is not permissible to drop articles from an aircraft without authorisation from the CAA.

Filming or Flying with Doors Off

When flying with the doors off all persons and equipment must be secured and all loose articles properly stowed.

Camera and recording equipment must be independently secured from the operator.

The Safety harnesses used by camera operators must be fit for purpose and be suitable for the recording activity. For some camera work it is necessary to fly with the doors open or off. There is a significant risk of persons or equipment leaving the aircraft when banking or manoeuvring in mid-air. All persons and equipment needs to be secured from falling out.

Any restraint equipment for persons may be classified as personal protective equipment (PPE), and require treating as such.

Radio Equipment & Frequencies

Any radio equipment to be used in an aircraft must be CAA approved.

The radio frequencies to be used must be cleared for airborne use.

Approval must be given by the operator before radio equipment is used in an aircraft.

Air Accident

In the case of an air accident, you must:

- ensure immediate safety of all involved
- not move casualties unless they are in further danger
- contact emergency services (in the UK, via 999, and notify Police even if no injury occurred)
- contact Air Accident Investigation Board on 01252 512299
- not move any part of aircraft or other article involved, including personal belongings, as these form part of the evidence.

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