

CHAPTER 5. AIR AMBULANCE OPERATIONS

SECTION 4. AIR AMBULANCE OPERATIONS TRAINING PROGRAMS

1393. GENERAL. This section contains guidance to be used by principal operations inspectors (POI) and inspectors when evaluating a Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Part 135 operator's training program for flightcrew and medical personnel in air ambulance operations. This section also contains elements that inspectors should consider when making such evaluations, as appropriate to the operator's operations (see volume 3, chapter 2, in this handbook for the types of training categories that operators must use in training curriculums in general). Operators must still comply with all other FAR Part 135 requirements and with other applicable guidance. This section covers the specifications for air ambulance—helicopter and air ambulance—airplane training programs, and coordination training for medical personnel and flightcrews in air ambulance operations.

NOTE: For the purposes of this training, a “response scene” refers to a site where in air ambulance operation is conducted, which involves nonroutine, hazardous situations.

1395. HELICOPTER TRAINING PROGRAMS.

Inspectors should consider the following elements when evaluating an operator's helicopter flight training program and helicopter ground training program:

A. Helicopter Flight Training Program. Crew resource management (CRM) and crew coordination procedures are an integral part of each of the flight maneuvers that follow. Inspectors should ensure that each of these maneuvers is included in the operator's flight training curriculum:

- Unimproved takeoff/landing area operations
- Night cross-country
- Night cockpit lighting considerations
- Night forced landing
- Communications, air to ground and flight crew/medical crew
- Inadvertent instrument meteorological conditions (IMC) (should include demonstrated control of the aircraft in simulated or actual instrument meteorological conditions)
- Techniques used with lighting equipment

B. Helicopter Ground Training Program. Inspectors should ensure that the following areas are included in the operator's ground training curriculum:

- Day-response scene operations
- Night-response scene operations
- Obstacle recognition
- Use of local area maps
- Aircraft systems variations (such as special electrical generation)
- Passenger restraining methods in flight
- Local flying area orientation (day/night) (helicopter only)
- Handling problem passengers
- Adequacy of landing sites
- Flightcrew functions and responsibilities
- Foreign operations (if appropriate)
- Prevention and control of infectious conditions (to include knowledge of infectious and communicable diseases and diseases recently identified as occupational health risks, such as hepatitis B, herpes simplex, herpes zoster, and AIDS)

1397. AIRPLANE TRAINING PROGRAMS. Inspectors should consider the following elements when evaluating an operator's airplane flight training program and airplane ground training program.

A. Airplane Flight Training Program. There are no airplane flight training maneuvers which are unique to air ambulance services.

B. Airplane Ground Training Program. Inspectors should ensure that the following areas are included in the operator's ground training curriculum:

- Aircraft medical systems variations
- Passenger restraining methods in flight
- Handling problem passengers
- Flightcrew functions and responsibilities

- Prevention and control of infectious conditions (to include knowledge of infectious and communicable diseases, diseases recently identified as occupational health risks such as hepatitis B, herpes simplex, herpes zoster, and AIDS)

1399. MEDICAL PERSONNEL AND FLIGHTCREW COORDINATION TRAINING.

A. *Training in Coordination Procedures.* In air ambulance service operations, the medical personnel and the flightcrew are involved in two distinct operations. While flight crewmembers are generally not required to be trained in any medical subject areas, medical personnel are required to be trained in some flight operational procedures. Additional training for medical personnel is permitted in specific areas that the operator deems necessary. Operators must have training in coordination procedures to be used between flight crewmembers and medical personnel in specified situations. These specific situations must include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Physiological aspects of flight
- Patient loading and unloading
- Safety in and around the aircraft

- Passenger briefing (when appropriate)
- Appropriate in-flight emergency procedures
- Emergency landing procedures
- Emergency evacuation procedures

B. *Medical Personnel Considered Crewmembers.* Medical personnel may or may not be considered crewmembers at the discretion of the operator. If the operator desires to consider the medical personnel crewmembers, the medical personnel must complete initial and recurrent crewmember training programs. Additionally, the medical personnel must perform some duty in an aircraft that relates to the operation of that aircraft, such as assisting the flightcrew in seeing and avoiding other aircraft, evaluating a landing site, coordinating with ground personnel at a landing site, and emergency shutdown of aircraft systems in a crash.

NOTE: If the medical personnel are crewmembers, they are not considered passengers. When only crewmembers are on board the aircraft, the flight may be conducted under FAR Part 91. When a patient or passenger is on board the aircraft, the flight must be conducted under FAR Part 135.

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[PAGES 4-807 THROUGH 4-868 RESERVED]