

# HELIPORTS

The 25 Most Asked Questions...  
And Answers



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## INTRODUCTION

This guide has been prepared in response to numerous requests for information on how to begin planning for a heliport and is an excerpt from the Heliport Development Guide, published by the Helicopter Association International (HAI).

A key recommendation of the Government/Industry Vertical Infrastructure Program for the 21st Century (VIP 21) is increased emphasis on heliport development. Each year, rotorcraft in the United States perform 9.6 million takeoffs and landings and fly approximately 2.3 million hours. The value of the fleet, flight hour expenditures, and manufacturer payrolls in the USA's rotorcraft industry exceeds \$6.2 billion. Heliport infrastructure growth is imperative to satisfy the increased demands placed upon the vertical flight industry.

HAI wishes to thank Mr. Raymond A. Syms, a member of the its Heliport Committee and primary author of this publication, for his dedication to the rotorcraft industry.

For information on Helicopter Association International, the HAI Heliport Development Guide, or the Vertical Infrastructure Program for the 21st Century, contact Helicopter Association International at (703) 683-4646 or visit us at [www.rotor.com](http://www.rotor.com).

## NOTICE

**It should be noted and understood that the information and material in this guide have been compiled solely for the purpose of assisting planners, heliport proponents, and rotorcraft operators in their development efforts.**

**It should not be used as a standard with respect to any particular heliport. Every heliport site is unique and must be evaluated on its own merits, considering all applicable factors, the needs of the total community, and federal, state and local regulatory requirements.**

**No interpretation of this guide relieves any pilot, planner, authority, political entity, or operator from any legal duty he or she might otherwise have with respect to any particular heliport.**





# **Heliports: The 25 Most Frequently Asked Questions (And Answers)**

## ***1. What is a “Heliport”?***

A heliport is a permanent facility where helicopters take off and land. It can range from a specifically designated area that requires little or no external support to a location that supports scheduled air services with hangars, fuel and aircraft maintenance capabilities. Over 90% of current facilities serve single helicopters and provide no fuel or services.

The existing rotorcraft fleet is substantial. The World Helicopter Civil Fleet Statistics for 2004 shows there were over 25,000 helicopters registered worldwide, with approximately 50% being in the United States. This number does not include those in the U.S. military.

In the United States, there are over 5,500 registered land-based heliports, many of which are on elevated structures. There are thousands of offshore landing facilities worldwide, many of which are on oil platforms in the Gulf of Mexico. Over 75% of the oil platforms in the Gulf of Mexico have heliports. There are also hundreds of mobile drilling rigs with heliports. In addition, many oil tankers, commercial ships, and private yachts have helidecks.

Future heliports may be very sophisticated, encompassing direct intermodal transportation links, more stringent security requirements, allowing direct interlining with scheduled airlines at airports, and the most advanced satellite-based instrument approach procedures facilitating all-weather operations. The end result is ease and convenience never before experienced by the traveling public.

## ***2. What is an “Emergency Landing Zone”?***

Such sites can go by many similar terms, but these are not heliports. Basically these are either predetermined or spontaneously designated sites which public safety agencies, in cooperation with emergency heliborne responders, select to evacuate trauma or disaster victims. For example, HAI has published a standard for Emergency Helicopter Landing Facilities (EHLF), that also includes a “Model Ordinance.” This standard has been adopted by the National Association of Fire Chiefs as its policy with regard to establishing emergency helicopter access to rooftops of high-rise buildings.

## ***3. What is a “Helistop”?***

Helistop is a generic term that refers to a minimally developed facility for boarding and discharging passengers or cargo. The heliport/helistop relationship is comparable to a bus terminal/bus stop relationship with respect to the extent of services provided or expected.

#### ***4. What are STOL and VTOL?***

STOL, or short takeoff and landing, applies to certain airplanes, tiltrotor aircraft, and helicopters that can, for the purpose of operating at increased gross weights and performance, use running or rolling takeoffs and landings on short runways or rollways. These distances are significantly shorter than the lengths of runways typically seen at airports for use by airplanes.

VTOL, or vertical takeoff and landing, applies only to helicopters and tiltrotor aircraft and requires a much smaller landing and takeoff area than STOL aircraft or airplanes. Heliports and Vertiports fulfill the needs of VTOL aircraft.

#### ***5. What are the sizes of heliports?***

All international standards have space requirements (both on land and in the air) for an obstacle-free area in order for the aircraft to take off and land. The standards for the Touchdown/Lift-off (TLOF) area are generally predicated on the size of the aircraft undercarriage or the rotor diameter. The obstacle-free areas surrounding the TLOF are generally determined by a multiplier of the aircraft's overall length and/or rotor system size. The use of the heliport (i.e., private, general aviation, hospital, and transport) may also determine the minimum size. These can vary from an open area of 65 feet by 65 feet for a small helicopter to 100 feet by 100 feet for a medium twin-engine helicopter to up to several acres for facilities serving multiple helicopters. Recommended standards vary by the anticipated use of the facility. Typically, a privately used heliport requires less space than would a facility intended for general aviation or commercial transport use.

#### ***6. What are the different types of heliports?***

The type of heliport is determined by its intended use. They can be ground level, elevated, rooftop, or floating. As defined in the FAA's Heliport Design Advisory Circular, AC 150/5390-2B, most typical are:

**A. Prior Permission Required (PPR)**, (formerly called "Private") facilities serve corporations, individual operators and their guests and make up the majority of all current heliports. They are typically privately funded, located on private/corporate property, and usually are not open to the general public.

**B. General Aviation (GA)** facilities are open to the public, and some may charge landing or other fees. They may be a combination of privately and publicly owned properties. If the FAA Airport Improvement Program (AIP) has funded the location, the facility must be public use and committed to operate for a specified period of time. GA facilities may vary from a single-rotorcraft heliport to an elaborate location designed with multiple parking locations and intermodal links to light or heavy rail systems, ferries, highways, and airports. They can form part of a hub-and-spoke system of heliports that serve as feeders from major cities to airports, suburban to urban areas, and city-center to city-center locations.

**C. Transport** Category facilities are typically publicly owned or controlled, generally utilize scheduled operators, and are designed for accommodating larger rotorcraft and increased numbers of passengers. Transport Category heliports may include intermodal considerations, passenger waiting and ticketing areas, and provisions for the high security associated with direct linking of helicopters to major air carriers at airports.

**D. Hospital** facilities are located at or near a hospital. Many hospital heliports are elevated or on rooftops. In addition to the normal provisioning for heliport operational requirements, patient handling and care considerations are important factors in the facility design. Proximity to the trauma/emergency areas or ambulance drop-off and pick-up points must be considered. Access to many hospital heliports is generally restricted to Helicopter Emergency Medical Services (HEMS) or medical evacuation helicopters.

**E. Emergency Sites** are suitable clear and open areas close to or at the scene of an accident, medical emergency, or disaster that meets the criteria set by the HEMS company/operator and the pilot-in-command of the aircraft. While the sites may be part of a preplanned system along highways, at rest areas or in recreational areas, they are not designed for use other than in emergencies. Due to their nature, these sites are typically not subject to formal regulatory review and oversight.

**F. Official-Use** facilities are for police, fire, and sheriff's departments, as well as various federal, state, and local government agencies, and typically follow PPR criteria. Special permission is generally required for landing at these locations.

**G. Emergency Evacuation Facilities** are intended to facilitate bringing emergency personnel to a roof and removing building occupants. Local codes may require buildings over a predetermined height to provide a roof area with sufficient size and strength to land a helicopter. Some building owners have constructed private rooftop heliports that service the travel needs of the occupants as well as meet evacuation requirements.

**H. Temporary** facilities are defined in Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 157. The FAA does not require notification of intent to construct or activate any intermittent-use, Visual Flight Rules-only site which is used or intended to be used for less than one year. Intermittent use means use or intention to use for no more than three days in any one week and no more than 10 operations in any one day.

State or local jurisdiction regulations will take precedence, which in some areas require permission for any landings (usually excluding medical and emergency situations).

## ***7. Where can heliports be located?***

The versatility of the rotorcraft allows heliport locations to be similarly flexible. They may be on ground level; elevated on buildings, parking garages, or bridges, or over or next to freeways and interstates; on airports; on docks, piers, barges, boats, offshore oil/gas rigs, or portable deck systems in jungles/mountains/marshes; and even on water for aircraft equipped with floats.

The location depends predominately on available air space, real estate priorities, and exact departure points/destinations of the passengers, or where services are required. For example, hospitals generally want the heliport as close as possible to the emergency treatment area for incoming patients. Corporate clients are interested in getting to and from meetings and conferences or connecting to longer-range aircraft. Forestry, exploration, and utility crews need to access the area in which they are working.

Heliports can be in cities, suburbs, or rural areas and are only limited by the availability of a suitable open area.

### ***8. What materials are used to construct heliports?***

The most common heliport material for a ground level site is turf or reinforced turf (grass pavers, perforated steel planking [PSP], mixed gravel, shells, and coral). For more elaborate sites or for elevated structures, asphalt (not recommended in some cases, especially hotter climates), concrete, concrete with steel supports, aluminum, wood and composites may be used. Composites include fiberglass, Kevlar, carbon, and numerous other fibers that are formed into high-strength structural members.

### ***9. Who regulates heliports?***

In the U.S. and its territories and possessions, the FAA regulates airspace, assuring its safe and efficient use. This includes interfacing with current or planned aeronautical uses. Land use issues are controlled by state and local regulation. Transport Canada regulations are in place for all Canadian provinces. International regulations may vary; however, most countries utilize the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) regulations.

### ***10. Do zoning codes include heliports?***

Many municipalities make specific reference to heliports in their land-use regulations. Many authorities include and permit these landing areas as accessory uses of a primary land use. An example is a corporate heliport that serves the travel needs of the corporation's executives and clients. A comparison is made to the needs for parking lots, driveways and loading docks as other transportation-related accessories to serve corporate offices.

### ***11. What are the benefits of a heliport?***

#### **A. Emergency/Disaster Relief**

In addition to the daily business and private sector benefits, a system of strategically placed facilities can provide a means for adequately responding to emergencies. In the event of local or regional disasters (e.g., fire, earthquakes, floods, and industrial accidents), a system of rotorcraft landing/staging areas can be immediately available for saving lives. Nowhere has a lack of such a system been more evident than the hurricane disasters of 2005.

## **B. Emergency Medical**

The use of helicopters as aerial ambulances has made the inclusion of a heliport at acute care and trauma centers a requirement in many states and countries. Hospitals around the world consider a heliport an essential part of the total patient care system, which has resulted in thousands of lives being saved.

## **C. Public Service**

Many public service agencies (e.g., fire, law enforcement, and government wildlife and resource management authorities) use helicopters and heliports. Helicopters enable effective mission accomplishments.

## **D. Economic**

Access to a heliport, and a regulatory environment that accommodates the permitting and development of heliports, will help attract businesses that use helicopters. A number of U.S. and international corporations own, lease or charter helicopters for the transportation of their employees with time-critical functions, clients, and priority cargo.

## **E. Electronic News Gathering and Traffic Safety**

Many network and local television and radio stations use helicopters and heliports for their support to provide up-to-the-second news, traffic reports and, in some cases, lifesaving information to the public.

## **F. Utility, Forest and Resource Management**

Many heliports support helicopters that patrol and enable the repair of critical power transmission lines, fight forest fires, manage national forests, support logging operations, and survey vast areas without the need for disturbing the environment.

## **G. Energy**

The offshore oil industry transports thousands of workers from shore stations to oil platforms around the world. Bases of operations are established in localities that best serve the rapid and efficient transportation needs of the industry and provide significant revenue for local communities. Onshore and offshore exploration for energy sources are dependent on helicopters and heliports

## ***12. What equipment is needed for a heliport?***

Equipment requirements are based upon the use of the facility. A simple day-only Visual Flight Rules (VFR) heliport requires only a windsock and appropriate markings. Current National Fire Protection Association standards do not require any fire equipment for an unattended facility. Attended ground-level facilities require portable fire extinguishers. Most elevated locations on occupied structures require specialized foam-dispensing

equipment. Local fire department regulations may dictate the need for additional fire-suppression equipment.

If the location is to be used at night, a lighted windsock and perimeter and obstruction lighting are typically all that are needed. Instrument Flight Rule (IFR) may indicate the need for more extensive lighting and ground equipment, including a means for ascertaining current and forecast weather information, if satellite-based Global Positioning System (GPS) instrument approaches are to be used.

Fueling, servicing and automatic weather reporting would all require equipment as appropriate to the needs of the operator, but are not requirements for the heliport.

### ***13. Can an instrument approach to a heliport be developed and approved?***

Yes. Future considerations should be given to IFR operations and the need for instrument approaches. In the U.S., the FAA recently approved satellite-based GPS non-precision point-in-space approaches to heliports. Differential receivers being tested and installed should, in the future, allow for Category I (normally 200' ceiling and ½-mile visibility) precision instrument approaches directly to or in the vicinity of the facility served. Traditional non-precision approaches (e.g., VOR, NDB) can also be incorporated into the heliport design. Many obstacle clearance and airspace standards that differ from normal VFR flight operations would be required.

### ***14. Should the heliport have an instrument approach?***

Hospitals are the most predominant recipients of the benefits of instrument approaches. The numbers of hospital heliports with approved instrument approaches are increasing each year. In the case of scheduled operations at transport heliports, an all-weather capability is essential to effectively service the market.

If an IFR demand is present and verified at private, hospital and general aviation facilities, a feasibility analysis for adding that capability should be performed. This analysis should include factoring in the site's obstacles and determining the applicable weather minimums. Other issues to be considered are the interface with the current airspace structure and air traffic control issues, along with the amount of additional equipment that would be required. This includes items such as lights, differential global positioning system (DGPS) transmitters (not required for non-precision approaches) and automated weather observation systems (AWOS) for FAR Part 135 operations.

### ***15. Are heliports expensive?***

The majority of domestic U.S. heliports/helistops are simple, inexpensive facilities. A daylight helistop, exclusive of real estate cost, can be established for only a few hundred dollars for markings and a windsock. Cost for hard surfaces will be driven by local construction cost. Night operations will require lighting and can range from a few hundred dollars to several thousand dollars depending upon the source of electricity and

fixture types. Costs of larger facilities are in direct proportion to the real estate costs and outlays for enhancements. Normal construction materials and techniques can be utilized for heliports. A full-service heliport with hangars, fuel, services, and offices would cost about the same as for facilities designed with similar attributes for cars, trucks or other vehicles.

### ***16. Are there lights specifically designed for heliports?***

The majority of today's facilities use lights that were designed for airports and adapted to the needs of heliports. The obstruction lights, perimeter lights, windsocks, and floodlights that are available reflect this heritage. Most major aviation lighting manufacturers have heliport lighting packages that meet the guidelines in the FAA Heliport Design Advisory Circulars. There are lighting systems that are conventional incandescent and electro-luminescent. Fiber optic, light bar, LED, laser, and cold cathode tube technologies are currently being developed. There are a number of battery-powered lighting systems for temporary sites or sites isolated from a normal electrical power source.

### ***17. Where are preferred heliport locations?***

The facility should be located and designed according to the needs of the users. The locations should be balanced against the likely environmental impact of the heliport. Hospitals generally need to have the heliport as close as practical to the emergency/trauma area for ease of patient transport. Corporate heliports are sometimes within walking distance or actually on the passenger destination buildings. City-center transportation centers and convention centers are natural locations for including a rotorcraft landing facility. Landing facilities at major airports are predominately in the general aviation area, allowing for direct access to corporate/charter aircraft as well as direct interlining with airlines when appropriate security measures are in place.

Strategically located heliports can form a system that provides a link in city-center to city-center transportation, airport links, and service to and from the passenger's origination points and destinations.

### ***18. Aren't heliports noisy?***

The sound levels of rotorcraft are similar to those of many items found in our daily lives. Planes, trains, automobiles, lawnmowers, motorcycles, buses, trucks, boats, and cars all regularly produce noise levels higher than those which the average person would hear from a rotorcraft. The relative distance, nature and intensity of the noise generated, height above the ground, model of the aircraft and sound attenuation factors of the terrain between the source and the receptor are all factors in the way sound is perceived. Most of the public are acquainted with helicopters through movies and television, but many of these are either military or early civil helicopters and, thus, are very different from modern and quieter civil helicopters in use today. It is critical to understand that the "Hollywood" depiction of helicopters often creates an adverse reaction by the public.

A typical heliport operation produces an extremely transitory sound. The entire sound event lasts for approximately 45 seconds on landing or takeoff, although ground running can increase the time. At any one point along the flight route, providing the observer is close enough to notice, the helicopter will typically be heard for 20 seconds or less. This is quite unlike other transportation uses such as streets, highways/interstate road systems, commuter/freight railways where sound production is almost constant.

Special attention should be given to siting heliports in areas or corridors where the sound inherently produced by other sources provides a shielding or muffling effect of the sounds of the helicopters. Heavily industrialized areas, especially large industrial and commercial zones, make good sites for potential landing areas due to the relatively high ambient noise.

In essentially all metropolitan transportation systems, there are clearly defined corridors of motor vehicle, train, and waterborne traffic that provide excellent ingress and egress routes for helicopters. In addition to providing ambient noise that can shield aircraft sounds, these freeways, highways, railroads, and waterways, also offer an area of relatively unobstructed airspace that can be considered fairly permanent.

Helicopter operators can also reduce the sounds of the helicopter significantly by the use of noise abatement techniques developed by essentially all of the helicopter manufacturers. This material has been widely distributed and promoted as part of the Helicopter Association International (HAI) "Fly Neighborly" program, which also contains information on noise impact in the community and methods for noise planning and assessment guidelines for heliports.

Extensive research and development programs are leading to the design and manufacture of quieter helicopters. Some results of these programs include a no tail rotor (NOTAR) system, improved main and tail rotor designs, blade-tip speed reductions, and quieter engines.

### ***19. What are the exhaust emissions from helicopters?***

Helicopters are predominately powered by gas turbine engines that produce very few pollutants. Much of this is due to the engine's high-combustion temperatures and its ability to burn fuel very efficiently. The type of fuel utilized by these engines is high-quality jet fuel. Properly stored, dispensed and used, it meets the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) high standards for use of such fuels. Gasoline powered helicopters produce emissions comparable to other similarly powered vehicles (e.g., cars, trucks, and boats).

### ***20. How safe are heliports?***

Nothing is more important to the residents of any community than their family's safety and their property. The FAA, using its own data and that of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), investigated the relative risk a community has in relation to a helicopter landing area. This information and historical data reveal that typical heliports are extremely safe.

The FAA and many of the state and local governments are highly proactive when it comes to heliport safety. Additionally, FAA regulations are very strict when it comes to any unsafe actions undertaken by pilots.

### ***21. Do heliports affect property values for adjacent or nearby properties?***

Historical studies, as well as real estate appraisal guidelines, indicate that property values are not affected due to the proximity of a heliport/helistop. One of the highest per capita income areas in the country, Somerset County, New Jersey, has a large number of private and corporate heliports within some of the finest, and higher valued, estates in the county.

### ***22. Are there any means for obtaining U.S. government funding for a heliport?***

If the facility is to be open to the public for general aviation and/or transport operations, the FAA has AIP funding, a small percentage of which may be available for the necessary studies, planning, land purchase and construction of public use heliports. In addition to their own monies, many states have block grant FAA AIP funds for such development and improvements on publicly accessible landing sites. Many economic development agencies are also a source of potential funding. Contact with your local state aviation office or the regional FAA airports office would yield specific information.

### ***23. What steps are necessary to develop a heliport?***

HAI's "Guidelines For Establishing a Heliport" checklist provides an overview of the basic process.

Consulting with helicopter operators who have established heliports locally or the regional helicopter operators association, which exists in many locations, will facilitate understanding of the basic process. State aeronautical authorities vary dramatically in the amount of assistance they can and will supply. A telephone call to the appropriate state authority will provide that information.

Consulting the Airports Office at the regional FAA headquarters will provide information on the availability of an FAA heliport specialist in your region. The Airports Office will also verify the currency of the Heliport Design Advisory Circular (AC 150/5390-2B). Additionally, a copy of FAA Form 7480 must be filed if a heliport is being constructed. AC 150/5390-2B is a technical document that covers design elements and assumes a basic understanding of helicopter and heliport operations. The design ACs also list the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the various state aviation offices.

There are also of aeronautical consulting firms that will assist with the process.

The heliport development effort is an endeavor requiring knowledge and understanding of the process and the ability to address the numerous issues presented. A combination of

sound technical planning and effective public involvement is essential for the success of a facility application. Many heliport applications fail due to improper presentation and/or major defects in the design or lack of planning.

#### ***24. What developmental issues might I face?***

Numerous surveys, extensive field experience, and recent case studies that were performed for the FAA and are outlined in “Heliport/Vertiport Implementation Process-Case Studies” (DOT/FAA/ND-96/1) and “Six Heliport Case Studies” (DOT/FAA/ND-97/1) indicate:

- a. “The critical factor in heliport development is local government approval of the project. Almost all failed applications occur at this level irrespective of the type of heliport (i.e., public, private or hospital).”
- b. “Local governments are highly influenced by voters, and the primary concerns voiced by the citizens are safety, noise, pollution, degradation of property values and quality of life. These issues need to be addressed from the very beginning of any project. The planning, community effect mitigation and public education process needs to be an integral part of the developmental process.”
- c. “While there is no guarantee of success for a professionally prepared heliport application, many failed applications had fatal errors in their planning, design and presentation.”

#### ***25. Where can I turn for assistance?***

HAI staff and the HAI Heliport Committee have produced this guide. Information is current as of December 2, 2005, and is intended as informational only. HAI is located at 1635 Prince Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2818; telephone (703) 683-4646; fax (703) 683-4745; [heliports@rotor.com](mailto:heliports@rotor.com); [www.rotor.com](http://www.rotor.com).

## HAI'S GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING A HELIPORT

Since the first production helicopters began landing at facilities other than airports, helicopter operators have been faced with questions of not only where best to land their aircraft and take advantage of the machine's flexibility but also: When is an ad-hoc or temporary helicopter landing area required to become (or when should it become) an established helistop or heliport?

The Federal Aviation Administration's Heliport Design Advisory Circular, AC 150/5390-2-B and HAI's Heliport & Technical Programs Department can provide most of the information necessary for heliport design and development. However, the fact that there is so much information available concerning heliport design and development can often seem overwhelming. Establishing a helicopter landing facility requires dealing with many federal, state and local government agencies. The roles of these agencies may seem confusing or overlapping, but each play an important role in heliport development.

**Federal Role:** The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is responsible for regulating all United States airspace. The FAA determines whether new heliports or expansion projects will have an impact on air traffic or the airspace surrounding existing aircraft landing facilities. For public use facilities, the FAA ranks projects according to the need to relieve capacity constraints and the availability of funds.

**State Role:** Many states have aviation commissions or aeronautics divisions that fund federal and state public use heliport and airport projects. State heliport guidelines can provide objectivity and standardization to alleviate local concerns with safety.

**Local Role:** Local authorities are responsible for land use. The city or other political subdivision in which a heliport is to be established is the single most important entity in regulation and jurisdictional authority to ensure compatible land uses. Most towns, cities and counties have plans specifying districts in which helicopter operators may establish and conduct prescribed activities. Particular requirements, such as filing procedures, criteria and zoning approval through public hearings are outlined in ordinances passed by municipalities. This is the level at which you must obtain community approval of your heliport, through both the formal compliance with ordinances as well as educating and convincing your neighbors that you will be a good neighbor. Environmental considerations and community concerns with safety, real or perceived, must be addressed in cooperative spirit or residents are certain to object to any heliport.

The first question in heliport establishment should be: Will the heliport be for private or public use?

### **For Private Use Heliports:**

1. Determine need for one's own helistop or heliport. Consider using an already established helicopter landing facility, including a private use facility. (Other facilities can be located by accessing the HAI Helicopter On-Line or the HAI Heliport Directory.
2. Obtain a copy of FAA Advisory Circular 150/5390-2B Heliport Design Guide and use it as your guide.
3. Determine the helicopter size and weight for which the heliport will be required to support.
4. Determine the frequency of use.
5. Select site, prepare facility layout plan, approach & departure paths, obstructions, and surrounding land uses, including known and potential noise sensitive areas.
6. Prepare and submit three copies of FAA Form 7480-1, Notice of Landing Area Proposal with the nearest Airport District Office. Anyone proposing to activate, construct, or deactivate a heliport is required to submit FAA Form 7480-1 within 90 days of the proposed action. The form is not required for temporary landing sites, medical emergency sites, or emergency evacuation facilities under the provisions of FAR Part 157.
7. Research local ordinances and state laws to determine applicable permits and approvals. Coordinate land use compatibility and zoning approval with local government agencies. Determine and obtain any applicable exemptions or exceptions in accordance with correct procedures.
8. Be fully prepared for any public hearing to determine the fate of your project.
9. Consult with local officials and community leaders, including expected opponents, and address all aspects of anticipated operations and their impact on the community.
10. Comply with state heliport design and site criteria and obtain applicable licensing or certification. Some states with licensing requirements may not enforce licensing when a heliport is established. Operators would obtain and maintain current licensing of their heliports in states with licensing laws to avoid future embarrassments such as violations or heliport closure.

### **For Public Use Heliports:**

1. Establish the legal sponsor or sponsors (state, county, city, or airport authority) who will be responsible for grants and other financial backing.
2. Determine heliport need through review of existing heliport system plan(s) (state, regional, or municipal) or stimulate state and local authorities to prepare a system plan. Some municipal planning departments have incorporated heliports into their development plans to serve local and regional needs. Existing and projected heliports should be coordinated with overall master plans.
3. Coordinate with state and local officials and the FAA to ensure inclusion of the heliport in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS).
4. In cooperation with FAA Regional Heliport Coordinators at Airport District Offices, determine a detailed scope of work and cost of performing necessary studies (heliport master plan, site selection and I or environmental assessment).
5. Request federal funding from the FAA through the Airways and Airport Improvement Program (AIP).
6. Establish local technical / advisory committee(s) for the project's duration. Ensure helicopter professionals experienced in dealing with community agencies and leaders (not just helicopter enthusiasts) are included.
7. Comply with steps 2-10 as for private use heliports. (FAA Heliport Design Criteria is mandatory for public use heliports).

Many heliports have been developed with a minimum of effort, funds, or real estate. Overly detailed or expensive studies are not necessarily prerequisites for successful heliport development.

The FAA, HAI, and many other organizations publish reference materials with detailed information on heliport development.

For additional information, contact HAI at 1635 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314- 2818, (703) 683-4646; fax (703) 683-4745; mail [heliports@rotor.com](mailto:heliports@rotor.com); or visit our website at [www.rotor.com](http://www.rotor.com)

Helicopter Association International (HAI) is the trade association of the civil helicopter industry worldwide. HAI's Regular members operate more than 4,000 helicopters, flying more than 2,000,000 hours each year. HAI's Associate members manufacture, repair, broker, insure and otherwise support the civil helicopter industry.

### **HAI'S MISSION**

To provide its members with services which directly benefit their operations and to advance the civil helicopter industry by providing programs which enhance safety, encourage professionalism, facilitate communications and promote the unique contributions made by helicopters to society.

#### **For more information contact:**

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