

Approved Check Pilot (ACP) / Advanced Qualification Program (AQP) Evaluator Bulletin No. 02/18

Applicability

ACP	AQP
X	

Subject: Helicopter PPC Assessments

Purpose

1. This bulletin is only applicable to helicopter flight checks and addresses the following items:
 - (a) Announces a change in policy to re-define the grading of helicopter flight check results;
 - (b) Clarifies the relevance of helicopter flight check results with respect to upgrading an SIC to PIC; and
 - (c) Clarifies the selection of the Captain, First Officer and Upgrade fields on the helicopter Flight Test Report (FTR).

Background

2. Current policy prohibits the downgrading of an unsuccessful PIC flight check to a successful SIC flight check (ACP Manual 6.39). This policy is appropriate for aircraft operated in a 'seat-dependent' manner, whereby the PIC and SIC normally occupy a position-designated seat, and/or carry out unique seat-related functions. Under these circumstances, it cannot be assumed that a PIC would demonstrate the same level of competency in a seat that he/she does not normally occupy, hence the need for a policy that prohibits the downgrading of a flight check.
3. Although it is a common practice to operate fixed-wing aircraft in a seat-dependent manner, two-crew helicopters are rarely operated, or designed, in this manner. There is typically no substantive automation, engine or flight control functions that are unique to a specific seat. It is a common practice for the PIC and SIC to routinely occupy the left or right seat on a rotating or ad hoc basis. In such cases, pilot competency is not tied to seat position, and it is logical to expect a PIC to be equally capable of fulfilling the role of SIC, regardless of seat position.
4. From a flight check perspective, the content and choreography of a helicopter flight check on a PIC and SIC are the same. Both flight checks contain the same maneuvers from the same PPC

Schedule and are graded in accordance with the same tolerances and marking scale. The PIC and SIC are each expected to take a 'leading role' during their respective flight check and use CRM practices to manage normal and abnormal events. The only measurable difference is in the standard that defines a successful flight check, which is a maximum of two "2's" for a PIC and four "2's" for an SIC (with no grades of "1" for a PIC or SIC).

5. Based on the above factors, there is no defensible argument to deny the downgrading of an unsuccessful PIC flight check to a successful SIC flight check, nor is there any detriment to aviation safety by doing so. A practical option to address this matter is to re-define the overall grading practices of the helicopter flight check to simply state that a candidate has either met the "PIC Standard" or "SIC Standard", based on the number of "2's" received during the check.
6. An air operator may not have an interest in employing a PIC in an SIC role, but the option needs to be available if the PIC has met the SIC standard and the helicopter is not operated in a seat-dependent manner. Conversely, if an SIC has met the PIC standard during a flight check, an air operator should have the flexibility to employ that person as a PIC at the operator's discretion (without an additional PPC), although employment as PIC must be based on additional factors and not just flight check results.

Policy Changes:

7. Successful / Unsuccessful Grading of a Helicopter PPC

Note – This policy change only applies in situations where the helicopter is not operated in a seat-dependent manner by the applicable air operator. For helicopters operated in a seat-dependent manner, the existing PIC / SIC flight check grading policy stated in section 6.39 of the ACP Manual remains in effect.

- a) A flight check on a PIC or SIC in a helicopter operated as "two-crew" is to be assessed in accordance with the following standards:
 - (i) A flight check on a PIC or SIC is to be graded as "Successful to the PIC standard" if the candidate is assessed with no more than two "2's" during the flight check (and no grade of "1");
 - (ii) A flight check on a PIC or SIC is to be graded as "Successful to the SIC standard" if the candidate is assessed with more than two "2's", but less than five "2's" during the flight check (and no grade of "1"); and
 - (iii) A flight check on a PIC or SIC is to be graded as "Unsuccessful" if the candidate is assessed with five "2's" or more during the flight check, or a grade of "1".
- b) Prior to the flight check, the candidate(s) must be informed that he/she will be graded in accordance with the above standards, and that the flight check will not be terminated for either candidate unless any test item is graded as a "1", or more than four items are graded as a "2";

- c) If a candidate who is normally employed as a PIC does not meet the PIC standard during the flight check, but meets the SIC standard, the applicable air operator is responsible for determining whether the candidate is to be re-tested to attempt to meet the PIC standard (after completing any required training). Alternatively, the air operator may elect to employ the candidate as an SIC until the operator determines that the candidate is ready to re-attempt the flight check to meet the PIC standard; and
- d) Under no circumstances will an air operator employ a person as a PIC if that person has not met the PIC standard on a flight check. Due diligence is essential with respect to verifying flight test results in situations where a newly-hired pilot is 'porting' his/her PPC from another air operator.

Policy Clarification:

8. Upgrade Process – SIC to PIC

- a) With the introduction of the new grading standard for PICs and SICs in the 10th Edition of the ACP Manual, it is not clearly stated how this new standard is to be applied to pilot upgrades (SIC to PIC). If an SIC has met the PIC standard during a helicopter flight check, the applicable air operator can employ that person as a PIC at the operator's discretion. For helicopters operated in a seat-dependent manner, a pilot must pass a flight check to the PIC standard in the seat normally occupied by the PIC, before being employed as a PIC. In all cases, a pilot must also hold the required license, and the qualifications, experience and competencies required by the air operator to be employed as a PIC; and
- b) It is important to note that the PPC is not designed to be used as the sole means of assessing a pilot's competency and suitability for the role of PIC. PPCs are typically more limited in scope and complexity in comparison to training scenarios and command upgrade programs. These latter venues offer the opportunity to introduce a wider variety of abnormal situations and complex malfunctions, which in turn provides a better opportunity to assess the competencies that are most relevant to the role of PIC, such as decision making, CRM, situational awareness, and technical skills and knowledge. In addition to the forgoing assessment opportunities, it is expected that an air operator will also consider a pilot's character and operational performance when evaluating his/her suitability for the role of PIC.

9. Completion of the Captain, F/O and Upgrade Fields – Helicopter Flight Test Report

- a) There is no clear guidance that explains how the "Captain", "F/O" and "Upgrade" circles are to be completed on the FTR. On the Helicopter FTR, the following practices shall be followed:
 - (i) For flight checks when 'seat-dependency' is not applicable, apply the following practices, regardless of whether the candidate is employed as a PIC or SIC:
 - (1) Fill in the "Captain" circle when the candidate meets the PIC standard - (assessed with no more than two "2's" and no grade of "1"); and
 - (2) Fill in the "F/O" circle when the candidate meets the SIC standard (assessed with more than two "2's", but less than five "2's" and no grade of "1").

- (ii) For flight checks when 'seat-dependency' is applicable, apply the following practices:
- (1) Fill in the "Captain" circle when the candidate is being tested as a PIC in the seat designated for the PIC on that type, regardless of the candidate's flight check results; and
 - (2) Fill in the "F/O" circle when the candidate is being tested as an SIC in the seat designated for the SIC on that type, regardless of the candidate's flight check results.

Note: For helicopters operated in a seat-dependent manner, the existing PIC / SIC flight check grading policy stated in section 6.39 of the ACP Manual remains in effect.

- (iii) Do not use the "Upgrade" circle for any flight check. It has no tracking or regulatory purpose with respect to helicopter flight checks.
- b) Failure to adhere to the above conventions could result in the rejection of the FTR by the dedicated data system.
10. The assistance of ACPs associated with an air operator is required to ensure that the contents of this bulletin are brought to the attention of the Chief Pilot and Flight Operations Manager, particularly with respect to the information in paragraph 7 (d) and paragraph 8.

Effective Date:

11. The above changes take effect immediately.

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