

► This RA has been substantially re-written; for clarity no change marks are presented – please read the RA in its entirety ◀

## RA 3536 - Domestic Helicopter Landing Site

**Rationale** *For a Safe Operating Environment (SOE) to be available at a Domestic Helicopter Landing Site (HLS) it is vital that the facilities, services and procedures are correctly enabled, published and managed. The absence of these provisions, or a misunderstanding of Responsibilities, could lead to unsafe operations or delay the response to an Incident. The correct preparation and management of a Domestic HLS, in accordance with (iaw) this Regulatory Article (RA), will enable the provision of an SOE iaw the site classification.*

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### Scope

The purpose of this RA is to provide a proportionate regulatory framework to ensure that Domestic HLS operations are conducted safely. A Domestic HLS is a facility, where there is no permanent Rotary Wing (RW) presence, which is designated only for the movement of Passengers, crew cargo or training and no other activities take place (eg Maintenance). It may be located in the UK or overseas and may contain one or more landing points.

For the avoidance of doubt, sites or facilities that support tactical and / or non-permanent HLS operations, that do not constitute the provision of a Domestic HLS, are outside the scope of this RA. Head of Establishment (HoE) responsibilities for such sites are contained in RA 1010(1)<sup>1</sup>.

### Regulation 3536(1)

#### Domestic Helicopter Landing Site – General Requirements

3536(1) HoE and Aviation Duty Holder-Facing Organizations and Accountable Manager (Military Flying)-Facing Organizations (AA-Facing Organizations) **shall** ensure that the following general requirements are achieved for all Domestic HLS.

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#### Domestic Helicopter Landing Site – General Requirements

1. A Suitably Qualified and Experienced Person (SQEP) HLS Custodian **should** be appointed to carry out the responsibilities within this RA.
2. Accurate details of the Domestic HLS **should** be submitted to Royal Air Force (RAF) No.1 Aeronautical Information Documents Unit (AIDU) for inclusion in the HLS Directory<sup>2</sup>, including:
  - a. Location, operator and contact details.
  - b. Available facilities, services and procedures, including radio frequencies to be used.
  - c. Hazards, restrictions, and any other pertinent information.
3. An Emergency Plan **should** be established detailing immediate actions in the

<sup>1</sup> Refer to RA 1010(1): Classification Tier of Establishment.

<sup>2</sup> Refer to RA 1030 – Defence Aeronautical Information Management.

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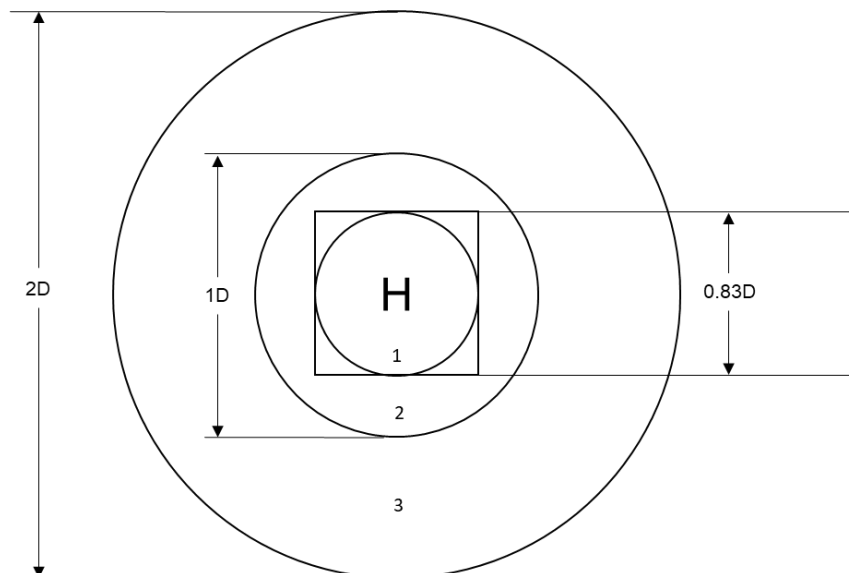
event of an Aircraft Accident or serious Incident within the geographical boundary of the estate that the Domestic HLS is situated in.

4. An Incident Plan **should** be maintained to cope with the follow-on response to an Aircraft Accident or serious Incident, and to indicate within whose Post-Crash Management Area of Responsibility (AoR) the Domestic HLS falls, which unit will provide an Aircraft Post Crash and Incident Management (APCIM) response<sup>3</sup> and the coordinating arrangements necessary to achieve it.
5. All Domestic HLS **should** operate on a Prior Permission Required (PPR) basis with current contact details published. Aircraft movement co-ordination should be recorded and managed to ensure time deconfliction of landing spot occupation.
6. During use, vehicle or pedestrian movement **should** not be permitted in the vicinity of the landing / take-off point<sup>4</sup>.
7. The Touchdown and Lift off (TLOF) surface **should** be periodically visually inspected to ensure that dangerous surface and other defects are identified in sufficient time to enable them to be rectified to prevent damage to Aircraft using it.
8. Where a Domestic HLS constitutes a movement area within the boundary of an existing Airfield, it **should** be included as part of the Airfield's maintenance schedule iaw with RA 3590<sup>5</sup>.
9. Where a Domestic HLS is located on an Aerodrome or Air Weapons Range, management of the Domestic HLS **should** be integrated into the Aerodrome's Air Safety Management System (ASMS) ensuring compliance with applicable Regulations iaw RA 1010<sup>6</sup> Annex B.

#### Dimensions

10. The size of a Domestic HLS **should** be determined according to the largest overall dimension of the Aircraft, (D), that will use it, and established iaw the minimum dimensions in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Minimum Dimensions for Domestic HLS



<sup>3</sup> For further guidance, refer to RA 1430 – Aircraft Post Crash and Incident Management and Significant Occurrence Management, and the Manual of Aircraft Post Crash and Incident Management.

<sup>4</sup> The exception being if the vehicle and pedestrian movement is part of the operating requirement of the Aircraft eg Passenger / equipment loading.

<sup>5</sup> Refer to RA 3590 – Maintenance and Safeguarding.

<sup>6</sup> Refer to RA 1010 – Head of Establishment Aviation Responsibilities and Aviation Duty Holder / Accountable Manager (Military Flying) Establishment Responsibilities.

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**Surface**

11. The surface of the TLOF **should** be even and sufficiently firm to support the safe and stabilized use of the intended Aircraft.
12. Ideally the TLOF will be level, however if a slope is present, the angle and direction **should** be annotated in the HLS Directory.
13. Prior to use, the TLOF **should**, as far as is practicable, be cleared of FOD that could be blown up by the rotor blades.
14. TLOFs with sandy or dusty surfaces **should** be stabilised or covered by an approved material.
15. Snow and ice **should** be removed from the TLOF, when required.

**Obstacles**

16. Obstacles **should** be limited iaw Figure 1 as follows:
  - a. Circle 1: TLOF free of obstacles.
  - b. Circle 2: Cleared to ground level.
  - c. Circle 3: Free of obstacles over 25cm high.
17. Beyond this area, and including the approach and exits paths, any pertinent obstacles assessed during survey, **should** be published in the HLS Directory, and lit where the HLS is intended for night use.

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**Domestic Helicopter Landing Site – General Requirements**

18. The HoE may appoint themselves as HLS Custodian.
19. Whilst the HoE is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the Aeronautical Information submitted for publication in the HLS Directory is accurate, they may enlist the services of the Joint Helicopter Support Squadron (JHSS) to assist with establishing all the pertinent details and procedures for their facilities. JHSS can supply Suitably Qualified and Experienced Personnel for conducting surveys and recce of HLS surfaces, facilities, and obstacle environment.
20. It is expected that the Emergency Plan and Incident Plan will be proportionate to the classification of HLS and the expected frequency of activity. Further detail to support the creation of these plans can be found in the MAA Manual of Aircraft Post Crash and Incident Management, the MAA Manual of Air Safety, DSA02 DFRS – Defence Aerodrome Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Regulations and AP1269 Lft 12-08<sup>7</sup>.
21. An Emergency Plan will focus on immediate actions to preserve life and minimize damage in the event of an Aircraft emergency, including but not limited to: emergency contact numbers, rendezvous points, emergency services access, first aid provision<sup>8</sup>, available water supplies or fire suppression facilities<sup>7</sup> and actions in the event of fire.
22. An Incident Plan will go beyond this to broader elements of post-crash management, preservation of evidence and securing the area. It is not expected that Domestic HLS units will hold their own, full, APCIM capability and that this will be provided under call-out arrangements within the wider AoR of another unit or organization. Further guidance is available in the MAA Manual of Aircraft Post Crash and Incident Management.
23. The HoE is only responsible for publishing the appropriate frequency to use, where one is available to be nominated. If none is available, there is no requirement to establish one for a Domestic HLS.
24. Larger dimensions than those illustrated at Figure 1 may be appropriate,

<sup>7</sup> Refer to AP1269 – The RAF Manual of Medical Administration, Lft 12-08 – Guidance on the Standards of Medical Cover for Military Aerodromes.

<sup>8</sup> This may be from civilian emergency services, Defence assets or locally provisioned first aid and fire-fighting appliances.

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depending on the task being supported.

25. Whilst the dimensions of the TLOF are based on 'circle 1', it may be established as either a circle or a square / rectangle, provided the required dimensions are contained within it.

26. Where it is deemed proportionate to the activity being supported, units may consider establishing a schedule of proactive maintenance for the TLOF surface, to ensure that it remains free of harmful irregularities, defects and Foreign Object Debris (FOD).

**Regulation  
3536(2)**

**Domestic Helicopter Landing Site – Classification and Specific Requirements**

3536(2) HoEs **shall** ensure that any Domestic HLS within their AoR is correctly classified and meets the corresponding requirements.

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**Domestic Helicopter Landing Site – Classification and Specific Requirements**

27. A Domestic HLS **should** be classified iaw Table 1, and meet the corresponding requirements in Annex A. If several Domestic HLS exist within the same site, each one **should** be individually classified.

*Table 1. Domestic HLS Classifications*

Classification	Definition
<b>Group 1: Transient</b>	A surveyed area that can be used as a TLOF to facilitate a safe place for the arrival and departure of Military RW Aircraft  It will likely have other day-to-day functions.  It is not intended for use by civil RW Aircraft.
<b>Group 2: Dedicated</b>	A surveyed and permanently prepared TLOF to facilitate a safe place for the arrival and departure of Military RW Aircraft.  It is not used for other functions.  It may be used to accept civil RW Aircraft.

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**Domestic Helicopter Landing Site – Classification and Specific Requirements**

28. The classification of the HLS will determine the extent of HoE involvement in generating an assured SOE:

- a. Group 1 are typically, but not limited to, designated areas of car parks, parade squares or sports fields.
- b. Group 2 are the most regulated and will provide the most standardised and assured facility.

29. In determining whether a Group 1 facility warrants uplift to a Group 2 facility, the HoE may consider the type and frequency of activity being supported, in conjunction with SQEP advice from JHSS and / or the relevant ADH chain.

30. Civil use in the context of this RA refers to civilian owned and operated Aircraft that are not involved in a military task. However, regardless of the classification, best effort will be made to accommodate the safe use of a Domestic HLS by emergency services for operational reasons (eg – Air Ambulance, Police helicopters).

31. Full detail on Hazard management can be found in the MAA Manual of Air Safety.

**Regulation  
3536(3)**

**Domestic Helicopter Landing Site Custodian – Responsibilities**

3536(3) The Domestic HLS Custodian **shall** be responsible for the management of the HLS to support the safe operation of Aircraft.

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**Domestic Helicopter Landing Site Custodian – Responsibilities**

32. The Domestic HLS Custodian **should** as a minimum:
- a. Ensure that the required SOE is being provided and maintained, through active management of their HLS iaw this RA.
  - b. Identify Hazards and reduce them as far as reasonably practicable.
  - c. Record and accurately promulgate Hazards iaw this RA.
  - d. Establish suitable testing activity, such that they can remain assured that the Emergency and Incident plans are current and effective.
  - e. Ensure that all Air Safety Occurrences are reported, iaw RA 1410<sup>9</sup>.
  - f. Provide Auditable Assurance to the HoE of continued compliance with all applicable RAs.
  - g. Identify and monitor any temporary decision, activity or change in circumstances that results in a Hazard or change to the published services / facilities provided.
  - h. Ensure the appropriate process is followed, iaw MAA03<sup>10</sup>, where compliance cannot be achieved.

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**Domestic Helicopter Landing Site Custodian – Responsibilities**

33. HLS Custodians will assess the complexity and level of activity being supported and provide advice to the HoE as to whether the production of an Aerodrome Safe Operating Environment Manual (ASOEM), to support and enhance the management and Assurance of the HLS, is warranted.
34. Specific testing criteria and periodicity of the Emergency and Incident plans is not mandated, allowing the HLS Custodian to use their best judgement as to the most suitable and proportionate way to assure these contingencies.
35. The list of Domestic HLS Custodian responsibilities does not preclude the HoE from assigning the Domestic HLS Custodian additional responsibility that supports the safe operation of Aircraft.
36. There is no requirement for the Domestic HLS Custodian to be permanently based at the site in question. Day-to-day management of the HLS may be delegated, but the Domestic HLS Custodian retains full Responsibility.

**Regulation  
3536(4)**

**Domestic Helicopter Landing Site Custodian – Qualifications and Experience**

3536(4) The Domestic HLS Custodian **shall** be SQEP.

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**Domestic Helicopter Landing Site Custodian – Qualifications and Experience**

37. The HoE **should** determine whether a candidate is SQEP for the intended duty.
38. A Domestic HLS Custodian **should**, as a minimum, have relevant experience and / or training within any of the following:
- a. Air Operations at an Aerodrome, HLS or His Majesty's (HM) Aircraft

<sup>9</sup> Refer to RA 1410 – Occurrence Reporting and Management.

<sup>10</sup> Refer to MAA03 – Military Aviation Authority Regulatory Processes.

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Carrier.

- b. A flying Squadron.
- c. Civil Airfield management.
- d. Specific training in HLS management.
- e. Training in aviation Hazard management.

39. If none of the criteria above are met, or if the HoE otherwise judges that the candidate lacks adequate experience or training, the individual **should** attend the Aerodrome Operators Study Period (AOSP) prior to appointment.

40. A HLS Custodian **should**, as a minimum, be qualified as an Air Safety Information Management System (ASIMS) Reporter and Commentator.

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3536(4)****Domestic Helicopter Landing Site Custodian – Qualifications and Experience**

41. ASIMS training is available online via individual ASIMS accounts.

## Annex A

## Domestic HLS Specific Requirements

Requirement	Rationale	Group 1: Transient	Group 2: Dedicated
<b>Surface</b>	Enable operator awareness of the surface characteristics of the HLS.	Surface suitable for the intended Aircraft.  Surface will likely have other day-to-day uses.	Surface permanently prepared and maintained for the intended Aircraft.  The surface is not to be used for other purposes.
<b>TLOF Markings<sup>11</sup></b>	Appropriate markings to identify the TLOF and its perimeter if this is not self-evident. Additional marking requirements to be established during survey.	Optional.	Required.
<b>Wind Direction Indicator</b>	Understanding the surface wind direction and strength is critical to facilitate safe operations. Where provided, Wind Direction Indicators are to be compliant with RA 3533 <sup>12</sup> .	Optional. If not provided, this is to be published.	Required.
<b>Lighting</b>	Appropriate lighting, such as a NATO 'T' or floodlighting, is required if the HLS is available for use at Night.	Required.	Required.
<b>Marshalling</b>	A Marshaller may be required to assist with underslung load operations, or for positioning. Where provided, the Marshaller is to be SQEP.	Optional.	Optional.

<sup>11</sup> Refer to RA 3534(4): Permanent Helicopter Landing Site - Touchdown and Lift Off Markings.

<sup>12</sup> Refer to RA 3533 – Helicopter Landing Site - Indicators and Signalling Devices.

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