

Securing the Landing Zone: Walk-Around Checklist

1. Identify Landing Zone (LZ) using pre-designated LZ number and description across referenced with street address location.
2. The LZ should be a minimum of 100' by 100' on the ground
3. The ground should be firm. Check for mud, swampy areas, sand or loose gravel. Gravel can be blown by the rotor wash and could hurt bystanders or do damage to parked vehicle's paint or windshields. Loose dust or snow can create a 'white-out' condition that could be confusing to both ground and flight personnel.
4. Any slopes (slanted ground) should be avoided if possible and identified if they are excessive. Severe slopes may force the rotor blades closer to the ground on one side of the helicopter and would be a hazard to anyone approaching the aircraft from that side.
5. Personnel should walk the LZ on arrival: any loose debris should be removed and obstructions that are in the ground should be made note of i.e.; boulders, pipes, fence, trash barrels, posts, swales, ruts, stone walls etc. The obstructions may be obvious to ground personnel but may not be noticeable from the air. Whenever possible, park apparatus adjacent to obstruction.
6. The helicopter can generate winds in excess of 100 MPH. Debris in the surrounding area such as trash, construction materials, tarps, sheet plastic, plywood, children's toys, or crime scene tape, anything that can be picked up by rotor wash and become a projectile must be either removed or secured.
7. Crowds must be controlled to include curious bystanders and children. Landing at a sports field with a game in progress would require additional crowd control. All bystanders must be closely watched as they are usually unpredictable. There must be adequate personnel to surround the LZ to block off ALL entrances by vehicle or by foot.
8. Obstructions around the LZ should be noted, especially wires which are particularly difficult to see from the air. Other obstructions could include trees, telephone poles, sports field lighting, smoke stacks, boat masts, sails, satellite dishes, cranes etc. should all be passed along to aircraft.
9. Approach and departure paths should be noted for anything that could cause difficulty or hardship such as medical institutions, horse farms, or any noise sensitive areas.
10. Consideration should be given to night operations where it would not be apparent to the flight crew that the surrounding area may be noise-sensitive or have unusual items that may be affected by rotor-wash or excessive terrain features.

11. All emergency lights should be on to allow easier identification of the LZ location. Night operations work best with two emergency vehicles stationed to make an "X" with their low beams at the point of desired touchdown. Small flares, lights or cones that are light weight and not anchored will be blown out of the area and add to confusion. The driver of each vehicle should remain in the cab to turn off lights if requested to do so by flight crew.
12. A well-defined approach path for emergency personnel and vehicles should be considered so that the flight crew and vehicles will have a good line of sight view of each other. Vehicles should always remain outside the 100 ft landing area. Aircraft should always be considered dangerous whether rotors are turning or appear to be stopped. Vehicles in the vicinity of the LZ should not be in motion when the helicopter is on landing or preparing to lift off.

Once all points above are complete, LZ is then secure

13. If possible, the helicopter will land and lift off into the prevailing wind.
14. When offering directions to the incoming helicopter, the local landmarks may not be visible or known to the flight crew. "Washington Street" or "Mel's Diner" may be of little assistance for directions. However, cardinal headings (North, South etc.) have much more value. Even some large features may not be noticeable from the air at night, cemeteries, secondary roads and rivers are difficult to spot in the dark.
15. If at all possible, keep radio traffic to a minimum during final phase of landing and during lift-off.
16. **NEVER** approach the aircraft unless escorted by flight crew
17. Once on the ground, a safety officer should be assigned to watch aircraft