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HQ ANTF, IAF  
Old PHQ  
Civil Lines  
Raipur, Chhattisgarh

AFD/RAI/S 3101/1/Air

18 Oct 15

ADG ANO (CGP)

MAKING HELIPADS SUITABLE FOR NIGHT NVG OPS

1. PI refer the following:-

- (a) Our letter of even reference AFD/RAI/S 3101/1/Air dated 15 Sep 15.
- (b) Your letters H.F-13/2015-helicopter dated 16 Sep 15 and PHQ/ADGP/Nax Ops/Sec-3/F-11/D/2711/15 dated 15 Sep 15.
- (c) Joint SOP on Anti Naxal Ops (Op Triveni) between MHA and MoD (ratified vide MHA No. CF-3220071/13/MHA-AW/2014/732 dated 20 Mar 15 and MoD I.D. No. 7687SO(P)/D(Air-II)/2007 dated 24 Mar 15).

2. At present, most of the helipads continue to have inadequacies of size, dusty surface and obstructions. I have been personally interacting regularly with all the SPs to explain to them the nuances of what all is required to make the earmarked helipads suitable for NVG ops, which is based on the Joint SOP referred above (a schematic helipad layout from this SOP is again annexed for ready reference). The following may kindly be noted:-

(a) Size. The basic requirement is to have the helipad of desired dimensions (75m X 35m, with an additional 30m clear area around at the same level as the helipad surface with no obstructions).

(b) Obstruction Clearance. The details of obstruction clearance requirements have been individually explained to the SPs. The task of obstruction clearance as per the stipulations is noticeably slow and not getting the required impetus. It is requested that a reminder be issued to SPs and PDCs be ascertained.

(c) Surface.

(i) The helipad should be a "Prepared Surface", implying adequate strength to take the weight of a loaded helicopter (13-ton) and being 'dust free'. This implies dust not getting kicked up during landing/ take-off; this can blind the pilots on NVG, leading to a dangerous flight safety situation. For this, the surface can even be grassy, provided the grass layer is such that there would be no dust during helicopter operations. The SPs have projected their inability to have a grassy surface and maintaining it round the year, citing high effort and water shortage issues.

(ii) Therefore, a black top surface of required strength may suffice. However, this may be suitable for remote and rarely visited helipads. For



frequently visited helipads with regular helicopter movements, it may be cost effective in the long term to have a cemented/ concrete helipad so that the surface does not degrade/wear off. This is even more applicable for helipads where refueling facility has been provided/ catered for (Dantewada, Bijapur, Sukma, Kanker and Narayanpur) since after landing any helicopter movement on ground during turns can cause attrition to the helipad surface. The decision on the type of surface for various helipads may be taken at the appropriate level and it is reiterated that there is no insistence on a concrete surface.

3. Availability of Funds. The SPs have consistently been projecting their inability to proceed with preparing the helipad surfaces due to non-availability of required funds with them. This may kindly be looked into on top priority.

4. Helipad Relocation. In some cases the SPs have clearly stated that there is no means by which they can meet the obstruction clearance requirements since the helipad is in a confined area (usually an existing post/ unit) with buildings/ constructions next to the helipad. They have stated that construction of a new helipad in near vicinity is the only option, and this is again linked to release of funds and catering to security of the helipad. This may kindly be looked into.

5. Additional NVG Lights. The number of operative helipads in Chhattisgarh is large. For life-saving emergent casualty evacuation missions at night, relocating the NVG lights to a desired helipad may not be available as an option. While ADG (F&P) has informed that three more sets of NVG helipad lights have been requisitioned, it is requested that additional NVG lights (at least 15 additional sets) may be considered for procurement on priority.

6. The measures recommended above would facilitate an enhanced level of assurance of a successful and safe cas evac mission at night by IAF helicopters and would be a tremendous boost to our troops.

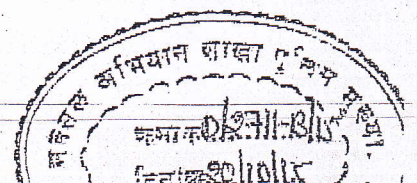
7. For consideration, please.

  
(Ajay Shukla)  
Air Commodore  
Task Force Cdr

Annexure: As Stated

Copy to: IG Ops (CRPF, Chhattisgarh)  
Air HQ (VB) (D Ops (H))  
HQ CAC IAF (Air II)  
Det Cdr (ANTF Ranchi)- For similar action

ADGP (ANO)
IGP (ANO)
DIG (ANO)
AO (ANO)





DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF HELIPAD  
AND APPROACH / TAKE OFF FUNNELS

A diagrammatic representation of an ideal helipad with prescribed dimensions is place below:

