Pleasant Valley Fire District

Standard Operating Guidelines

SOG #24 – HELICOPTER LANDING ZONES

PURPOSE: To establish a guideline for establishing a safe helicopter Landing Zone (LZ).

GUIDELINES: At an incident where a helicopter landing zone is required, the members operating there need to be aware of the proper guidelines to ensure safe helicopter operations.

1. The (LZ) needs to measure 100' x 100'. The LZ should be flat, or have a ground slope of 5 degrees or less. If the ground surface is not paved, then the shrubbery should be no higher than 24".

2. Communication should be between only the LZ Incident Commander (IC) and the helicopter on Field Ops 16. Command also needs to monitor Command 3. LZ Command also needs to notify the DC911 when the helicopter has landed and then again when the helicopter has departed.

3. The LZ should be clear of towers, trees, poles, signs, overhead wires, and any other obstacle.

4. The use of the LZ Kit is preferred; if not available the LZ should be marked as following;
   - DAYTIME - 4 cones in each corner
   - NIGHT - 4 cones in each corner with flashlight in them, or battery powered lights.

NEVER USE FLARES TO MARK LZ DUE TO POTENTIAL FIRE RISK

5. **PREPARATION OF LZ**
   - Secure all loose debris
   - If there is a large amount of loose dirt or gravel wet the area down prior to landing of helicopter

6. Stop all traffic in the area while the helicopter is landing or taking off.

7. Keep doors closed on ambulance until approached by helicopter crew.

8. Keep all spectators 500' from the LZ.

9. All emergency personnel and vehicles ***MUST*** be at least 100' from the LZ. The apparatus must be placed with the wind at its back. (Smoke will blow away from emergency personnel). At Troop K HQ landings, the engine will stage at the dumpster, at the end of the driveway to the helipad, no matter the wind direction.

10. No smoking on scene.

11. All Emergency lights should be turned off on the approach of helicopter.

12. All personnel should be in full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including eye protection, with a minimum of 2 firefighters in SCBA.

13. Foam Buckets should be on ground at pump panel, deck gun should be aimed towards the LZ, Foam eductor should be in place at pump panel and Foam Pak should be attached to a hand line. NO lines should be pulled due to the possibility of a trip hazard.

14. **APPROACHING HELICOPTER**

- Do not approach helicopter after landing unless an emergency arises.
- Never approach helicopter in non-emergency situations unless the crew signals you to.
- Always approach the helicopter with a team of 2 firefighters.
- When approaching always approach from the front or as directed by the flight crew. Always move away in the same direction.
- Always be aware of the height of the main rotor blades.
- If you have to approach on a slope always approach from downhill side.
- **NEVER WALK AROUND THE TAIL ROTOR AND ALWAYS BE AWARE OF TAIL ROTOR LOCATION.**

15. The attack on a helicopter fire will be a defensive operation. The first step should be to try and provide a means of egress for any possible survivors. Personnel also need to remember that Foam (Class B, AFFF) is the proper extinguishing agent. (Water will spread the jet fuel)