

HeliExperts International Announces Nation's First Heliport Audit and Accreditation Program

HeliExperts International (HEI) is launching the nation's first official Heliport Accreditation Program to address critical industry needs for increased heliport safety.

“There are no federal regulations regarding heliport safety, and state and local oversight is extremely varied—even non-existent in most locations,” said Ray Syms, managing member of HEI. “With the vast majority of public and private heliports containing significant safety risks, including hospitals and corporate sites, there is high potential for extremely costly and even fatal accidents, which are damaging to the heliport operator and the industry on a whole. Our program is designed to provide a solution for operators, insurance companies, and municipalities to determine heliports meet the latest safety recommendations while risks are mitigated to the highest degree possible.”

Leveraging HEI's legacy of planning and designing more than 850 heliports and work inspecting, auditing, and evaluating more than 3,000 heliports, the accreditation program includes a physical in-person audit, recommendations for risk mitigation, and full accreditation for sites that pass an initial or post-mitigation audit.

The HEI audit is built directly from the FAA's Heliport Design advisory circular and the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) fire safety guidelines for heliports, designed to ensure heliport operators achieve the lowest risk possible while maximizing safety. Those passing the audit are automatically offered accreditation. Heliport operators who mitigate any risks identified in the HEI safety audit can then apply for accreditation. Accreditation benefits include continued support by HEI to evaluate and mitigate potential new risks to the heliport, such as a third party building an obstacle into the heliport's accredited flight path.

The HEI Heliport Accreditation Program will begin a soft roll out in the second quarter of 2018 with current and past HEI customers. The full open program is planned to launch later this year.

The Need

Across the United States, state and local regulations regarding heliport design and safety range from no oversight to full regular audits from trained public auditors. Given this disparity, paired with no federal requirement that heliports meet the FAA's Heliport Design advisory circular or the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) fire safety guidelines for heliports, the vast majority of heliports are at high risk for serious accidents.

Through its partners, HEI provides a combined 150+ years of highly specialized aviation, helicopter and heliport expertise and experience in FAA, military, corporate, offshore, and air medical operations with over 75 combined years in aeronautical consulting, safety, heliport development, education, and litigation support.