

CAL-AAMS

TITLE: Air-to-Air Communications

SUBMITTED BY:

PURPOSE

To improve safety through the standardization of self-announce practices used by helicopters transiting to, from and in the vicinity of a Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) landing zone (LZ).

POLICY

CALAAMS recommends that all California HEMS programs transmit and receive on a common frequency identified for the purpose of landing and take off advisories. Use of the appropriate common frequency, combined with visual alertness and application of the following operating practices will enhance safety of flight into and out of LZ's.

This policy shall apply to all HEMS landing sites unless FAA regulations or local procedures require otherwise. For simplification purposes in this document, the term LZ will apply to all landing sites to include; scene calls, predetermined LZs, Emergency Landing Sites (ELS) and hospital helipads.

PROCEDURE

A. Frequencies:

1. 123.025 is the accepted common frequency unless the LZ is located within the boundaries of Class B, C, or D airspace or whenever a facility specific frequency is required. Examples of facility specific frequencies include private hospitals such as Stanford (130.05) or Enloe (122.85).
2. 124.30, also known as "Golden Gate Common", is used in the San Francisco Bay area. A number of facilities, such as Doctor's Hospital of San Pablo and Children's Hospital of Oakland, fall within the region covered by Golden Gate Common. Due to the large volume of non-EMS VFR aircraft in the area, Golden Gate Common should remain the preferred frequency when transiting in the Bay Area and operating in and out of those facilities.
3. For those LZs located within the boundaries of Class B, C, or D airspace, traffic separation for airborne aircraft SHOULD be provided by the controlling agency. However, the requirement to communicate on a tower frequency does not preclude the HEMS aircraft from also monitoring and/or communicating on 123.025.

B. Recommended Traffic Advisory Practices:

1. Inbound, Outbound, and Transiting traffic: Whenever practicable, and when not required to be communicating on another ATC frequency, all aircraft should continuously monitor and communicate on the appropriate common frequency listed above, from a point no less than **10** miles from the LZ.

2. It should be noted that aircraft operating to or from another nearby LZ may be making self-announce broadcasts on the same frequency. To help identify one LZ from another, the LZ name (or general location if an unnamed LZ) should be spoken at the beginning and end of each self-announce transmission.
3. Inbound traffic:
 - a. No less than 10 miles out report the name of LZ, altitude, location relative to the LZ, flight intentions, and the name of the LZ.
Example: **“John Muir Hospital, (aircraft call sign), 1,500’, 7 miles east, landing, John Muir”** or **“Doctor’s San Pablo, (aircraft call sign), 1,000’, 6 miles north transiting southeast, Doctor’s San Pablo.”**
 - b. Report turning final for the LZ. For LZs with multiple approach paths, this call will include the direction the aircraft is arriving from.
Example, **“Mendo Coast Hospital, (aircraft call sign), turning final (from the north or south as appropriate), Mendo Coast.”**
 - c. Report on the ground.
Example, **“Santa Rosa Memorial, (aircraft call sign), on the pad, Santa Rosa Memorial.”**
4. Departing traffic:
 - a. Upon startup or while running on the ground, monitor the appropriate frequency for other traffic in the area.
 - b. Prior to lifting, indicate intentions for takeoff and direction of flight.
Example: **“Delta Hospital Antioch, (Aircraft call sign), lifting or lifting in X minute(s), westbound, Delta Hospital Antioch.”**
 - c. Continuously monitor the frequency until at least 10 miles from the LZ.
5. While transiting between LZs, base, or other facilities, aircraft are encouraged to periodically self-announce call-sign, altitude, position, and heading on the appropriate common frequency, so that other aircraft transiting the area may be made aware of their presence.