

# Public Service and Media AVIATION GUIDELINES



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## **PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS BOOKLET**

SAFETY is the NUMBER ONE priority for all aircraft and ground personnel at any high profile newsworthy incident, particularly where public service and/or media aircraft are converging. The purpose and scope of this Booklet is to offer a set of standard operating procedures from which public service and media pilots can draw common ground and develop an expectation of how each will operate over a given incident. Although each incident may require a different response, this Booklet offers a basis from which further communication and dialogue may evolve with better working relationships for all. The Guidelines outlined herein are not regulatory; however, once they are agreed upon, there is a certain expectation that all pilots and their respective representatives will follow the Guidelines in the interest of aviation and ground safety for ALL personnel.

Cooperation and Communication between all pilots are essential for safe operations, ensuring that all pilots, crew members and ground personnel can complete their assigned tasks.

The material contained in this booklet is advisory and not regulatory.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

All pilots must at all times exercise sound judgment to ensure safe operations. Pilots should exercise caution when converging on a location and maintain an altitude above the scene that will preclude the possibility of impacting the integrity of the ground incident. It is suggested that media aircraft maintain an altitude of at least 1500 feet AGL to avoid impacting the operations on the ground.

Media aircraft should contact public service aircraft by radio at least two nautical miles from the scene of an incident. If public service aircraft are not on scene, media aircraft should remain at a reasonable distance from the incident, so as not to cause interference with the operation. All pilots should announce their intended arrival at least two nautical miles from the scene. When public service aircraft are on scene, media aircraft should remain approximately 500' above the highest public service aircraft and 1000' laterally from the widest orbit of the public service aircraft. In no case should a media aircraft directly overfly the incident or a public service aircraft.

In some instances, a Temporary Flight Restriction (FAR 91.137) will be requested by the agency, and imposed by the Federal Aviation Administration. Pilots should follow the procedures set forth by the FAA regarding any airspace restriction. Should the incident take place in controlled airspace, altitude and airspace restrictions dictated by ATC shall prevail. Contact should be made at least ten to twelve miles out from the center of the TFR.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MESSAGE

Fellow Aviation Professional:

The Professional Helicopter Pilots Association (PHPA) is proud to publish and distribute this booklet to all public service and media aviation professionals concerned about AIRSPACE SAFETY.

The Aviation Public Service and Media Guidelines originated several years ago after meetings between public service and media representatives revealed a lack of communication and coordination among pilots in the crowded airspace over newsworthy incidents. Everyone attending these meetings agreed that AIRSPACE SAFETY was the overriding issue and voluntary compliance with mutually accepted guidelines was a good start toward achieving success. The information contained in this booklet is a result of those meetings.

These Guidelines, however, are only effective if EVERYONE agrees to adhere to the procedures as outlined and, most important, COMMUNICATES! The key to our success as aviation professionals is our commitment to SAFETY and safe operating practices through communication, cooperation and education. The PHPA is likewise committed to aviation safety through education, discussion and a spirit of cooperation among aviation professionals. The Public Service and Media Guidelines are an example of that commitment.

Although not regulatory in nature, the Public Service and Media Guidelines provide a common set of procedural standards intended to encourage cooperation and communication specifically between public safety and media pilots.

Please distribute this booklet widely to all helicopter and fixed wing pilots who provide vital air support services to public agencies, or report on events and activities involving these same agencies. These services from both the public and private sectors are equally beneficial to the public interests.

Comments about this booklet are welcome and may be submitted to our Message Center Hotline at **(323) 929-PHPA** or via email at **info@phpa.org**.

PHPA Board of Directors

## AIRPORT FREQUENCIES

*The pilot in command is responsible for confirming the accuracy of the frequencies and telephone numbers.*

NAME	IDENT	TWR / CTAF	ATIS / AWOS
AGUA DULCE	L70	122.800	
APPLE VALLEY	APV	122.800	
AVALON/CATALINA	AVX	122.700	120.675
BAKERSFIELD/MEADOWS FLD	BFL	118.100	118.600
BANNING	BNG	122.800	
BARSTOW/BICYCLE LAKE AAF	BYS	118.175	
BIG BEAR CITY	L35	122.725	135.925
BLYTHE	BLH	122.800	120.175
BRACKETT - LA VERNE	POC	118.200	124.400
BURBANK	BUR	118.700	134.500
CABLE - UPLAND	CCB	123.000	
CAMARILLO	CMA	128.200	126.025
CAMP PENDLETON MCAS	NFG	128.775	
=> LONGRIFLE		123.200	
CARLSBAD/PALOMAR	CRQ	118.600	120.150
CHINA LAKE NAS	NID	120.150	
CHINO	CNO	118.500	125.850
COMPTON	CPM	123.050	
CORONA	AJO	122.700	132.175
DAGGET/BARSTOW	DAG	123.000	132.175
EL CENTRO NAF	NJK	119.100	
EL MONTE	EMT	121.200	118.750
FALLBROOK	L18	123.050	
FOX FIELD - LANCASTER	WJF	118.525	126.300
FULLERTON	FUL	119.100	125.050
HAWTHORNE	HHR	121.100	118.400
HEMET – RYAN	HMT	123.000	118.375
=> AIR ATTACK BASE		136.400	
HESPERIA	L26	123.000	
IMPERIAL BEACH NAS	NRS	120.650	
LONG BEACH	LGB	119.400 (N) 120.500 (S)	127.750
LOS ALAMITOS AAF	SLI	123.850	118.875
LOS ANGELES INT'L	LAX	119.800	133.800

## AIRPORT FREQUENCIES

*The pilot in command is responsible for confirming the accuracy of the frequencies and telephone numbers.*

NAME	IDENT	TWR / CTAF	ATIS / AWOS
MARCH AFB	RIV	127.650	134.750
MARCH GCA	RIV	133.500	
MIRAMAR MARINE CORPS AS	NKX	135.200	
MOJAVE	MHV	127.600	132.225
NORTH ISLAND NAS	NZY	135.100	
OCEANSIDE	OKB	123.000	127.800
ONTARIO	ONT	120.600	124.250
OXNARD	OXR	134.950	118.050
PALMDALE - PLANT 42	PMD	123.700	118.275
PALOMAR	CRQ	118.600	120.150
PERRIS	L65	122.900	
POINT MAGU NAS	NTD	124.850	125.550
RAMONA	RNM	122.725	126.325
REDLANDS	L12	123.050	123.050
RIVERSIDE	RAL	121.000	128.800
ROSAMOND	L00	122.900	
SAN BERNARDINO INT'L	SBD	119.450	124.175
=> AIR TANKER BASE		123.975	
SAN DIEGO - BROWN	SDM	126.500	132.350
SAN DIEGO - GILLESPIE	SEE	120.700	125.450
SAN DIEGO - LINDBERGH	SAN	118.300	134.800
SAN DIEGO - MONTGOMERY	MYF	119.200	126.900
SANTA ANA - JOHN WAYNE	SNA	126.800	126.000
=> TRANSITIONS 0615-2300		128.350	
SANTA BARBARA	SBA	119.700	132.650
SANTA MONICA	SMO	120.100	119.150
SANTA PAULA	SZP	122.900	
SOCAL INT'L - VICTORVILLE	VCV	118.350	109.400
THERMAL	TRM	123.000	118.325
TORRANCE	TOA	124.000	125.600

## POLICE INCIDENTS

Media aircraft should maintain a distance of 500' above and 1000' laterally from any public service aircraft involved in a pursuit or any other law enforcement activity. After radio contact is established on common air-to-air frequency (see *Common Air-to-Air Frequency, page 8*), media aircraft may be moved in closer, depending upon the circumstances of the incident. If only one public service aircraft is working the incident, media pilots should attempt to make contact with the public service pilot. The public service pilot may or may not immediately respond to the media aircraft request since the pilot may be busy in the coordination of ground units.

A vehicle pursuit is one of the most hazardous high profile police incidents handled by law enforcement ground and air units. During a pursuit, the law enforcement aircraft above the scene usually becomes the controlling unit of the pursuit, relaying vital information to the ground units. Therefore, it is crucial that the law enforcement air unit is allowed sufficient air space to maneuver and follow the pursuit. If more than one public service aircraft is over a pursuit (or other police or SWAT operation), media pilots should make radio contact with the secondary aircraft, which will be flying above the primary aircraft. Media pilots should also be alert for pursuit hand-offs from one air unit to another when pursuits cross jurisdictional boundaries. Public service pilots must ensure that hand-offs are well communicated in advance and coordinated between all pilots.

During freeway pursuits, the need for wide separation of public service and media aircraft is crucial. In most cases involving freeway pursuits, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) will be the primary ground agency. A CHP air unit may be involved in the pursuit along with an air unit from another law enforcement agency. Media aircraft **MUST** use sound judgment to remain clear of the public service aircraft following the pursuit and anticipate maintaining communication with either the primary or secondary public service aircraft.

At the conclusion of a pursuit, media aircraft should pull up and away as the law enforcement pilot and observer may become involved in directing a foot pursuit of several suspects running in different directions and/or establishing a containment to begin searching for outstanding suspects.

Many public service departments have helicopters working mountain Search and Rescue emergencies or conducting technical rescue operations. This is a very complex and dangerous operation for the pilot, rescue team and victim. Although these rescues are usually very visual for media coverage, pilot coordination is a necessity prior to entering the rescue airspace. Media pilots should contact the rescue aircraft prior to entering the immediate area. Once contact is established, media aircraft should follow any airspace traffic patterns or positions requested by public service rescue aircraft.

## FIRE AGENCY FREQUENCIES

USFS / CDF VHF AIR-TO-AIR	123.025, 122.850 123.975, 122.900	(714) 765-6870
CAL-FIRE / HEMET-RYAN	<b>122.925*</b> ( <i>see below</i> ) 123.075, 135.975, 122.575	(951) 652-2066
L.A. CITY FIRE	119.975	(818) 756-8635
L.A. COUNTY FIRE	130.700, 122.925*	(818) 890-5755
O.C. FIRE AUTHORITY	123.575 (N) 135.575 (S)	(714) 573-6200
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY	122.825, 118.950	(909) 356-3800 (909) 883-1112
VENTURA COUNTY	129.950	(805) 388-4212
MUTUAL AID (specific) (see <i>Wildland Fire</i> section)	130.200	
AIR ATTACK – BASE RAMP	123.975	
KERN COUNTY	135.975, 122.925	(661) 861-3110
ANGELES NAT'L FOREST (ANF)	135.575	
BERNARDINO NF (BDF)	136.000, 118.950	

*(\*) CalFire aircraft use 122.925 as their "guard" frequency. Radio traffic on this frequency is continuously monitored.*

## MISCELLANEOUS

EDWARDS AFB	120.700 tower	(661) 277-3510
NASA P/R		(661) 276-3446
GOOD YEAR BLIMP	132.000	(323) 770-0456
LONG RIFLE R-2533 (PENDLETON)	123.200	(760) 725-4219
USCG SEARCH & RESCUE	123.025	(310) 521-3801
L.A. CENTER		(661) 575-2077
AIR GUARD	168.625	

## COMMON AIR-TO-AIR FREQUENCY

(courtesy FAA Los Angeles Helicopter Route Chart , 6/23/2016)

Caution: At or below 2000' when operating along a line parallel to and one mile North along the 91 Freeway Corridor from West where the extension of that line intersects the beach just South of Manhattan Beach pier, East along the 91 Freeway to Prado Dam and all areas *North* of this line in the LA Basin, pilots are encouraged to make regular position reports on 123.025 when not in contact with ATC. ATC flight following is recommended.

Caution: At or below 2000' when operating along a line parallel to and one mile North along the 91 Freeway Corridor from West where the extension of that line intersects the beach just South of Manhattan Beach pier, East along the 91 Freeway to Prado Dam and all areas *South* of this line in the LA Basin, pilots are encouraged to make regular position reports on 122.85 when not in contact with ATC. ATC flight following is recommended.

## POLICE & SHERIFF FREQUENCIES

ANAHEIM P.D.	123.025	(714) 765-6870
BURBANK / GLENDALE P.D.	123.025	(818) 504-0191
CHP (Fullerton)	122.875	(714) 228-2300
HAWTHORNE P.D.	123.025	(310) 970-7022
HUNTINGTON BEACH P.D.	123.025	(714) 536-5609
LAPD - HOOPER (KMB7)	123.075	(213) 485-2600
LASD (WAG8)	122.975	(562) 421-2701
LONG BEACH P.D.	123.025	(562) 570-8726
ONTARIO P.D.	123.025	(909) 391-0615 x3634
ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFFS	122.850	(949) 252-5268
PASADENA P.D.	118.570	(626) 744-4625
RIVERSIDE P.D.	123.025	(909) 351-6116
RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF		(951) 320-8095
SAN BERN CO SHERIFF		(909) 252-4100
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFFS	129.950	(805) 388-4212



## **STRUCTURE FIRES**

Throughout the state of California, the Incident Command System is used to control and manage the response of all fire agencies to the scene of a fire. The highest ranking fire official in whose jurisdiction the fire is located, is usually the Incident Commander (IC). At larger fires, an Air Operations Coordinator could be assigned to coordinate air traffic. The Air Coordinator may be in the air or may be on the ground during major incidents, if an Air Coordinator is not at the scene, media aircraft should remain upwind and at least 1500' above the fire scene until communication is established with the Air Coordinator or fire aircraft if any are working the fire. All aircraft, both Public Service and Media, should be concerned with safety and noise abatement near the Incident Command Post and over the scene of the fire. In all cases, common sense should prevail.

Media pilots above an emergency incident can have ground media representatives contact the PIO / PSO on the ground for more information on the incident or any airspace limitations. Proper prior planning dictates that all pilots should have a current listing of radio frequencies with which they can monitor and/or communicate with public service aircraft or personnel at the fire.

Media Aircraft should maintain a minimum altitude of 1500' AGL whenever possible to avoid disturbing communications at the Incident Command Post.

## **WILDLAND BRUSH FIRES**

During wildland brush fires, safety remains the prime concern of all pilots, public service and media. The Air Attack Supervisor is responsible for directing air traffic in the immediate vicinity of the fire. All aircraft, air tankers, water dropping and command helicopters as well as media and other non-fire related public service aircraft will be under his/her supervision. The Air Attack Supervisor will coordinate aircraft firefighting operations with the I/C on the ground.

All aircraft requesting access into any fire area should first establish communications with the Air Attack Supervisor on the appropriate air-to-air frequency. This frequency should be obtained and confirmed prior to entering the affected area. Pilots should be prepared to notify the Air Attack Supervisor of their present position, altitude and heading. Pilots should also be prepared to state his/her request and identify their aircraft by type and color. The Air Attack Supervisor will want to make visual contact with your aircraft before allowing any access within the vicinity of fire operations.

Permission to enter brush fire airspace must first be obtained from the controlling agency if a Temporary Flight Restriction under FAR 91.137 is in effect.

South Ops is the primary coordinating facility for brush fire aerial firefighting operations south of Mono Lake. (951) 276-6725  
<https://gacc.nifc.gov/oscc/>  
Email: SouthOps.airspace@gmail.com

**WILDLAND BRUSH FIRES**  
(continued from previous page)

Otherwise, permission to fly into the affected area rests with the Air Attack Supervisor. Pilots should establish radio contact with Air Attack on the designated frequency at least five miles out and stay clear of the incident air traffic. It is recommended that media aircraft contact Air Attack using station name instead of N number. Public service pilots should ID by agency and inform Air Attack of the type of aircraft they are operating and who they represent.

Ideally, Air Attack prefers that media aircraft fly above Air Attack Aircraft when arriving on the incident scene. However, this will be determined on an incident-by-incident basis according to aircraft altitude and airspace restriction of the incident.

Before entering any brush fire area in which the United States Forest Service (USFS) or California Department of Forestry (CDF) aircraft are operating, media pilots should contact USFS / CDF Region III Aviation Office (phone numbers are located in the reference portion of this handbook). Region III includes Northern San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

The following is a list of frequencies that *cooperating agencies* will automatically use in the action zones during the initial attack phase in pre-specified geographic locations.

<i>East of I-605, South of SR-60, West of SR-71, North of SR-91</i>	130.200 (initial attack only) <sup>(1)</sup>
<i>Santa Susana Pass</i>	119.975 <sup>(2)</sup>
<i>San Fernando Valley</i>	119.975 <sup>(3)</sup>
<p><sup>(1)</sup> indicates an area where L.A. County Fire, Orange County Fire Authority and CDF will all be dispatched to the same fire.</p> <p><sup>(2)</sup> indicates areas where L.A. City Fire, L.A. County Fire &amp; Ventura County will all be dispatched to the same fire.</p> <p><sup>(3)</sup> indicates L.A. City Fire jurisdiction but where L.A. County Fire will also be dispatched to the same fire.</p>	

## **HAZ-MAT INCIDENTS**

During Hazardous Materials incidents, media aircraft can play an important role in providing emergency responders (usually multiple agencies) a “first view” of the incident either prior to or after their arrival on scene. The on-scene Incident Commander may require ALL aircraft to vacate the immediate area until a determination can be made relative to the hazardous material substance. If this should occur, ALL aircraft should remain at least one mile from the affected area and not descend below an altitude of 1500’ AGL while completely avoiding the cloud of smoke or vapor, if visible.

Similar to other high profile incidents, noise from hovering or orbiting aircraft may have a detrimental effect on ground operations. Pilots must be aware of their noise profile and take steps to lessen its impact on the ability of ground units to communicate. Most Haz-Mat suits are radio equipped and excessive aircraft noise makes it difficult for emergency responders to hear transmissions.

Rotor wash can also cause potentially fatal toxic clouds to be forced downward on rescuers, media, and the public. Pilots must at all times know the whereabouts of the toxic cloud in proximity to their location in the air. This is especially important during night time Haz-Mat incidents where the toxic cloud may be difficult to see.

## **MEDIA & NEWS DESKS**

KCBS-TV Ch. 2	(323) 460-3316
KNBC-TV Ch. 4	(818) 840-4321
KTLA-TV Ch. 5	(323) 460-5505
KABC-TV Ch. 7	(818) 863-7600
KCAL-TV Ch. 9	(323) 460-3316
KTTV-TV Ch. 11	(310) 584-2025
KMEX-TV Ch. 34	(310) 348-3495
KNX RADIO 1070 AM	(323) 460-3343
CITY NEWS SERVICE	(310) 481-0404

# Why Join the PHPA?

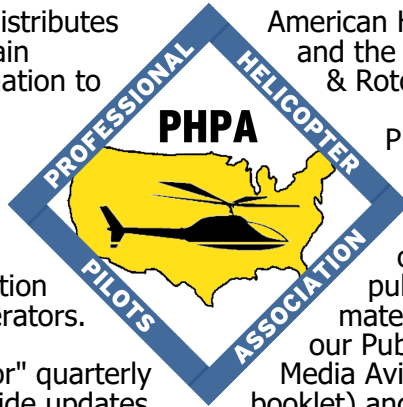
PHPA regularly distributes emails that contain important information to our members.

PHPA provides this website ([phpa.org](http://phpa.org)) which provides valuable information to helicopter operators.

PHPA "Main Rotor" quarterly newsletters provide updates about our organization, our industry and our members and local operators.

PHPA Safety Seminars allow members to gain valuable knowledge from some of the top leaders in our industry.

PHPA "Helicopter Awareness Day" events are now held in collaboration with other local helicopter air shows and events including the



American Heroes Air Show and the Wings, Wheels & Rotors Expo.

PHPA works in conjunction with public service operators to publish safety materials (including our Public Service & Media Aviation Guidelines booklet) and offer hosted events (including our annual Fire Service Briefing) where private operators can meet the firefighting and law enforcement aviation professionals and get updated information about the requirements of flying near their incidents.

PHPA provides a great opportunity to network with other aviation professionals in your community.

*By paying your Annual Membership Dues, you give us the financial foundation that allows us to continue fighting unfair or restrictive government regulations, protecting our heliports, promoting aviation safety and educating pilots, working together with the public, and securing a healthy future for our industry.*

To join, download the membership application form at:

[phpa.org/membership](http://phpa.org/membership)