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**Australian Government**  
**Civil Aviation Safety Authority**

**PROTOCOL**

# **(OPS.17) Rotorcraft performance class**

March 2025

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### Acknowledgement of country

The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our offices are located and their continuing connection to land, water and community, and pays respect to elders past, present and emerging.

Inside front cover artwork: James Baban.

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# 1. Purpose

This protocol is for the assessment of an air transport operator's policies and procedures that ensure rotorcraft conducting air transport operations are flown in a performance class that meets the requirements of Subpart 133.F of the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1998 (CASR). This protocol can also be used for the assessment of an aerial work operator who elects to fly in a performance class. This protocol enables standardisation of the assessment process.

# 2. Concept and philosophy

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) for chapters 3.1.1, 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 of section II of Annex 6 – Part III - International Operations - Helicopters (ICAO Annex 6 Part III) require a State to ensure rotorcraft conducting commercial air transport operations are operated in accordance with a code of performance established by the State of the Operator.

The code of performance should consider situations in conditions where the safe continuation of flight is not ensured in the event of a critical engine failure. In doing so, rotorcraft operations must be conducted in a manner that gives appropriate consideration to achieving a safe forced landing.

The SARPs also outline that, where rotorcraft are operated to or from heliports in a populous area, and where suitable forced landing areas are not available, the competent authority of the State in which the heliport is situated must specify requirements to enable these operations to be conducted in a manner that gives appropriate consideration to the risk associated with an engine failure.

To meet the objectives chapters 3.1.1, 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 of section II of ICAO Annex 6 Part III, Australia has designed a performance code that utilises the performance class concept and risk assessment and management processes. These are outlined in Part 133 of CASR and the associated Part 133 Manual of Standards (MOS).

# 3. Process

All administration tasks should follow standard regulatory service administration procedures (as applicable), in addition to the following:

- a. For an initial issue AOC, operators will submit the Air Operator's Certificate / Associated Approvals form (CASA-04-5515) to CASA as required under regulation 119.065 of CASR.
- b. For a significant change to an AOC, operators will submit Air Operator's Certificate / Associated Approvals form (CASA-04-5515) to CASA for an approval under regulation 119.095 of CASR.
- c. Regservices will create a case in EAP to be assigned to a CASA inspector as either the project manager or the assessor, depending on the application.
- d. Regservices and the inspector should confirm that an EAP stop alert is not active.
- e. If required, the project manager will review the application and form a project team to conduct the assessment.
- f. All associated CASA staff must be knowledgeable of, and competent with, Principle (OPS.17), which provides details for the assessment of an initial issue AOC or a significant change to an existing AOC.
- g. The relevant sections (determined by scope) of Worksheet (OPS.17) must be completed by the CASA inspector and saved as a PDF document in RMS, including:
  - i. the assessment summary
  - ii. the approval data sheet.
- h. If the application is a significant change, the inspector must complete the relevant section on the approval data sheet and provide the revision details for the exposition.
- i. The inspector must complete EAP in accordance with the EAP OAS Case Management - Regulatory Oversight Division (ROD) handbook (CASA-03-550).

The assessment must be endorsed by an independent person, see section 3.1 of this Protocol

## 3.1 Recommendation endorsement

All recommendations must be endorsed by a separate person, normally a Manager Regulatory Services, prior to the delegate issuing the authorisation.

The Manager Regulatory Services may assign the endorsement to another inspector.

The role of the endorser is to:

- ensure all sections of the worksheets been completed
- the assessment summary page has been completed
- the approval data sheet has been completed
- all worksheets and relevant documents have been filed in RMS
- the "Assessment" section of EAP has been fulfilled
- the "Create recommendation" section of EAP has been fulfilled

If satisfied the endorser will complete the "Endorse recommendation" section of EAP and forward the task to the delegate.

If the assessing inspector holds the delegation for the authorisation, they can issue the authorisation.

## 4. List of supplements

Only the following supplements may be used in support of this protocol. The most recently approved versions will be found on the CASA intranet website. Approved forms are located on CASA's external website.

- [Principle \(OPS.17\) Rotorcraft performance class assessment](#)
- [Worksheet \(OPS.17\) Rotorcraft performance class](#)

## 5. Scope

This protocol is for the assessment of an operator's exposition/operations manual to ensure its rotorcraft performance policy and associated procedures:

- establish safe and compliant operations, by setting out the operator's requirements for compliance with any mandated or elected operational performance requirements applicable to their operations
- effectively inform the operator's crew members how these requirements are to be carried out in their operations.

## 6. Competency requirements

To conduct the assessment, flying operations inspectors must have successfully completed the foundation training and advanced regulatory assessment training programs, and meet the following experience requirements:

- for performance class 1, 2 or 2 with exposure – have operational experience in the conduct of multi-engine rotorcraft operations
- if a flying operations inspector's experience is in single-engine rotorcraft, assessment is limited to performance class 3.

Flying operations inspectors must conduct their first assessment under the observation of a qualified inspector.

## 7. Associated legislation

**Table 1. Legislation associated with this protocol**

Document	Title
Part 11 of CASR	Regulatory administrative procedures
Part 91 of CASR	General Operating and Flight Rules
Part 119 of CASR	Australian air transport operations—certification and management
Part 133 of CASR	Australian air transport operations—rotorcraft
Part 138 of CASR	Aerial work operations

## 8. Guidance references

**Table 2. Guidance material relevant to this protocol**

Document	Title
AC 1-01	Understanding the legislative framework
AC 1-02	Guide to the preparation of expositions and operations manuals
AC 11-04	Approvals under CASR Parts 91,103,119,121,129,131,132,133,135,138 and 149 (including MOS)
AC	AC 133-01 Performance class operations (and Associated documents)
AC	AC 133-02 Performance Class 2 with exposure operations (and associated documents)
Part 133 AMC/GM	Australian air transport operations - rotorcraft
Part 138 AMC/GM	Aerial work operations

## 9. ICAO references

**Table 3. ICAO references applicable to this protocol**

Document	Title
Annex 6 Part III	Operation of Aircraft – Part III - International Operations - Helicopters
Annex 8	Airworthiness of Aircraft
Annex 14 Volume II	Aerodromes – Volume II – Heliports
Doc 9261	Heliport Manual
Doc 10110	Helicopter Code of Performance Development Manual

## 10. Revision history

Amendments/revisions of this protocol are recorded below in order of most recent first.

**Table 4. Revision history table**

Version No.	Date	Parts/Sections	Details
1.1	March 2025	Section 3	Addition of section 3.1, recommendation endorsement.
1.0	August 2023	All	First release