



# Learning Event



## WORKING OUTDOORS

**HAZARD**  
Environmental  
(wind)

**Person in  
Line of Fire**

**CONSEQUENCES**

**Actual:** No harm to persons

**Potential:** This could have caused a fatality

### WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO MANAGE LINE OF FIRE RISKS CAUSED BY HAZARDOUS WEATHER CONDITIONS?

#### What Happened?

As stormy weather approached a remote airfield, a helicopter pilot drove a light vehicle onto the airfield apron to relocate ground support equipment (a motorised heliporter) to prevent damage from imminent rain. A 1,800kg helicopter parked on the apron spun 90° during a high wind gust and the tail boom struck the vehicle, which was being driven outside the rotor disc area. The horizontal stabiliser on the tail boom penetrated the vehicle's front windscreen, narrowly missing the driver.



#### Why did it Happen?

- **Normalised deviation** - ground support equipment (GSE) was stored outside on the apron when not in use rather than in the designated shelter area due to:
  - difficulty in using it over a long distance and on uneven ground (difficult to move / battery life)
  - no power supply available at the shelter to charge it, but there was power on the apron
- **Procedures** – Operator's local Standard Operating Procedure did not include:
  - instruction on the storage of equipment to protect it from the effects of weather or weather changes.
  - a requirement to check the weather forecast throughout the day, even though the aircraft was stored outside.
- **Rapid change in weather conditions** - wind speed gusts increased from 35 km/h to 117 km/h within a 7 minute period.
- **Hazard identification and risk assessment** – as stormy weather approached the pilot left the shelter to move GSE, putting himself in the line of fire.

#### What did they Learn?

- New GSE procured to improve stability of aircraft when moving and increase battery life.
- Procedures amended to include adverse weather policy and requirement of parking GSE under shelter when not in use.

#### Ask yourself or your Crew:

- Are you involved in airfield operations? Do your Standard Operating Procedures include instruction on the storage of equipment to protect from effects of weather or weather changes?
- What controls do you have at your workplace to manage risks caused by hazardous weather conditions? Do they include restrictions on vehicle and people movements and types of operational activities allowed?

#### IOGP Life-Saving Rules

- ✓ Obtain authorisation before deviating from procedures
- ✓ Be positioned to avoid moving objects
- ✓ Stop and reassess if conditions change



#### Further information:

Safer Together –  
Line of Fire Portal



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