FAA FINAL RULE ADDRESSES HELICOPTER AIR AMBULANCE & OTHER OPERATORS

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has issued a final rule that requires helicopter operators, including air ambulances, to have stricter flight rules and procedures, improved communications, training, and additional on-board safety equipment. The rule represents the most significant improvements to helicopter safety in decades and responds to government and industry concern over continued risk in helicopter operations. All U.S. helicopter operators, including air ambulances, are required to use stricter flying procedures in bad weather. This will provide a greater margin of safety by reducing the probability of collisions with terrain, obstacles or other aircraft. Within 60 days, all operators will be required to use enhanced procedures for flying in challenging weather, at night, and when landing in remote locations. Within three years, helicopter air ambulances must use the latest on-board technology and equipment to avoid terrain and obstacles, and within four years, they must be equipped with flight data monitoring systems.

This rule is effective April 22, 2014. For more information go to https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2014/02/21/2014-03689/helicopter-air-ambulance-commercial-helicopter-and-part-91-helicopter-operations