



Interagency Aviation TECH BULLETIN



No. IATB 17-01

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Subject: Clarification of the HOGE Power Check requirement

Distribution: All Helicopter Operations

Discussion: This is to provide clarification of the purpose and use of the HOGE power check task listed in the Interagency Helicopter Pilot Practical Test Standards (IHPPTS).

The following NTSB recommendations following the accident in Weaverville, CA in 2008 was;

(A-10-163) Require a hover-out-of-ground-effect power check to be performed before every takeoff carrying passengers from Heli-spots in confined areas, pinnacles, and ridgelines.

The Forest Service action plan for this recommendation is;

Require the performance of hover-out-of-ground (HOGE) power checks for all take-offs associated with pinnacles, ridgelines and confined areas that prevent level acceleration through effective translational lift (ETL). This requirement will be placed in the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide (IHOG).

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The task was developed and inserted into the IHPPTS in 2012. Since the Helitack/Passenger transport endorsement is a one-time endorsement, it was found to be possible that some pilots have been missed on being evaluated and understanding the requirement for the HOGE power check task. There is no separate endorsement for the HOGE Power check. The PTS task below is the required maneuver that must be completed when carrying agency personnel on board type 2, 3 aircraft.

A. TASK: HOVER-OUT-OF-GROUND-EFFECT (HOGE) POWER CHECK

OGE POWER CHECK: TAKEOFF

1. Do not allow drift to exceed 10 feet during the ascent or while at a hover.
2. Maintain heading ± 10 degrees.
3. Perform a hover above the IGE altitude established in the performance charts.
4. Determine if the aircraft OGE power, obstacle clearance and controllability are sufficient.
5. Perform a proper takeoff, safely clear obstructions
6. Maintains aircraft power within operating limits.

If OGE power is NOT available:

1. Do not allow drift to exceed 10 feet during the descent.
2. Do not exceed 300 feet per minute during the vertical descent.
3. Reduce payload prior to next attempted takeoff.

The OGE power check will be performed for either the takeoff or landing, whichever is most restrictive.

1. Objective. To determine that the applicant:

- a. Checks the load calculation to ensure environmental conditions are accurate.
- b. Positions the helicopter in the vicinity of the takeoff point and in the direction of takeoff.
- c. Conducts an in-ground power check. Determines available power margin.
- d. Maintains within normal operating limits.

2. **Action.** The inspector will ask the applicant to:
- Demonstrate knowledge of the HOGE power check operations to determine that the applicant's knowledge meets the objectives.
 - Perform the HOGE power check operation to determine that the applicant's performance meets the objectives.

OGE POWER CHECK: ARRIVAL

- Objective.** Determine that the applicant exhibits knowledge of current conditions, load calculation, and aircraft performance.
- Action.** The inspector will ask the applicant to establish an OGE hover to the following standards:
 - Zero ground speed into the wind.
 - Stable hover, verifies minimum 10% power margin available.
 - Greater than 200 feet of obstacle clearance for escape.
 - At or above the elevation in conditions similar to the site where OGE maneuvers are to be performed.
 - Establish a positive rate of climb without transitioning to directional flight.

Night or NVG Considerations

- Select an area with good ground contrast and several reference points that are of the same height or higher than the OGE hover. Under NVGs, this procedure helps in maintaining a constant altitude and position over the ground.
- Maintain proper scanning techniques to avoid becoming spatially disoriented.

Helicopter Inspector Pilots (HIP) were required to start evaluating this task once the IHPPTS was signed by leadership in 2012. Therefore, all aviation missions that involve carrying agency personnel, shall insure that this task is adhered to in the appropriate phase of the mission. This is being considered for contractual language.

For questions, contact Tom Cook, USFS National Helicopter Standardization Pilot thomascook@fs.fed.us or Arlyn Miller, DOI-OAS National Helicopter Specialist, arlyn_miller@ios.gov or any agency Helicopter Inspector Pilot.

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