

be flown and visibility is at least 1 SM, but never less than the minimum required for the approach to be flown. If no instrument approach procedure has been published for the alternate airport, the ceiling and visibility minima are those allowing descent from the MEA, approach, and landing under basic VFR.

Part 135 Operators

Part 135 operators are not required to file an alternate if, for at least one hour before and one hour after the ETA, the ceiling is at least 1,500 feet above the lowest circling approach minimum descent altitude (MDA). If a circling instrument approach is not authorized for the airport, the ceiling must be at least 1,500 feet above the lowest published minimum or 2,000 feet above the airport elevation, whichever is higher. For the IAP to be used at the destination airport, the forecasted visibility for that airport must be at least 3 SM or 2 SM more than the lowest applicable visibility minimums, whichever is greater.

Alternate landing minimums for flights conducted under 14 CFR Part 135 are described in the OpSpecs for that operation. All helicopters operated under IFR must carry enough fuel to fly to the intended destination, fly from that airport to the filed alternate, if required, and continue for 30 minutes at normal cruising speed.

Helicopter Instrument Approaches

Many new helicopter IAPs have been developed to take advantage of advances in both avionics and helicopter technology.

Standard Instrument Approach Procedures to an Airport

Helicopters flying standard instrument approach procedures (SIAP) must adhere to the MDA or decision altitude for Category A airplanes and may apply the 14

97.3 Symbols and Terms Used in Procedures

- b) (1) “Copter procedures” means helicopter procedures with applicable minimums as prescribed in §97.35 of this part. Helicopters may also use other procedures prescribed in Subpart C of this part and may use the Category A minimum descent altitude (MDA) or decision height (DH). The required visibility minimum may be reduced to ½ the published visibility minimum, but in no case may it be reduced to less than one-quarter mile or 1,200 feet RVR.

Figure 7-8. Part 97 excerpt.

CFR Part 97.3 (d-1) rule to reduce the airplane Category A visibility by half but in no case less than 1/4 SM or 1,200 RVR.

[Figure 7-8] The approach can be initiated at any speed up to the highest approach category authorized; however, the speed on the final approach segment must be reduced to the Category A speed of less than 90 KIAS before the MAP in order to apply the visibility reduction. A constant airspeed is recommended on the final approach segment to comply with the stabilized approach concept since a decelerating approach may make early detection of wind shear on the approach path more difficult. [Figure 7-9]

When visibility minimums must be increased for inoperative components or visual aids, use the Inoperative Components and Visual Aids Table (provided in the front cover of the U.S. Terminal Procedures) to derive the Category A minima before applying any visibility reduction. The published visibility may be increased above the standard visibility minima due to penetrations of the 20:1 and 34:1 final approach obstacle identification surfaces (OIS). The minimum visibility required for 34:1 penetrations is ¾ SM and for 20:1 penetrations 1 SM, which is discussed in chapter 5 of this handbook. When there are penetrations of the final approach OIS, a visibility credit for approach lighting systems is not allowed for either airplane or helicopter procedures that would result

Helicopter Use of Standard Instrument Approach Procedures			
Procedure	Helicopter Visibility Minima	Helicopter MDA/DA	Maximum Speed Limitations
Standard	The greater of: one half the Category A visibility minima, ¼ statute mile visibility or 1,200 RVR unless annotated (Visibility Reduction by Helicopters NA.)	As published for Category A	The helicopter may initiate the final approach segment at speeds up to the upper limit of the highest Approach Category authorized by the procedure, but must be slowed to no more than 90 KIAS at the MAP in order to apply the visibility reduction.
Copter Procedure	As published	As published	90 KIAS when on a published route/track.
GPS Copter Procedure	As published	As published	90 KIAS when on a published route, track, or holding, 70 KIAS when on the final approach or missed approach segment. Military procedures are limited to 90 KIAS for all segments.

Figure 7-9. Helicopter use of standard instrument approach procedures.