

Summary guidelines

Helicopter and aircraft operations

1. Wildlife

- ✓ Helicopters and small aircraft should not land or fly within 2000 meters horizontal and 2000 meter vertical separation of concentrations (20 or more animals) of birds and seals.
- ✓ When helicopters or aircraft are to be used closer to colonies/rookeries than the above stipulated 2000 meters, they should preferably not be used during incubation and weaning.
- ✓ All helicopters and aircraft should maintain a 300 meter vertical and horizontal separation limit above and around whales.
- ✓ If weather conditions make it impossible to maintain the minimum separations, then the flight should be postponed if possible.
- ✓ When approaching land, a flight path as low to the horizon as possible should be chosen. Seabirds are more alarmed by helicopter and aircraft above them than low to the horizon.
- ✓ Helicopters and small aircraft should always land downwind of wildlife concentrations to minimise disturbance due to noise, dust and exhaust fumes.
- ✓ In unfamiliar areas care should always be taken in order to avoid flying over concentrations of wildlife.

2. Lakes

- ✓ Helicopters and small aircraft should avoid flying over known lakes at altitudes of less than 500 meters or operate upwind of lakes, even when frozen, to prevent dust and exhaust fumes from settling on lake surfaces.

3. Vegetated areas

- ✓ Helicopters and aircraft should not land on, or immediately upwind of, vegetated areas, this in order to avoid physical damage to, or dust and exhaust fumes settling on vegetation.

4. Station Areas

- ✓ See the site specific guidelines pertaining to use of helicopters and aircraft at the Nordic stations

5. Protected Areas and Managed Areas

- ✓ Most Antarctic Protected and Managed Areas have strict regulations with respect to helicopters and aircraft. Before approaching, flying over or landing in a designated Protected or Managed Area, consult the management plan for the site in question.

6. Refueling and Maintenance

- ✓ Scheduled refueling and aircraft maintenance work should whenever possible be undertaken at fixed sites. At the Nordic stations these fixed sites are equipped with an absorptive mat or other foundation that will prevent large and small spills from reaching the ground.
- ✓ Refueling is not to occur in Protected Areas unless such action is permitted through the management plan.
- ✓ Refueling should not occur near concentrations of wildlife, lakes or vegetated areas unless helicopter or aircraft has been permitted to land near such areas in association with approved research.
- ✓ Fuel drums and other equipment must be removed from field sites at the conclusion of the refueling and maintenance operations.
- ✓ All helicopters and aircraft are to have the following equipment available in order to clean up spills from the refueling/maintenance operations:
 - ◇ absorption mats/pillows
 - ◇ plastic bags to dispose of soiled equipment

