



SHOULDER MEASUREMENT

Passenger Size FAQs

January 2015

From 1st April 2015, the CAA will prohibit helicopter operators from carrying passengers on offshore flights, except in response to an offshore emergency, whose body size, including required safety and survival equipment, is incompatible with the nearest authorised underwater escape exit.

What does this mean for me? This is a requirement for all helicopter passengers travelling offshore in the UK. All passengers should be measured by the 1st April 2015 to make sure their size is compatible with the nearest authorised underwater escape exit. Helicopter passengers with a shoulder width of more than 55.9cm (22") will be classified as extra broad (XBR), while those with a shoulder width of 55.9cm or less will be classed as 'regular'. At least 30% of seats on all helicopter types are suitable for XBRs. With good planning, there should never be an issue for seats.

What will be measured? The Passenger Size workgroup has consulted with the CAA, members of the workforce, employers and academic experts to decide what the best measurement process will be. The group has concluded that a passenger's shoulder width is the most reliable and appropriate measure of body size in terms of establishing compatibility with the size of the nearest exit. Unlike the shoulder which is a musculoskeletal dimension, the abdomen can change shape significantly in response to compression and neither this, body weight or BMI can be considered an accurate reflection of a person's compatibility with an exit.

How will I be measured? A group of specifically-trained trainers will be deployed throughout the UK to train measurers, who will be medics and occupational health professionals from the offshore community. We hope that every medic on manned installations will be trained by February to allow them to measure the offshore workforce. Measurements will be taken with an approved set of callipers and be recorded centrally into VANTAGE, by the measurer. This will allow every flight to be planned in advance in accordance with available seats. Onshore occupational health professionals will also be trained for non-core and office-based personnel.

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When will I be measured? The action in CAP1145 mandated by CAA Safety Directive SD-2014/002 comes into effect on 1st April 2015 so helicopter passengers must be measured before this date. The trainers will be trained in January to allow them to train the measurers as soon as possible. As soon as a measurer has been trained, he or she can begin to measure offshore workers. Two sets of callipers will be issued to each offshore installation and to onshore occupational health professionals. This gives eight weeks to measure approximately 27,000 core offshore workers; bearing in mind we have a peak workforce of approximately 62,000. Measurements will not be taken on the same day as a departure flight as it doesn't give enough time to plan helicopter seating.

What should I wear for being measured? You should either be topless or wear either a sleeveless top for being measured. It is important that the measurer can access your upper arm when they are taking measurements so they make the measurement at the correct position.

Will survival suits and clothing affect the measurement? No, the size of survival suits and clothing has been incorporated into the 55.9cm measurement.

Will this affect the BOSIET? No, but one of the recommendations within CAP1145 is to review the frequency and fidelity of survival training. Members of the Passenger Size workgroup are involved in the current BOSIET review run by OPITO and will feed all relevant information into it.

How reliable are the people who are taking the measurements? The initial trainers will be trained by Dr. Arthur Stewart who is an expert in this field. He will host seven half-day workshops in January for up to eight trainers at one time. The courses will cover the right way to obtain accurate measurements, how to accurately record the information and how to deliver training to other measurers. A measurement error margin has been included in the 55.9cm criteria. All accredited measurers will be trained by one of the aforementioned trainers. As a result, we are confident that all the measurers will be capable of accurately recording shoulder width measurements.

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How will this affect the Helideck crew? The main responsibility for the helideck crew will be to ensure that XBR passengers sit in the allocated XBR seats. All XBR passengers will be recorded in the flight manifest and will have a checked armband which will match a checked hood on the XBR seats on each aircraft. We will also ensure that all relevant training courses will be updated to reflect this change and work with OPITO to address this.

Can I appeal my measurement if I think it's wrong? If you feel that your measurement is incorrect you should contact your HR department as part of your normal HR processes.

What does it mean if I'm an XBR? XBR passengers will be seated in an allocated XBR seat. These seats will be identified by a black and white checked pattern on the headrests. This will match a black and white checked armband which XBR passengers will be given at heliport check-in desks. These armbands should be worn over survival suits and will help heli-admin crew easily ensure that everyone is in the correct seats.

What is an SXBR? This stands for Super Extra Broad. If your shoulder measurement is greater than the diagonal measurement of a 68.6cm, you should attend a course in which you will undergo a series of tasks. If these tasks are completed successfully, you will be classed as an XBR. If you are unable to perform these tasks to a satisfactory level, you will only be able to fly in helicopters that have a Type III sized exit which has a measurement greater than 68.6cm.

What is the difference between a regular seat and an XBR seat? The only difference between a regular seat and an XBR seat is its location within the aircraft. XBR seats are adjacent to a Type IV or Type III exit, but not necessarily a window seat.

What if too many XBRs turn up for the same flight? With good planning, this should not be the case. Approximately 30% of the seats on an aircraft in the UK fleet are suitable for XBRs. Vantage will not allow you book more people on the aircraft than there are designated XBR seats. Regular passengers can sit anywhere on the aircraft – including the XBR allocated seats if they are not occupied.

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