

Sierra – Sacramento Valley EMS Agency Program Policy			
HEMS Aircraft Quality Management			
	Effective: 04/01/2026	Next Review: 10/2028	621
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PURPOSE:

To establish HEMS aircraft quality management requirements.

AUTHORITY:

- A. HSC, Division 2.5, § 1797.204, 1797.220 and 1798.
- B. CCR, Title 22, Chapters 4, 7 & 10.

POLICY:

- A. Records
 - 1. HEMS aircraft providers shall submit patient care data as required by S-SV EMS policies.
 - 2. HEMS aircraft providers shall submit dispatch/flight records to S-SV EMS for quality management and/or investigative purposes upon request.
- B. Emergency Medical Services Quality Improvement Program (EMSQIP):
 - 1. HEMS aircraft providers shall develop, implement, and maintain an EMSQIP, which is approved by S-SV EMS.
 - 2. The EMSQIP shall be designed to objectively, systematically and continuously monitor, assess and improve the quality and appropriateness of patient care and safety. The EMSQIP indicators should be tracked and trended to determine compliance with established thresholds as well as reviewed for potential issues.
 - 3. When the EMSQIP identifies a need for improvement, the HEMS aircraft provider shall develop, in cooperation with other EMS system participants when applicable, a performance improvement action plan. If the area identified as needing improvement includes system clinical issues, collaboration is required with the provider’s medical director and the S-SV EMS medical director.
 - 4. The EMSQIP shall be reviewed annually for appropriateness to the operation of the HEMS aircraft provider. A summary of this review, including how the provider’s EMSQIP addressed the program indicators, shall be provided to S-SV EMS.
 - 5. HEMS aircraft providers are responsible for conducting initial and recurring planned/structured safety training to public safety agencies and hospital personnel who interface with their medical services. This training at a minimum shall include:

- a. Identifying, designating, and preparing an appropriate landing zone (LZ).
 - b. Personal safety in and around the helicopter for all ground personnel.
 - c. Procedures for day/night operations, conducted by the medical team, specific to the aircraft.
 - d. High and low reconnaissance.
 - e. Two-way communications between helicopter and ground personnel to identify approach and departure obstacles and wind direction.
 - f. Approach and departure path selection.
 - g. Procedures for the pilot to ensure safety during ground operations in a LZ with or without engines running.
 - h. Crash recovery procedures specific to the aircraft make and model must minimally include:
 - i. Location of fuel tanks.
 - ii. Oxygen shut-offs in cockpit and cabin.
 - iii. Emergency egress procedures.
 - iv. Aircraft battery – stay away from it.
 - v. Emergency shut-down procedures.
 - i. Education regarding “weather shopping” must be included.
- Safety training records shall be submitted to S-SV EMS as part of the annual EMSQIP update.
6. Appropriate HEMS aircraft provider management and clinical representatives shall participate in S-SV EMS regional committee meetings and other EMS activities that affect the region.

C. HEMS Aircraft Utilization Review:

1. HEMS aircraft scene calls will be routinely reviewed by S-SV EMS staff to evaluate appropriate utilization, deviation from applicable policies/protocols, dispatch trends and to assess EMS system management.
2. S-SV EMS may select a committee to systematically review HEMS aircraft scene incidents for appropriate utilization and adherence to applicable policies/protocols.