

South Georgia Habitat Restoration Project: Phase 1

Crash Recovery Plan

South Georgia Heritage Trust

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Overview

Two light helicopters will be employed to spread bait during each year of the South Georgia Habitat Restoration Project. There is a very small risk of a helicopter making an uncontrolled landing during this operation, resulting in the machine being sufficiently damaged such that it cannot fly again and is written off. This document sets out the planned response to this scenario.

This Plan assumes that the immediate aftermath of a crash (possibly including the recovery of passengers) has passed, and that the crash site is stable. Accident investigation procedures will take place as appropriate prior to recovery operations (see Search and Rescue Plan). Any environmental damage caused by the accident will have already occurred. Crash recovery operations will commence when adequate resources are available and when it is safe to do so. This may occur weeks or months after the event.

Decision making and control

A team comprising the Project Director (Leader), Assistant Project Director, Chief Pilot (or 2nd pilot in his absence), Government representative and KEP Base Commander will meet to discuss and agree a plan for recovery of a crashed aircraft, and when would be appropriate to make the attempt. The circumstances of a crash (such as elevation, proximity to a beach, distance to KEP) are so variable that it is not productive to make any firm plans in advance of the situation arising. Once the recovery has been initiated, this group will meet daily until the task has been completed.

Objective

The aim is to remove all the material of the crashed aircraft from the site in a safe manner and later dispose of it in an appropriate way.

Methodology

Each of the two helicopters deployed during this work is capable of lifting the other if they are stripped down to bare essentials and the tail boom removed, so the crash recovery effort will be focussed on the use of the second helicopter. This aircraft will lift personnel and any

necessary equipment to the crash site, and will lift all material from the site with underslung strops or cargo nets. Prior to removal, any recoverable fuel or oil will be put into metal drums, sealed and then underslung back to King Edward Point for proper disposal.

Once the crash debris has been recovered from the site, it will be stored at Grytviken at a location agreed with the Government representative. If one or more shipping containers are immediately available, these will be utilised. If not, any debris that might be dispersed by wind will be housed in a suitable building - possibly the hangar - until containers can be made available. All debris will subsequently be shipped to either the UK or to the Falkland Islands for suitable disposal.

N.B. In the event that the second helicopter is not available for crash recovery, it is likely that recovery of all but small debris will have to be postponed until a suitable helicopter is available - perhaps in a subsequent season.

Environmental considerations

The circumstances of a crash are such that any environmental damage will have already occurred before recovery is attempted. The recovery team will seek to avoid or minimise any further spillage of fuel or lubrication oils by removing any that are recoverable, but otherwise will concentrate on collecting and removing all debris from the site.

Relevant literature

SGHT 2010a. Environmental Impact Assessment for the eradication of introduced rodents from South Georgia. South Georgia Heritage Trust. Available from the SGHT office & website.

SGHT 2010b. Operational Plan for the eradication of rodents from South Georgia: Phase 1. Version 3. South Georgia Heritage Trust. Available from the SGHT office & website.

SGHT 2010c. Search and Rescue Plan for South Georgia Habitat Restoration Project: Phase 1. South Georgia Heritage Trust. Available from the SGHT office & website.