SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT
SPECIAL OPERATIONS DIVISION

AIR SUPPORT UNIT
OPERATIONS MANUAL

2026

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10.1 LETTERS OF AGREEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the San Diego Police Department Air Support Unit is to provide aerial support and expertise for the organization's patrol, investigative and administrative needs.

The goal of the Air Support Unit is to enhance the safety of the community and police personnel through the strategic deployment of airborne technologies. The Unit strives to increase the safety of officers, as well as improve their effectiveness and efficiency through the timely use of properly equipped helicopters.

The Air Support Unit's operations manual exists to set forth rules, guidelines and expectations for the safe operation of department aircraft. Neither this document, nor even a collection of documents, can outline every conceivable event that may befall an aviator. The intent of this manual is to provide guidance for compliance with specific requirements and generally accepted aviation procedures.

This manual is supplemented by Federal, State and local regulations, and by San Diego Police Department Orders, Announcements and Procedures. Together these, along with written and verbal communications, constitute the nucleus for the safe conduct of Air Support Unit flight operations.

SECTION ONE

PURPOSE AND AUTHORITY

1.1 PURPOSE

This publication presents a consolidation of information, procedures, rules and guidelines for the operation of the San Diego Police Department Air Support Unit. It compliments existing Department Procedures and Policies, Manufacturer's Flight Manuals, Federal Aviation Regulations, and other pertinent information relating to flight operations.

While it provides the best possible operating instructions under most conditions, it is not a substitute for sound judgment.

This Operations Manual has the same authority as a Department Order and is the definitive authority for the San Diego Police Department Air Support Unit.

1.2 DISTRIBUTION

The latest version of this manual will be available in the Department Resource Library. The Unit Captain, Lieutenant, Sergeants and all Officers will receive email notification of all revisions.

1.3 REVISIONS

Revisions of this Operations Manual will be as changes in regulations, policies, or procedures occur. All employees are encouraged to submit written or verbal suggestions for manual changes that will increase the efficiency, effectiveness, or safety of Unit operations.

SECTION TWO

AIR SUPPORT UNIT GENERAL FUNCTIONS

2.1 UNIT FUNCTION

Generally, helicopters will be used in direct support of patrol operations. The Air Support Unit is responsible for, but not limited to:

A. Providing air support to patrol operations

B. Providing the following special air support functions to units of the Department for the accomplishment of their missions:

1. Providing surveillance for investigative units;

2. Flying photographic missions as required for gathering evidence, planning, critiquing, and surveying;

3. Transportation of detectives and other Department personnel, when appropriate;

4. Providing aerial security of V.I.P. and foreign dignitaries as required;

5. Search for lost or stranded persons and/or suspects; and,

6. Any other missions deemed necessary by the Chief of Police.

C. Providing assistance to incident commanders during critical incidents, unusual occurrences and special events.

1. Provide downlink video for incident commanders at established critical incidents or special events.

2. Provide an aircraft when available to serve an aerial command post for incident commanders during unusual occurrences.

SECTION THREE

UNIT ORGANIZATION

3.1 ASSIGNMENT

Members of the Air Support Unit will be assigned to Special Operations Division.

A. Operationally, the Unit is budgeted for two sergeants and 12 officers, for a total of 14 sworn personnel, with ten pilots and all Unit members performing the duties of tactical flight officer (TFO).
B. Sergeants who are designated unit pilots-in-command and/or TFOs are authorized to fill in as a pilot and/or TFO on an as needed basis.
C. Three civilian mechanics are contracted to perform required aircraft maintenance.

3.2 CAPTAIN

The Air Support lieutenant reports to the captain of Special Operations Division.

3.3 LIEUTENANT

The lieutenant is the Commanding Officer of the Air Support Unit (ASU) and in charge on all matters related to the operational readiness of the Air Support Unit.
The ASU lieutenant will be responsible for the following:

A. Ensuring the operational readiness of the Air Support Unit and overseeing all aspects of unit operations
B. Maintaining high morale and motivation of the members of the Air Support Unit
C. Direct supervision of ASU sergeants
D. Ensure the Air Support Unit is in compliance with all Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations and ASU flight standards and that proper documentation is kept in compliance with Federal Aviation Regulation Part 61 (FAR Part 61)
E. Overall responsibility for both the ASU maintenance program as well as the ASU training program
F. Ensure all inspections required by the FAA, San Diego Police Department, Airbus Helicopters and the contract maintenance company are accurate, complete, and in compliance
G. Administer, inspect, plan and budget yearly for the Air Support Unit
    1. Manage existing long-term contracts for aircraft maintenance and aviation fuel.
    2. Evaluate new and existing purchase orders for potential savings by entering into long term contracts.

3. Work with fiscal and City of SD Purchasing and Contracting during the contract process.

3.4 SERGEANTS

The Air Support Unit sergeants are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Unit. Those duties include:

A. Supervise all ASU personnel, equipment, and maintenance.

B. Coordinate training with the Chief Pilot for personnel as required. The sergeant is the final authority regarding Unit training requirements and flight standards.

C. Ensure all Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) mandated training parameters are met in the training plan for all aircraft crew members.

D. Ensure all crew currency requirements are in compliance with all Federal Aviation Administration Regulations and ASU flight standards. Crewmember currency inspections will be conducted at the beginning of every ASU shift by the Safety Sergeant and a memorandum of the inspection will be prepared for the Unit Lieutenant.

E. Evaluate qualification status of each crewmember. Verify all performance standards are met.

F. Maintain appropriate training/qualification records in compliance with FAR Part 61 and department standards.

G. Ensure all Department law enforcement officer training is conducted.

1. Ensure Air Support Unit personnel comply with: Department rules and regulations, Federal Aviation Regulations, and public laws

2. Ensure aircrews maintain current knowledge of crime problems citywide

3. Review daily journals at least once a week for completion and accuracy

4. Ensure all forms of documentation are completed

5. Review all ASU videos recorded by the Unit

6. Maintain liaison with the assigned Fiscal Management analyst

7. Maintain a current list of eligible personnel on the Police Department who have indicated a desire to transfer to the Air Support Unit

8. Perform flight crew duties as needed, if qualified

9. Establish, assess, and inspect flight standards and Unit training standards with training staff

10. Supervise and coordinate the schedule for operations, training, and maintenance

11. Ensure liaison with all area commands

12. Conduct inspections as outlined in the Department's Inspection Guide

13. If a designated unit pilot-in-command and/or TFO, fill in as pilot-in-command and/or TFO as needed.

3.5 CHIEF PILOT

A. Possess a current helicopter flight instructor certificate with night vision goggle endorsement.

B. Develop, coordinate, and schedule all Unit training with approval from the training sergeant.

C. Conduct annual standardization check rides and biannual fight reviews in accordance with FAR 61.56A for all Air Support Unit pilots. In regard to pilot currency, Unit pilots will maintain all required currency in accordance with all FAR regardless of public aircraft operation pilot exemptions.

D. Maintain ASU training records for all Unit personnel. Maintain copies of FAA medical certificates and pilot's licenses for all Unit pilots in each pilot's training file.

E. Maintain direct liaison with:

1. FAA - San Diego Flight Standards District Office

2. Outside training resources

3. Aircraft insurance company

4. Trade associations (APSA, HAI, AOPA, etc.)

F. Assist the Training Sergeant in maintaining current status boards in the ready room for all assigned personnel for qualifications and training.

G. Ensure continuity between policies and procedures in the Unit Operations Manual and applicable Federal Aviation Regulations.

H. Ensure Unit policies and procedures and applicable FARs are being adhered to at the line-level.

I. Actively participate in all Unit Safety Committee meetings.

J. Actively participate in all Unit Safety Incident investigations.

K. Assist with the long-range Unit schedule with special attention to training needs and crew parings based on experience levels.

3.6 TRAINING OFFICERS

A. HELICOPTER INSTRUCTOR PILOT

1. Possess a current helicopter flight instructor certificate

2. Assist the Chief Pilot in establishing ground and flight training programs for all current flight personnel and newly assigned pilots

3. Conduct ground and flight training

4. Assist the Training Sergeant and Chief Pilot in maintaining current status boards in the ready room for all assigned personnel for qualifications and training, especially training standards or currency dealing with pilot training.

B. LEAD TACTICAL FLIGHT OFFICER (TFO) TRAINER

1. Must be an unrestricted helicopter pilot-in-command

2. Assist the Chief Pilot in establishing ground and flight training programs for all current and newly assigned TFOs

3. Assess TFO Performance Anchors, and report to the Chief Pilot any recommended changes or modifications

4. Assist the Unit Sergeants and Chief Pilot with TFO candidate orientation, testing and selection process

5. Assist the Training Sergeant and Chief Pilot in maintaining current status boards in the ready room for all assigned personnel for qualifications and training, especially training standards or currency dealing with TFO training.

3.7 MAINTENANCE OFFICERS

A. HELICOPTER MAINTENANCE OFFICER / ASSISTANT MAINTENANCE OFFICER

1. Schedule and ensure inspections and maintenance on all helicopters are coordinated with Unit aviation mechanics and completed in a timely manner

2. Coordinate acceptance flights for new helicopters

3. Coordinate and perform Post Maintenance Quality Assurance flights as necessary in accordance with the Airbus Helicopters Functional Check Flight Procedures Manual

4. Follow-up helicopter part orders to ensure timely installations

5. Strive to ensure helicopters are available for all scheduled operations

6. Inspect helicopters for wear. Report needed replacement of major items to the maintenance sergeant so they can be included in the Unit budget.

7. Maintain updated maintenance records and helicopter status boards

8. Coordinate all installations of new or replacement equipment

9. Ensure all helicopters are cleaned on a regular basis

B. HELICOPTER POST-MAINTENANCE QUALITY ASSURANCE CHECK PILOTS

1. If maintenance has been performed on an aircraft that requires an "operational check" per FAR 91.407(b) a Unit pilot who is PMQA qualified, must perform a check flight.

2. Unit pilots assigned to perform PMQA checks must attend a model specific factory functional check flight procedures course.

3. See Section 10.2 for details.

C. GROUND SUPPORT EQUIPMENT OFFICER

1. Track and maintain financial records for the maintenance of all ground support equipment for trend analysis.

2. Coordinate repairs with independent contractors as designated by the Unit Sergeants. Coordinate or conduct minor repairs and cleaning on all ground support equipment to include: Nightsuns, thermal imagers, binoculars, Night Vision Goggles, starting units, ground handling wheels, fuel truck, and electric carts.

3. Facilitate the completion of forms and paperwork between maintenance contractors and the Air Support Unit for shipping and repairs.

4. When applicable or requested, provide training in the use and handling of ground support equipment.

3.8 SAFETY OFFICERS

A. AVIATION SAFETY OFFICER

1. Maintain a viable aviation and industrial safety program for the Air Support Unit. Assist the Unit Sergeants in the formation and implementation of safe operating procedures.

2. Coordinate the Air Support Unit's Safety Committee

   a. The Committee should meet at least once each patrol shift.
   b. The Unit Safety sergeant may recommend deferment of any meeting in the event of a lack of safety related material to review.

3. Conduct safety orientations for new personnel

4. Conduct periodic training in the area of aviation safety

5. Participate in safety seminars, surveys, and programs

6. Disseminate to all Air Support Unit personnel, current safety information from the aviation industry, aviation schools, and aviation seminars

7. Maintain ready reference files of aviation safety literature

8. Maintain a current mishap prevention program and pre-accident plan for the Air Support Unit

9. Manage the Air Support Unit's hazard reporting program

10. Provide technical guidance where safety is a factor in Unit operations

11. Disseminate any mishap reports involving other law enforcement aircraft to Unit members.

12. Maintain liaison with FAA personnel regarding safety issues.

13. Evaluate needed safety equipment, solicit input form other Air Support Unit pilots, and submit purchase recommendations to the Unit Sergeant.

14. As necessary, maintain liaison with the National Transportation Safety Board, and the California Division of Aeronautics.

B. INDUSTRIAL SAFETY OFFICER

1. Assist the Aviation Safety Officer in maintaining a viable industrial safety program for the Air Support Unit. Assist the facilities sergeant in the formation and implementation of safe operating procedures as they relate to industrial and occupational safety.

2. Participate as a member in the Air Support Unit's Safety Committee

3. Conduct periodic training in the area of industrial safety

4. Coordinate all aspects of the Unit’s industrial safety program

5. Maintain a liaison with City of San Diego Environmental Services Department and the County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health

6. Disseminate to all Air Support Unit personnel, current safety information relating to all aspects of industrial safety.

7. Assist the Aviation Safety Officer as needed investigating hazard reports involving industrial safety issues and provide technical guidance where industrial safety is a factor in Unit operations safety issues.

8. Evaluate needed industrial safety equipment, solicit input from other Air Support Unit members, and submit purchase recommendations to the Unit sergeants.

3.9 MECHANIC(S)

A. Perform all required inspections per aircraft manufacturer’s guidelines

B. Perform repairs and related maintenance duties necessary to maintain the aircraft in a safe, airworthy condition

C. Ensure all maintenance logs, flight manuals, airworthiness directives, service bulletins, are current and in compliance with directives.

3.10 PILOT-IN-COMMAND

A. The primary duty of the Pilot in Command is the safe and effective operation of department aircraft in accordance with department rules and regulations, Federal Aviation Regulations, the Aircraft Operator's Manual, Unit procedures, or public law, when applicable.

B. The Pilot in Command is the ultimate authority aboard the aircraft, regardless of the rank of any other person aboard.

C. Only ASU pilots who have been approved by the Unit sergeant and are qualified under the City's insurance policy may be assigned as the Pilot in Command.

D. All authorized pilots must receive a documented annual standardization check-ride from a Helicopter Instructor Pilot.

E. In addition to Pilot-in-Command duties, all Unit pilots are expected to maintain proficiency and perform the duties of a TFO.

3.11 TACTICAL FLIGHT OFFICER

A. Ensure the aircraft is properly outfitted with all equipment necessary to accomplish the mission and assist with preflight of the duty helicopter

B. Monitor the police radios at all times during their shift

C. Observe activity on the ground

D. Coordinate the tactical operation of the aircraft

E. Prioritize police radio calls, and assist the pilot in navigating to those calls

F. Operate all special equipment (lights, NVG, FLIR, PA system, siren, etc.)

G. Assist the PIC as needed

H. Monitor critical engine instruments during take-off and landing

I. Scan for air traffic

J. Monitor air traffic communications during take-off, departure, approach and landing

K. Retrieve voicemail messages from the ASU phone line

L. Submit the ASU schedule and check for postal mail

M. Perform any collateral duties assigned by a Unit sergeant

N. All crewmembers who are authorized to perform the duties of TFO must receive a documented annual standardization check-ride from a Unit TFO Trainer.

3.12 PILOT SELECTION

The following are the minimum qualifications for applicants to the Air Support Unit:

A. PO-II with at least four years of uniformed patrol experience on the San Diego Police Department

B. Satisfactory (Meets Standards) performance evaluations for the past two years

C. Commanding Officer recommendation

D. Possess an FAA Private Pilot Certificate for single engine airplane or helicopter

E. Possess a current FAA Class II medical certificate by the beginning of pilot training

F. Prior experience as an unrestricted TFO in the SDPD ASU

G. Upon pilot selection, pilots-in-training will be authorized to begin receiving pilot pay once their training begins.

H. After selection as a Unit pilot, crewmembers are expected to maintain proficiency and perform the duties of a TFO.

3.13 TFO SELECTION

A. PO-II with at least four years of experience on the San Diego Police Department

B. Satisfactory (Meets Standards) performance evaluations for the past two years

C. Commanding Officer recommendation

D. Ability to decisively communicate and perform multiple tasks in the dynamic, focused environment of a helicopter

E. Aviation experience is not required, but is desirable

3.15 MENTOR PILOTS

A. Must be an unrestricted PIC time within the unit

B. Designated by the unit Training Sergeant and Chief Pilot to fly with new unit pilots who have recently completed their initial AStar training (through Module-3)

C. Paired with new pilots to provide them with additional coaching and support as they continue to gain experience as a unit PIC

D. Unlike Training Pilots, Mentor Pilots do not act as the pilot-in-command of the aircraft.

SECTION FOUR

UNIT POLICIES AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

4.1 CREW CONDUCT AND CURRENCY

A. All Air Support Unit (ASU) personnel will conduct themselves in a professional and safety conscious manner. Safety is the first consideration in all operations.

B. Operations will be conducted in accordance with existing Department Policies, Federal Aviation Regulations; the aircraft manufacturer's operating manual, procedures outlined in this manual, or public law when applicable.

C. The currency for all ASU helicopter operations must be met in San Diego Police Department helicopters. No other flight time will be considered for the purpose of currency.

D. With the exception of Night Vision Goggle (NVG) currency, all crewmembers shall meet all currency requirements for helicopter missions they are authorized to perform, unless excused by a Unit Sergeant. The Unit Safety Sergeant will conduct a pilot currency inspection every ASU shift change and prepare a memorandum of the inspection to the Unit Lieutenant.

1. STANDARDIZATION CHECK RIDE
   Pilots shall complete a helicopter Standardization Check Ride each 12 calendar months

2. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES TRAINING
   Pilots shall receive quarterly emergency procedures training

3. NVG CURRENCY
   While using NVGs, pilots must operate in compliance with Section 6.12 E

4.2 PILOT'S LICENSE / MEDICAL CERTIFICATE

A. It is each pilot's responsibility to maintain a current Commercial Pilot's License, Class II medical certificate in accordance with Federal Aviation Regulations, and any required pilot currency per Unit Standards.

B. All ASU pilots must maintain a current Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Class II Medical Certificate

1. Upon completion of an FAA Class II medical examination, the Unit pilot will return the proof of renewal for the pilot's Class II Medical Certificate to the Training Sergeant.

2. The proof of renewal and any other necessary medical paperwork, such as payment receipts will be due to the Training Sergeant within the next week.

3. Upon any failure of a Class II medical examination or expiration of a current Class II Medical certificate, the Unit pilot shall notify the Chief Pilot or Unit Sergeant immediately.

4. The pilot is immediately prohibited from flying as the PIC in any Department aircraft, regardless of FAA public aircraft operation exemptions, until a current Class II Medical Certificate is obtained.

5. Payment receipts for the medical examination shall be included with the appropriate ASU pilot examination reimbursement memorandum. The memorandum shall be completed and submitted to the Unit Sergeant for reimbursement through Fiscal Management per M.O.U.

4.3 FLIGHT SAFETY

A. Unit flights will be performed in a manner deemed to be safe by the Pilot-In-Command, the Tactical Flight Officer, the Chief Pilot, and the Unit sergeants.

B. The Pilot in Command will ensure the aircraft flight controls are only manipulated by crewmembers assigned to the Air Support Unit or authorized contract instructors.

C. Public, crew, and aircraft safety are the principle considerations in determining whether or not a particular request is performed. Good judgment and common sense must prevail.

D. Any indication of a Caution Warning Panel (CWP) light activation, whether flickering, blinking, or steady, shall be interpreted by the crew the same as a steady, constant indication of an aircraft malfunction, and the crew shall take appropriate action as outlined in the Emergency Procedures Checklist.

4.4 FLIGHT CANCELLATION

A. The Pilot-in-Command may cancel a scheduled helicopter patrol flight for a legitimate reason. The Communications Desk is to be notified as soon as practical. The reason for the cancellation will be noted in detail on the daily journal, and the daily flight schedule annotated.

4.5 RIDE ALONG POLICY

A. Helicopter

1. The San Diego Police Department Air Support Unit utilizes a ride-along program in the ASU helicopters, which is generally consistent with Department Procedure 6.15 (Ride-Along Program).

2. Generally, civilian ride-alongs are prohibited. However, the Unit sergeant may approve civilian ride-alongs on a case-by-case basis.

3. For the purposes of crew composition, all ASU ride alongs are considered non-flying crewmembers.

4. When practical, the Pilot-in-Command must ensure a “waiver of claims” ride-along form is completed and signed prior to departure for all persons not employed by the San Diego Police Department.

B. A Unit sergeant or Pilot in Command may decline any ride-along due to the volume of requests, training needs, operational limitations, mission requirements, safety reasons, and/or overall security.

C. In all cases, the unit sergeant will be the final authority in approving ride-alongs.

D. Passenger pre-flight briefing

1. Scheduled ride a longs will be advised to be at the ASU facility approximately thirty minutes prior to the scheduled departure time. The telephone number and weight of the ride-along should be noted on the master schedule.

2. The ride a long will be given an ASU briefing upon arrival at the facility, including a video and personal safety briefing.

   a. Whenever practical, the ASU “Passenger Briefing Video” will be shown to the ride-along to ensure consistency in briefing.

   b. If it is not feasible to show the ASU “Passenger Briefing Video” to the ride-along, he/she will be verbally briefed by a Unit member. The briefing will include:

      1) Safety procedures - Seatbelts, door operation, dangers of the tail rotor, hand signals, forced landings, and other associated hazards.

      2) Communication - Operation of the intercom (ICS)

      3) Location of the "sick sacks”, and instructions to notify the crew if the ride-along becomes ill.

3. The ride-along will be assisted into the helicopter by an ASU crewmember. Operation of the seatbelts, doors, and headsets will again be covered.

4.6 PROHIBITED/RESTRICTED MANEUVERS

A. With the exception of authorized training and maintenance flights, practice power-off maneuvers or other emergency procedures training shall only be conducted with a unit Instructor Pilot or approved contract helicopter instructor pilot.

4.7 OPERATIONAL AREAS

A. Area "A" - The onshore area within a 25 nautical mile arc of the Mission Bay VORTAC.

B. Area "B" - The area outside Area "A".

4.8 VFR CEILINGS AND VISIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A. Helicopter:

1. Area "A"

   a. 700 foot ceiling and three (3) mile visibility (day or night)

2. Area "B"

   a. 1,000 foot ceiling and three (3) miles visibility (day or night)

3. Anytime a helicopter is operated in weather below basic VFR minimums (1,000 ft. ceiling and 3 mile visibility), the following equipment shall be fully functional:

   a. Gyroscopic attitude indicator

   b. Directional gyro

   c. At least one form of area navigation

      1) Global positioning system, or

      2) VOR

   d. Adequate cockpit lighting to read all instruments

3. Hover-taxi operations at Montgomery Field

a. 400 foot ceiling and two (2) mile visibility (day or night)

b. These minimums only apply in the following situations:

1) A crew is returning to Montgomery Field, can make an approach to another location on the field in accordance with section 4.8A1a, and can safely hover-taxi to ABLE Base at these reduced minimums.

2) A crew is conducting hover training with a unit designated training pilot on board.

4.9 CITIZEN INQUIRIES

Complaints about noise or operating procedures will be forwarded to the ASU sergeant for follow-up. The sergeant will follow-up with the individual to determine appropriate course of action pursuant to department policy.

4.10 AIRCRAFT INTERNAL FLIGHT COMMUNICATIONS

A. On all ASU flights, the FAA recommendation of a "sterile cockpit" will be observed.

B. For helicopter operations, the sterile cockpit will be observed in the vicinity of an airport, helicopter landing pad (site), or known traffic corridor. During sterile cockpit procedures, all flight crewmembers shall monitor the air traffic control frequency being used.

4.11 PRE-FLIGHT INSPECTIONS / LAUNCH

Prior to all flights, the PIC is responsible for ensuring the following tasks are completed:

A. The aircraft is in airworthy condition.

B. A pre-flight inspection in accordance with manufacturers' operations manuals approved rotorcraft flight manual has been conducted, and each crew member visually checks the aircraft prior to flight;

C. The aircraft status board, appropriate logbooks, and discrepancies have been reviewed;

D. All crewmembers shall conduct a final walk-around inspection of the aircraft before each flight, immediately prior to takeoff. Crewmembers shall walk completely around the aircraft to ensure that all tie-downs are removed, all

cowlings, panels and baggage doors are closed and latched, the fuel cap is installed and no obvious problems exist.

4.12 POST-FLIGHT PROCEDURE

After all flights, the PIC is responsible for ensuring the following tasks are completed:

A. The aircraft will be refueled

B. All fluid level sight gauges will be checked

C. Overall inspection for damage, defects, or oil leaks

1. If an aircraft is found to have an unusual or excessive fluid leak, the aircraft shall be grounded pending a detailed inspection by maintenance personnel.

D. Any flight restricting condition to the aircraft must be reported to the Unit mechanics, maintenance officer, or Unit sergeant as soon as practical. The PIC is responsible to ensure all discrepancies of the appropriate aircraft's maintenance discrepancy log are recorded accurately.

E. The duty aircraft is ready for immediate launch.

4.13 LOG BOOKS AND JOURNALS

A. Each department aircraft will have a flight-time log assigned to it. The data for this log is generated by the electronic daily journals. The Unit Helicopter Maintenance Officer is responsible for updating this log. At the end of each shift, the last TFO to crew an aircraft is responsible for ensuring the aircraft hours and total landings are accurately documented on the electronic daily journal.

B. The aircraft maintenance logbook is the final authority regarding the flight status of an aircraft.

C. At the end of every flight in a Department aircraft, a Unit journal shall be completed by the end of the shift.

1. The Tactical Flight Officer (TFO) is responsible for accurately completing the journal. In the event, there is no TFO, the Pilot in Command is responsible for accurately completing the journal.

D. A Unit Sergeant will review and approve the journals on a weekly basis.

E. All crew currencies outlined in section 4.1 shall be documented on the daily journal. Each crewmember shall ensure the accuracy of their logged flight experience.

4.14 LOCAL / OUT OF AREA FLIGHTS

A. HELICOPTER

1. A Unit Sergeant or the Watch Commander should be notified of any out-of-county mutual aid calls and planned routes.

2. Helicopters should generally work in Area A unless one of the following applies:

a. The crew is responding to a mutual aid call for assistance;

b. The crew is conducting a training/orientation flight;

c. The aircraft is being positioned for maintenance purposes; or,

d. Any flight approved by a Unit Sergeant.

B. Flights into Mexico are prohibited unless approved by the Chief of Police.

C. Department aircraft are to be used for official operations only.

4.15 REFUELING PROCEDURES

A. The PIC is responsible for ensuring the aircraft is properly refueled. Standard fuel for the AStar AS350B3 is 111 gallons. Additional fuel or less fuel may be loaded for specific mission requirements or maintenance; however, standard fuel should be in the aircraft whenever turned over to a new crew, put in the hangar, and for most patrol missions.

B. Refueling any aircraft while the engine is running is prohibited.

C. Refueling an aircraft while any other aircraft is running on the heliport is prohibited. Pilots departing or landing on the heliport should avoid doing so while another aircraft is being fuel.

D. No smoking within 50 feet of Unit aircraft at any time.

E. Driving a fuel truck inside the arc of a helicopter's main rotor blade is prohibited.

4.16 CREW MEMBER PHYSICAL CONDITION

A. Crewmembers are to ensure their physical condition is maintained at a sufficient level to complete their mission. This includes:

1. Sufficient rest and nourishment

2. No use of alcohol for ten hours before a flight

3. Crewmembers will only use medication is compliance with FAR 91.17(a)(3) when assigned to a flight. Crewmembers taking any medication not in compliance with FAR 91.17(a)(3) will not act as aircrew on any Department flight, and they will advise a Unit sergeant of their medical status as soon as possible.

4. All crewmembers must have "full-duty" medical status per SDPD Medical Assistance.

5. Blood donations are not allowed for seventy-two hours prior to any flight.

B. A crewmember is generally prohibited from:

1. Being on duty more than 14 hours during a 24-hour period including overtime, special events, and patrol related assignments, to include Department Approved Outside Employment

2. Flying more than eight hours in any given shift

a. If circumstances arise in which a crewmember anticipates exceeding the maximum flight time and/or maximum duty day, the crewmember must brief the Unit sergeant or lieutenant as to the circumstances, and receive approval to exceed these limits.

b. Every attempt should be made by the sergeant or lieutenant to relieve the crew member(s) as soon as possible.

C. Crewmembers must be provided a nine-hour period between scheduled shifts, which applies to overtime, special events, patrol related assignments, and Department Approved Outside Employment. The crewmember is responsible for adequate rest during this time. This does not include emergency call back assignments.

1. ASU crewmembers accept an immense responsibility of flying department helicopters; it is essential to maintain proper rest within a duty day to adhere to the highest of safety standards. Crewmembers are generally the best gauge of their own physical and mental state. As such, they should

carefully assess their ability to safely perform their duties prior to accepting such an assignment.

4.17 LANDING SITES

A. Authorized landing sites:

1. Helicopters – an unrestricted PIC of a helicopter is authorized to land at the following locations. In all cases, the crew shall exercise good judgment, ensure that the site is free of obstructions, and that precautions have been taken to prevent personal injury or property damage.

a. Any airport.

b. Remote locations when an investigation or a mission requires the landing.

c. Private or public property for static display. Prior permission to land must be obtained from the property owner and a Unit sergeant. For scheduled off-airport landings, a ground safety observer should be utilized. Any Unit trained officer or supervisor may perform this function noting flight safety hazards, condition of the landing zone, and the ability to keep spectators clear.

d. Any location when providing emergency services.

e. Any location when conducting training with a Unit Trainer.

f. Any location where the crew consists of an unrestricted PIC and unrestricted TFO.

g. When an unrestricted PIC is paired with a restricted daytime TFO in their mentor phase, the crew may land at the locations listed on the TFO's current restriction letter.

B. Emergency or Precautionary Landings

1. When possible, communicate the following information to SDPD communications and air traffic control prior to landing.

a. Nature of emergency

b. Location of landing site

c. Need for emergency equipment

C. Notification of Chain-of-Command

1. Following a precautionary or emergency landing, a Unit sergeant and the Watch Commander must be notified immediately and they will evaluate the need to respond to the scene. When the Unit sergeant is unavailable, the Unit Lieutenant should be notified.

2. Following an emergency landing, a Unit Sergeant will notify the following persons:

   a. Air Support Unit Lieutenant

   b. Air Support Unit Captain

   c. Air Support Unit Maintenance Officer (see #3 below)

   d. Air Support Unit Safety Officer

   e. San Diego Police Department Media Relations Unit

   f. Assistant Chief of Special Operations.

   g. Chief of Police - at the discretion of the Watch Commander

3. The Unit sergeant will determine if necessary repairs can be made in the field, or if the aircraft must be transported to a repair facility. Unit mechanics and the Helicopter Maintenance Officer will be consulted.

D. The Air Support Unit sergeant will be responsible for ensuring completion of all reports after a precautionary or emergency landing.

E. The Safety Officer will be responsible for notification of the National Transportation Safety Board, the Federal Aviation Administration, if necessary.

4.18 CITY CARD

The following criteria will apply for use of a City Credit Card:

A. Fuel may be authorized by the PIC as needed for approved flights.

4.19 FLIGHT TRAINING

The following procedures will be adhered to prior to conducting flight training for any new missions.

A. The initiating officer will describe the overall concept with the Chief Pilot.

B. Whenever possible, the initiating officer will provide the Chief Pilot with material relevant to the proposed mission. The material should include, but not be limited to:

1. Any applicable Federal Aviation Regulations

2. Any applicable aircraft limitations that could affect the ability of the crew to perform the mission; and,

3. Unit policies and procedures from other agencies that perform similar missions with similar aircraft.

C. The Safety Officer will then review the material.

D. If, in the opinion of the Safety Officer, the training could be conducted with an acceptable degree of risk, the initiating officer, Safety Officer and Chief Pilot will meet with the Training Sergeant and discuss the overall concept. The initiating officer should be prepared to answer pertinent questions, including projected costs, estimated training time, benefits to the department etc.

E. A Unit Sergeant will decide whether or not the training will be conducted and the mission adopted.

4.20 AIRCRAFT GROUND HANDLING

A. Ground handling incidents are the number one cause of aircraft damage within the Unit. Ground handling helicopters by a single person is prohibited unless there is no one available to assist, and the aircraft must be moved immediately.

4.21 FACILITY VISITORS

A. Visitors to the ASU facility must be escorted by an ASU member at all times.

1. The only exceptions would be regular ASU vendors.

SECTION FIVE

UNIFORMS

5.1 GUIDELINES

All grooming, dress, and uniform guidelines are set forth in the Department Procedures, and are applicable to personnel assigned to the Air Support Unit.

5.2 UNIFORM EXCEPTION

A. Officers who are assigned to the Air Support Unit are authorized to wear the appropriate Pilot or TFO Wings insignia when they have passed training. The wings will be of gold plate with a miniature San Diego Police Badge centered on the wings. The wings will be worn on the patrol uniform shirt and/or jacket, centered just above the nametag.

B. Officers who are assigned to the Air Support Unit, and are required to appear in court, will comply with Department Procedures for dress. For court appearances where no jury is present, such as preliminary exams, officers have the option of wearing a flight suit. Flight suits are NOT authorized for court appearances with a jury present unless requested by the prosecuting representative.

C. Officers attending official ceremonies or special presentations will wear their Department Class "A" or "B" uniform in compliance with Department policy 5.10.

D. Any deviations from this policy must have prior approval from the Unit sergeant or lieutenant.

E. Officers choosing to wear a flight suit en route to, or from, work shall cover/remove Department or Unit insignia, badges, etc.

F. Unit members will have the option of wearing a two-piece flight suit but are required to have a serviceable one-piece flight suit for certain functions requiring uniformity among unit members.

5.3 FLIGHT CREW PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

The following protective clothing items will be provided by the Department, and shall be worn by the flight crews when operating department helicopters:

A. Flight helmets.

B. Flight suit made of Nomex fire retardant material, sage green in color.

1. Sleeves should not be rolled up

C. If desired, a flight jacket made of Nomex fire retardant material when funding is available.

D. Any department approved boot for wear by patrol officers, is approved for wear by Air Support Unit personnel; however, only boots with steel reinforced toes and shanks will be provided by the department.

E. During take-off, landing, and all helicopter flight training operations, Nomex fire retardant gloves should be worn by the flight crew.

1. All crewmembers will be trained in the benefits and proper use of these gloves, and they will be encouraged to use them. It is understood, however, that the use of such gloves may at times actually impede a crew member (i.e.: operating FLIR, etc.). Once airborne, the use of Nomex gloves will be at the discretion of each crewmember. It is recommended the gloves be worn at all times.

F. Any exceptions must be approved by a Unit Sergeant.

SECTION SIX

HELICOPTER PATROL OPERATIONS

6.1 PATROL POLICY - MISSION PRIORITIES

A. The primary purpose of the helicopter is to provide aerial support to field officers, with officer safety being the first priority. Officer safety considerations, tactical direction for officers, and increased officer effectiveness through aerial observation are most important. In the event of simultaneous requests, the aircrew will determine which call to respond to based on the following:

1. Protection of life
2. Protection of property
3. Patrol priority
4. Weather conditions
5. Distance to the call

B. Quality service and good judgment should prevail when prioritizing radio calls.

6.2 DEPLOYMENT PRIORITIES

A. Daily patrol areas will be based on the following criteria:

1. Calls for service
2. Type of radio call (officer safety, etc.)
3. Response time versus effectiveness
4. Special patrol requests
5. Known crime problems / trends
6. Areas designated and approved by a Unit Sergeant or the Field Lieutenant
7. In the event of a field emergency or special request (e.g. important surveillance request) and additional crews are already on duty, a Unit Sergeant is authorized to deploy a second helicopter if the primary helicopter is unavailable.

    a. The authorized person or designee making the decision shall notify

the Unit Lieutenant as soon as is practical.

b. The notification can be in the form of a phone call or text but will be followed up with an email as soon as practical.

c. The email shall include the reasons surrounding the incident or event.

d. Examples can include but are not limited to: known or suspected terrorist attacks in more than one area; patrol seeking assistance pursuing dangerous felons while Robbery Detectives are actively tracking dangerous suspects.

e. In the event of a suspected terrorist attack and insufficient personnel are available, emergency callbacks are authorized to complete the mission.

B. Special event requests may occasionally take priority over "routine" missions.

6.3 MINIMUM ALTITUDE

A. The following patrol and transit minimum altitudes shall be observed:

1. Outside Lindbergh's Class B airspace:

   a. 500 feet AGL

2. Inside Lindbergh's Class B airspace:

   a. 2,000 feet MSL late at night when Lindbergh arrivals and departures are at a minimum, or

   b. 1,500 feet MSL at all other times

3. These restrictions are weather and air traffic control permitting.

4. If weather or air traffic control restricts the pilot to a lower altitude, the pilot shall maintain the highest available altitude.

5. While actively responding to a call for service or self-initiated activity, pilots may descend to an altitude necessary to successfully complete the mission.

B. The pilot should not descend below 300 feet AGL for noise considerations. Officer safety factors, however, may require flight at a lower altitude, but the pilot should remain at that lower altitude for as little time as is deemed reasonable.

6.4 MINIMUM FUEL

A. No helicopter flight will be conducted with less than 30 minutes of fuel on board the aircraft. For the purposes of this section, 18.0 gallons of fuel is considered 30 minutes of fuel in an AStar.

6.5 STAND-BY READINESS

A. When not airborne, on-duty flight crews will be available to respond to any emergency.

6.6 CODE-FOUR

A. Although a cover situation may appear to be "Code-4" to the air crew, only ground units will advise "Code-4" on the radio.

B. The air crew will advise Communications they are returning to patrol service, and will depart the area as soon as practical after the scene is "Code-4".

6.7 VEHICLE PURSUITS

A. The helicopter will respond to vehicle pursuits on a priority basis.

B. The role of the aircrew during a vehicle or foot pursuit is to assist and coordinate field unit activities. The aircrew is responsible for monitoring and broadcasting pursuit information such as traffic hazards, actions of the suspect(s) and any other pertinent information. The aircrew shall video record the pursuit for evidentiary, tactical and training purposes. Overall control of the pursuit shall remain with the primary ground unit and field supervisor. For the benefit of officers, aircrews will re-broadcast transmissions from supervisors, the Watch Commander or Communications regarding dropping off, discontinuing or limiting the pursuit.

C. The helicopter cannot assume the role of primary pursuit vehicle because aircraft are not recognized as emergency vehicles under Section 165, Section 17004 of the California Vehicle Code, which states in part that public employees are not liable for civil damages while operating authorized emergency vehicles in the line of duty, or when in immediate pursuit of an actual or suspected violator of the law.

D. If pursuing units discontinue a pursuit, or if a supervisor calls off a pursuit for any reason, the aircrew may, at the discretion of a supervisor, continue tracking (i.e. monitoring) the suspect from the air. The aircrew may follow the suspect vehicle until such time that they believe the suspect may be apprehended without engaging in another vehicle pursuit.

6.8 SAFETY RULES FOR APPROACHING / LEAVING THE HELICOPTER

A. Prior to boarding the aircraft, passengers will be briefed by a qualified crewmember. The Passenger Safety Briefing video should be viewed. A qualified ASU member should escort the passenger to the helicopter, especially when the rotors are in motion.

B. All persons should be kept at least fifty feet away from the aircraft while the rotor blades are in motion, unless specifically authorized by the Pilot in Command (PIC).

C. When approaching the aircraft while the rotors are in motion, all persons will do so from the front or side, so the PIC can see them at all times. Under no circumstances will anyone approach the helicopter from the rear.

D. Persons departing the helicopter while the rotor blades are in motion will walk directly away and to the front of the aircraft until they are at least fifty feet away, if practical. Under no circumstances will anyone walk to the rear of the helicopter.

6.9 OVER WATER / OFF-SHORE POLICY

A. The safe operation of the helicopters is essential regardless of the type of over water operation being conducted.

1. No mission should be conducted over water unless circumstances exist which would justify the risks involved.

2. Rescues of persons in the water will not be attempted if the crew has not been properly trained.

3. If the operation or rescue is attempted, the PIC will be responsible for ensuring the safety of the helicopter and crew is the primary consideration, and the operation has a high probability of being successfully completed.

4. No mission will be conducted over water when the helicopter is out of autorotation range of shore, unless everyone on board is wearing appropriate floatation devices.

B. The listed items will be checked on pre-flight, and will be immediately available to the flight crew:

1. Water activated floatation device, (rescue ring)

2. One floatation device for each person in the aircraft

6.10 LOCAL FLIGHT FOLLOWING PROCEDURES

A. Any flight into Area B the aircrew must report to communications. Upon returning to Area A from a mission or training in Area B, the aircrew will notify communications of their return.

6.11 EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORT MISSIONS

A. ASU crewmembers receive only basic first aid instruction, and the aircraft are equipped with only basic first aid kits. Therefore, transportation to the hospital of critically injured patients is generally prohibited.

B. Transportation flights of injured persons are authorized in rescue situations requiring relatively short flights from scenes where rescue personnel have limited access. Under these circumstances, aircrews should coordinate their actions with rescue personnel and make arrangements to transfer care of the patient to qualified emergency medical personnel as soon as possible.

6.12 NIGHT VISION GOGGLE (NVG) OPERATIONS

A. NVG USAGE

1. NVG must be in the helicopter and accessible by the PIC for all operations during hours of darkness (one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise). This section may be waived by an Air Support Unit sergeant or lieutenant for helicopter operations in Area "A".

2. The PIC assigned to night shifts must be NVG qualified and current. (See Section 6.12E)

3. The Unit sergeant may assign non-current NVG pilots to missions within Area "A" when absolutely necessary on a case-by-case basis.

4. Callback assignments in Area "B" must be operated in compliance with Section 6.12D.

5. NVG will only be used by personnel authorized by the Air Support Unit sergeant. All persons using NVG will be thoroughly trained and briefed in the care, function, and use. Pilot training must meet the requirements of FAR 61.31(k).

6. Single-crewmember NVG training flights are prohibited.

B. NVG OPERATIONAL AREAS (Refer to the Unit NVG Area Chart)

Two operational areas have been designated with different NVG operational requirements.

1. Area “A” is the area overland within a 25 nautical mile arc of the Mission Bay VORTAC.

2. Area “B” is the area outside of Area “A”.

C. PILOT IN COMMAND NVG LIMITATIONS

1. The use of NVG for helicopter operations inside Area “A” is optional.

2. Excluding training flights with an authorized NVG Instructor, pilots with less than 100 hours of PIC NVG time shall not operate in Area B, unless the Light Level Planning Chart indicates the entire mission can be performed in the green shaded area.

   a. The Unit Aviation Safety Officer will maintain a current Light Level Planning Chart in the briefing room

3. Pilots with less than 200 hours of PIC NVG time shall not takeoff or land from unimproved sites in Area A or B, with the following exceptions:

   a. They are training with an authorized NVG Instructor

   b. They are taking-off or landing from one of the following designated NVG training sites:

      1) Grassy areas northwest and southeast of runway 23 at Montgomery Field
      2) Grassy area south of ABLE Base

      3) Nichols Field

      4) Parking lot southwest corner of Sweetwater Reservoir

      5) North and east shoreline of Sweetwater Reservoir

      6) Paved pad on northern end of Otay Lakes

D. NVG OPERATIONS IN AREA “B”

1. Use of NVG is mandatory within Area “B”

2 Both crewmembers shall use NVG during any flight in Area “B”, except as provided in Section 6.12D3

3. The use of NVG in well lighted, urban areas of Area "B" is optional.

4. A restricted nighttime Pilot-in-Command shall remain on-shore from the ocean during hours of darkness unless they are with a Unit instructor pilot. This includes orbiting a call where a portion of the orbit would be off-shore and an off-set orbit over land should be used. This does not apply to Mission Bay or San Diego Bay, which the restricted nighttime PIC is allowed to operate in.

E. NVG CURRENCY

1. Within 2 calendar months preceding the month of an NVG flight all pilots must successfully complete an NVG proficiency check or perform and log the following:

   a. Perform three takeoffs and three landings, with each takeoff and landing including a climb-out, cruise, descent, and approach phase of flight. If the pilot is authorized to make off-airport landings, all three takeoffs and landings must be to an off-airport landing zone.

   b. Three hovering tasks

   c. Three area departure and area arrival tasks

   d. Three tasks of transitioning from aided night flight to unaided night flight and back to aided night flight

   e. Six night vision goggle operations

   f. The Pilot's flight time, takeoffs and landings with NVGs shall be documented in the daily journal.

2. If a pilot's NVG currency is expired between 2 and 4 calendar months, the pilot must regain their currency, per this section, with a Unit NVG Instructor onboard, prior to being assigned to a night flight per section 6.12A.

3. If a pilot's NVG currency is expired more than 4 calendar months, the pilot must successfully complete an NVG proficiency check with a Unit NVG Instructor, and be documented in the pilot's unit training record, prior to that pilot being assigned to a night flight per section 6.12A.

4. All Unit pilots shall successfully complete an annual NVG proficiency check with an Air Support Unit NVG instructor.

F. NIGHT VISION GOGGLE MAINTENANCE

1. NVG will be inspected and maintained every six months by an appropriate facility equipped for all levels of NVG maintenance.

2. NVG that do not pass inspection / service must be removed from service until all discrepancies have been corrected.

3. NVG in need of repair or inspection should be referred to the unit NVG Maintenance Officer with a complete description of any problems. NVG maintenance may be completed by authorized unit maintenance personnel, or referred to an appropriate NVG repair facility.

4. Each NVG set must have a current maintenance tracking form readily available for review by any crewmember. The Unit NVG Officer is responsible for ensuring all NVG have been properly maintained, and are in serviceable condition.

G. NVG Security

1. When worn on the body, crewmembers shall wear their NVG with the lanyard over their neck and one other secondary securing point attached to their body (helmet mount, flight suit, survival vest, etc.). The chosen secondary securing point must prevent the NVG from swinging away from the body and being inadvertently damaged.

2. When not worn on the body, NVG shall be stored in the designated NVG rack in the hangar or in the office.

3. If an aircrew is in the field, away from ABLE base, and their NVG is not worn on the body, the passenger headsets shall be removed from their cases and the NVG stored in the empty cases in the aircraft.

6.13 HELICOPTER STANDARD APPROACH AND LANDING ASSIGNMENTS

The following procedures are guidelines. If there is a good reason to deviate from these procedures, crews should do so but be prepared to explain why.

A. All helicopters should make their approach to the “H” pad.

B. Patrol helicopters should generally takeoff and land on the #3 or #4 pads facing the hangar for routine patrol operations. The pilot may only takeoff or land on pads #1 or #2 if the hangar doors are closed. The pilot may takeoff or land on any pad if it is more appropriate under the circumstances (IE: maintenance run-up on another pad, wind conditions, emergency, pad availability, etc.).

C. Due to the proximity of the security fence, patrol helicopters should not routinely park the #1 pad.

D. The large foam fire extinguisher should be located near the southeast corner of the hangar.

6.14 CHECKLISTS

A. The current and approved ASU A-Star written checklist shall be used to properly start, take-off, land, and shut down the helicopter. The crew will call the checklist using a "challenge and response" method.

1. In an effort to encourage crews to keep all eyes outside the aircraft in the vicinity of airports and prior to landing, the only exception to using the written checklist is the option to call the landing checklist from memory.

B. During in flight emergencies, the emergency procedure checklist or Unit "SWOP" checklist should be used unless impractical or unsafe to do so.

1. "SWOP" is a Unit-developed memory aid for aircrews to use when dealing with an urgent in-flight emergency that requires the crew to "land as soon as possible".

S – Site
W – Wind
O – Obstructions
P – Path

B. Prior to making any off-airport landing not involving an in-flight emergency, the current and approved ASU off-airport landing checklist shall be used using a "challenge and response" method.

SECTION SEVEN

SAFETY PROGRAM

7.1 POLICY AND GOALS

The San Diego Police Department Air Support Unit (ASU) supports all requirements of law regarding safety and operational standards, and intends to provide all employees with a safe and healthy working environment. It is the Unit's intention to eliminate or reduce accidental injury to unit personnel or the public, and damage to aircraft or property. The ASU Safety Program includes all aspects of flight safety, maintenance safety, flight line and ramp safety, and fire prevention.

7.2 SAFETY PROGRAM MANUAL

A. The basic premise of the Unit's safety program is one involving attitude. The basis for continued success is the healthy attitude of all personnel involved in the department's airborne law enforcement program.

B. A comprehensive Safety Program has been developed to assist in maintaining the desired attitude. This approach to Unit Safety is beyond the scope of an Operations Manual. Therefore, a Safety Program Manual exists to outline the Unit's philosophy of aviation safety management.

SECTION EIGHT

VIDEO RECORDING PROCEDURES

8.1 OVERVIEW

Workload permitting, the following events should be digitally recorded:

A. Incidents that are of possible evidentiary value in criminal cases

B. Special events, as requested by members of the department

C. Any incident that will enhance the operation of the Police Department, or contribute to future department training.

8.2 VIDEO LIBRARIAN

A. The Video Librarian position is a collateral duty of a unit member. The duties and responsibilities of that position include:

1. Ensuring all aircraft digital video recorders (DVRs) are in good working order;

2. All DVR memory cards are in good working order with ample available memory for 2-3 days of normal video recording;

3. Transfer video recordings from DVR memory cards to back-up hard drives per section 8.4G;

4. Conduct video recording research per section 8.4H;

5. Monitor the need for additional memory cards and/or back-up hard drives and advise unit sergeants of such needs;

6. Ensure an ample supply of digital video disks (DVDs) for making copies of video recordings;

7. Maintain the Digital Impound Drive

8. Maintain an electronic database and printed copy of all impounded video recordings per section 8.3C

8.3 DISPOSITION OF VIDEO RECORDINGS

A. When a video recording is to be impounded, regardless of its evidentiary value, the original video recording will be impounded at the Air Support Unit and given the appropriate ABLE video recording number.

B. If the video recording is of evidentiary value, the flight-crew will notify the appropriate unit(s) or supervisor of the existence of the video recording if possible.

C. The impound log will be filled out with the required information. The video recording will be assigned a sequential tag number.

D. The video recording will ultimately be transferred from the aircraft's DVR the Digital Impound Drive. The electronic file will be labeled with the video recording number, crewmember names and department IDs, recording date, time, location, and subject. The file will be added to the appropriate folder in the Digital Impound Drive.

E. The Digital Impound Drive will remain locked, and password protected when it is not in use. This security will be maintained by undocking the Digital Impound Drive after use.

8.4 REQUESTS FOR VIDEO RECORDINGS

A. The original video recording will not be released unless it is required for court or investigative purposes, and only with the approval of a unit supervisor.

B. If a hard copy of the original video is needed for court purposes, the video will be transferred to a DVD from the Digital Impound Drive. The video recording sign-out log will be filled out with the appropriate sign-out information, and destination/final disposition of the video recording.

C. A video recording that is not evidence and recorded specifically for a police project or other City Department, will be treated as original property of the requesting unit and may not necessarily be impounded at Air Support.

D. All requests for copies of video recording (including officer copies) will be evaluated by a Unit sergeant. No copies shall be released unless approved by a Unit sergeant. Video recording copies, to be used for training purposes, shall be requested by a supervisor.

E. All authorized video recording copies which require a DVD will be documented in the ASU Video Recording Copy Log. The recipient shall sign for the copy in the Video Recording Copy Log.

F. If a DVD is not specifically requested a part of a video request, the video will be disseminated electronically, utilizing the Evidence.com program. The unit member completing the video request will upload the approved video into the Evidence.com program under the video number and appropriate event number if applicable. In the case of an outside agency requesting a video, the unit member will upload the approved video to the Evidence.com program under the video number and email a download link to the requestors email address.

G. All video recordings are captured on aircraft DVR memory cards. In order to make room for future recordings, the unit video librarian shall copy all past recordings to back-up hard drives prior to deleting those recordings from aircraft memory cards. Back-up hard drives shall be kept locked in the unit video locker. The video librarian will maintain a log of this process.

H. If a request is made for a copy of a past video recording that has not been assigned a video recording number, the request will be routed to the unit video librarian to research the actual existence of such a recording. If a recording is found on either an aircraft DVR memory card or a back-up hard drive, the video librarian will transfer that recording to the Digital Impound Drive, following the steps in section 8.2. The video will be added to the appropriate folder in the Digital Impound Drive, and copies will be disseminated electronically following the steps in sections 8.3A-F.

I. Videos that are downloaded from the aircraft SD cards onto the digital backup drives will be purged after two years in order to make room for current videos in need of downloading.

SECTION NINE

HELICOPTER MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

9.1 MECHANIC QUALIFICATIONS

A. All civilian maintenance personnel authorized to perform maintenance on Unit aircraft shall:

1. Hold a FAA mechanic certificate with airframe and power plant ratings; and,

2. Attend model specific factory field maintenance training.

a. If newly hired mechanics have not attended this training, they should be scheduled to attend as soon as possible.

B. The contract maintenance company shall designate a lead mechanic.

1. In addition to the requirements of section 10.1 A, the lead mechanic shall hold a FAA Inspection Authorization (IA).

9.2 POST MAINTENANCE QUALITY ASSURANCE (PMQA) CHECKS

A. Prior to releasing an aircraft for a PMQA check, the mechanic shall review all outstanding discrepancies in the aircraft discrepancy book.

1. The mechanic should make all reasonable attempts to address outstanding discrepancies, while balancing the need to return the aircraft to duty status.

2. If the Unit Helicopter Maintenance Officer determines that the aircraft is not immediately needed in-service, the aircraft should remain out-of-service while outstanding discrepancies are repaired.

B. If maintenance has been performed on an aircraft that requires an "operational check" per FAR 91.407(b), the following shall apply:

1. One pilot and at least one mechanic shall be assigned to perform each PMQA check.

2. Unit pilots assigned to perform PMQA checks must attend a model specific factory functional check flight procedures course.

a. Unit pilots assigned to perform PMQA checks requiring a "Supplemental Flight Test Checklist" must also be unit designated

instructor pilots.

3. Mechanics assigned to PMQA checks shall attend Unit specific training on crew resource management. The training shall include, but not be limited to:

   a. Use of safety equipment and clothing;

   b. Aircraft emergency procedures;

   c. Use of cockpit radio equipment; and,

   d. Airport traffic pattern procedures.

4. The PMQA check will be conducted utilizing a Unit approved PMQA checklist.

   a. The pilot is responsible for insuring that all requested data is recorded on the checklist.

   b. The mechanic is responsible for insuring that the completed PMQA checklist is attached to the aircraft maintenance records at the conclusion of the PMQA check.

5. The same pilot and mechanic must perform the PMQA check to its completion. If, for any reason, the process is interrupted and work is not completed in one duty day, the process shall be restarted, from the beginning, when work resumes.

   a. This section does not preclude one PMQA pilot from completing a standard "AStar Inspection Checklist" and another completing a "Supplemental Flight Test Checklist" on the same aircraft.

C. The following procedures shall be followed when conducting a PMQA pre-flight check:

1. The mechanic shall ensure that no tools have been left in or on the aircraft.

2. The mechanic shall conduct an independent pre-flight check prior to the pilot.

3. The mechanic shall thoroughly brief the pilot on all work performed on the aircraft.

4. The mechanic shall accompany the pilot while the pilot conducts a pre-flight check to answer questions and provide additional information

regarding the maintenance performed on each component.

5. Interruptions should be kept to an absolute minimum. Non-urgent phone calls and unrelated discussions with others should not take place.

D. The following procedures shall be followed when conducting a PMQA ground run:

1. One mechanic will perform checks on the aircraft as the pilot performs the ground run.

2. The aircraft cowling configuration during ground runs shall be consistent with which cowlings were required to be removed for the particular inspection.

3. At the completion of the ground run, after the aircraft has been completely re-cowled, the pilot and mechanic shall conduct a thorough walk-around check prior to any PMQA flight checks.

4. At the completion of the ground run, and prior to any flight check, the mechanic shall make the proper aircraft logbook endorsement releasing the aircraft for an operational (PMQA) check flight.

E. The following procedures shall be followed when conducting a PMQA flight check:

1. One pilot and one mechanic shall be on board the aircraft during all PMQA flight checks.

   a. Unless extenuating circumstances exist, no one else should be on board the aircraft.

   b. Under no circumstances shall there be any ride-alongs on board.

2. Mechanics assigned to a PMQA flight shall comply with all requirements of Section 5.3 Flight Crew Protective Equipment.

3. PMQA flight checks shall not be conducted in weather conditions less than 3 SM visibility or less than a 1,000 foot ceiling.

4. PMQA flight checks shall be completed between sunrise and sunset. No PMQA check should be started unless it is reasonably certain that all required flight checks can be accomplished before sunset.

a. If the PMQA check has been completed, and the aircraft has been returned to service per FAR 91.407(b), additional flight checks may be performed during darkness (i.e. track and
b. balancing, tactical equipment checks, etc.).

5. The pilot and mechanic shall conduct a thorough pre-flight briefing, which should include, but not be limited to:

   a. Route of flight;

   b. Required checks and procedures to be performed;

   c. "Normal" instrument parameters for the specific aircraft to be flown; and,

   d. Any parameters or components that may require additional attention (i.e. suspect gauges, rotor system vibrations, etc.); and,

   e. Crew duties during emergencies.

6. During the flight, the mechanic shall:

   a. Monitor all engine instruments and caution lights;

   b. Record all parameters required in the PMQA checklist; and,

   c. Monitor the VHF aircraft radio and assist the pilot in locating other air traffic.

7. The pilot will ensure that the primary police radio is always tuned to the appropriate police dispatch frequency where the flight is being conducted. The radio frequency shall be reset each time the flight travels into another division or jurisdiction.

F. The following procedures shall be followed at the conclusion of a PMQA flight check:

1. The pilot and mechanic shall both perform a thorough post-flight check of the aircraft.

2. If the aircraft is to be returned to service, the pilot shall:

   a. Make the appropriate aircraft logbook endorsement;

   b. Ensure that the aircraft is properly fueled for patrol flight;

c. If the aircraft will be immediately assigned as the “duty” or “standby 1” aircraft, the pilot shall ensure that ALL Unit mission equipment is properly installed in the aircraft (i.e. FLIR, Nightsun, duty bag, floatation devices, binoculars, map book, communication cords, etc.);

d. Ensure all of the maintenance time is accounted for on the electronic daily journal.

3. If the aircraft is to be returned to service, the mechanic shall:

a. Ensure the Unit aircraft status board is updated to show the status of the aircraft (duty, standby 1, etc.) and the new inspection-due times.

b. Ensure that all of the checklists and other documents related to the maintenance work performed are properly filed with aircraft’s maintenance records.

SECTION TEN

LETTERS OF AGREEMENT

10.1 LETTERS OF AGREEMENT

The following letters of agreement are maintained in the ASU office and in the Office of the Chief of Police:

A. Lindbergh Tower

1. Special VFR operations in Class B airspace

2. Clearance and Air Space Designations

B. Montgomery Tower

1. Snapdragon Stadium Operations

C. Montgomery Tower

1. Special VFR Departure and Arrival Routes

D. San Diego County Sheriff' Department

1. Multiple Aircraft Pursuit Agreement

E. Lindbergh Tower

1. Discrete Call Signs in the San Diego area

F. Southern California TRACON

1. Traffic Advisories and Visual Separation Requirements for Law Enforcement Flight Operations Within the San Diego Class B Airspace