

# **Record of Discussions of the Meeting Held in the Office of Mr. Arun Mishra IAS Joint Secretary Ministry of Civil Aviation at Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan on 1 May 2008**

**1.** A meeting was held under the chairmanship of Mr. Arun Mishra, Jt Sec, MOCA on 1 May 2008 to discuss various activities planned during the year of helicopter 2008 and to address other outstanding issues related to helicopter industry.

Following were present during the meeting

- a) Mr. Arun Mishra, IAS, Jt Sec MOCA - Chairman
- b) Mr. RP Sahi Jt DG and Head of Helicopter Group DGCA
- c) Mr. Hemant Rao IAS Director, MOCA
- d) Wg Cdr BS Singhdeo ® President RWSI Northern Region
- e) Air Cmde BS Siwach, AVSM YSM, VM ®, Secy General RWSI
- f) Mr. Sanjiv Bahl GM Finance and Accounts PHL

**2.** The Meeting commenced in the Chairman's office at 1530 hrs. During his opening address, the Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and informed that Secretary MOCA has expressed his desire to take up follow up action on various activities planned during the Year of Helicopter 2008.

**3. Activities Planned During Year of Helicopter 2008.** Air Cmde BS Siwach handed over the list of activities planned by RWSI during the Year of Helicopter 2008 to the Chairman and the members present. The activities were discussed as follows: -

- a) **Helicopter Emergency Medical Services – Capability Demonstration at High Density Population Centers.** Air Cmde BS Siwach briefed the Chairman about the planned activity in co-ordination with National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). NDMA, in the recent past, had asked RWSI to undertake a Pilot Project in Uttrakhand towards capability demonstration. However, due to technical reasons, the Pilot Project was postponed to financial year 2008-09.

**Decision.** In order to revive the project on fast track and to conduct the Pilot Project during year of Helicopter, Chairman decided that a team from MOCA, DGCA and RWSI will visit to interact with NDMA at the earliest during May 2008.

- b) **Capability Demos by helicopters in Fire fighting, Electronic News Gathering and law Enforcement at Metros.**

**Decision.** Chairman asked RWSI and DGCA to explore the possibility of these activities in coordination with PHL, HAL and major Helicopter Companies like Global Vectra, UHPL etc.

**c) Orientation Courses in Important State Capitals on Usage of Helicopters and Developments of Heliports/ Helipads.**

**Decision.** Chairman advised RWSI to conduct orientation programs through the respective regional presidents of RWSI. Support for the same will be given by MOCA and DGCA.

**d) Circulation of a pamphlet on Usage of Helicopter for Public Good to important Dist HQ, Major Medical Colleges and Hospitals etc.**

**Decision:** RWSI requested to publish and circulate the pamphlets for which necessary support will be given by MOCA and DGCA.

**e) Awareness Campaigns –Joy Rides to School Children in Selected Towns.**

**Decision.** RWSI requested to coordinate the joy rides in consultation with DGCA, HAL, PHHL and other major helicopter operators. Support from manufactures like Bell, Eurocopter and Agusta Westland will be appreciated.

**f) Screening of Helicopter Specific Film Prepared by Helicopter Association International, USA at 1 Max Theaters at Metros.**

**Decision.** RWSI requested to organize the screening of the film. MOCA and DGCA will provide necessary support.

**g) Publication of Coffee Table Book on Rotary Wing Aviation in India.**

**Decision.** RWSI to go ahead with the publication of Coffee Table Book. Necessary support will be given by MOCA and DGCA.

**h) Publication of Gallant Actions of Helicopter Pilots.**

**Decision.** RWSI requested to undertake the task. MOCA, DGCA will give necessary support.

**j) National Seminar on Usage of Helicopters in Disaster management in Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Orissa & AP.**

**Decision.** RWSI to coordinate the seminars in consultation with MOCA and DGCA.

**k) Release of First Day Stamp to Commemorate 2008 as Year of Helicopter.**

**Decision.** Chairman asked Mr. Hemant Rao to coordinate the release of stamp to coincide with the India Aviation - 2008 on 15 Oct 2008 at Hyderabad.

**l) Participation of RWSI during the International Exhibition and Conference on Civil Aviation, India Aviation 2008 15-18 Oct 2008 at Hyderabad.** Air Cmde BS Siwach requested the chairman to enable participation of RWSI during the India Aviation 2008 so as to promote helicopter Industry during year of Helicopter 2008.

**Decision.** Chairman appreciated the suggestion and offered to speak to FICCI to enable RWSI participation. He also advised RWSI to discuss with major helicopter manufactures and operators about their participation as well. Air Cmde Siwach was advised to meet the officials from FICCI during week commencing 5 May 2008.

**m) Financial grant to RWSI for conduct of various activities related to year of helicopter 2008.** Air Cmde Siwach requested the chairman to Consider allocation of funds to enable RWSI to undertake activities related to year of helicopter 2008.

**Decision.** Chairman asked RWSI to put up proposal for financial grant giving justification at the earliest.

**4. Exemption of Customs Duty on Import of Helicopter and Spare Parts to Private Operators.** In addition to the discussions on activities related to year of helicopter, the Chairman asked about the progress on various issues related to helicopter operations. Air Cmde Siwach informed the Chairman that helicopter operations were much more expensive compared to fixed wing operations and as such, there is a need to give exemption on customs duty on import of helicopters and spare parts to private operators as well to promote the growth of helicopter industry at least for a period of 3 to 5 years.

**Decision.** Chairman agreed to take up the matter with the Finance Ministry in the interest of giving boost to helicopter industry.

**5. Reduction in sales tax on ATF.** Air Cmde Siwach requested the chairman to consider reduction in sales tax on ATF to 4% for the helicopters which has already been made applicable to turbo prop aircraft under Central Sales Tax Act.

**Decision.** Chairman asked Mr. Hemant Rao to progress on this issue in coordination with RWSI.

**6. Waiving of RNFC and PSF for Helicopters.** Air Cmde Siwach informed the chairman about levy of RNFC and PSF by AAI even when these services are not available or availed by helicopters by virtue of type of their operations. In addition, the payment procedures were cumbersome and result in even harassment of the aircrew at times. It was requested that the RNFC and PSF may be waived off in respect of helicopters at least for a period of 3 to 5 years. Moreover, the payment procedures need to be streamlined and payment by credit / debit card

introduced.

**Decision.** Chairman asked Mr. Hemant Rao to put up proposal in consultations with RWSI for waiver of RNFC and PSF for helicopters.

**7. Payment through credit cards/ debit cards for ATF and other airport charges.** Wg Cdr Singh Deo informed the Chairman about the difficulties being faced by the foreigners while making payment for ATF and other airport charges. He requested that payment through credit cards/ debit cards be permitted by foreigners for ATF and other airport charges.

**Decision.** Chairman asked Mr. Hemant Rao to study the proposal and suggest necessary action in consultation with petroleum ministry and AAI.

**8. Follow up Action on DGCA Helicopter core Group Recommendations.** Air Cmde Siwach informed the chairman that there has been no follow up action on DGCA helicopter core group recommendations related to AAI.

**Decision.** Chairman informed that a committee headed by Mr. Sahi Jt DG DGCA has already been formed to address the issue of separate ATC procedures for helicopters and development of Helipads /Heliports. He asked Mr. Hemant Rao to include Mr Yadav Executive Director ATM as the representative from AAI to assist Mr. RP Sahi to progress the submission of report at the earliest. He advised Mr.R.P.Sahi to conduct the meeting of his team with Airport Director Delhi, Mumbai and DIAL, MIAL to progress the matter. Chairman also agreed to request Secretary, MOCA to conduct a meeting with senior officials form MOCA, AAI, DGCA and RWSI to resolve issues affecting helicopter operations at the earliest.

**9. Shortage Of Helicopter Pilots.** Shortage of helicopter pilots was discussed during the meeting. Chairman enquired about the plans of Bell and Eurocopter to open Helicopter Pilot Training Academy. Wg Cdr SinghDeo informed that the process is on.However, the site has not been finalized as yet and it may take some time before the training academy comes up.

**10. Helicopter Pilot Training in foreign countries for Outstanding Candidates.** It was proposed by Mr. RP Sahi Jt DG DGCA that some of the outstanding individuals from the pool of DGCA examination qualified candidates be considered for Helicopter Pilot training in foreign countries.

**Decision.** Chairman advised Jt DG to progress the matter in consultation with major helicopter operators.

**11. Establishment of Helicopter Simulator Facilities by Pvt Entrepreneurs.** Mr. RP Sahi Jt DG DGCA suggested that some of the private entrepreneurs, who wish to establish helicopter simulators, be encouraged and provided the necessary support. The helicopter simulators are essential to improve training standards and flight safety.

**Decision.** The Chairman appreciated the suggestion and agreed to look into the matter.

**12. Application of Rule 160.** Air Cmde Siwach requested that rule 160 which permits public sector undertakings like PHHL to employ Military pilots without holding CHPL be extended to private operators as well. It will help private operators in meeting shortage of pilots.

**Decision.** Chairman informed that Rule 160 has been made applicable only to Air India and Pawan Hans in public interest. However, he agreed to look into this issue in the interest of growth of Helicopter industry.

**13. Flying by pilots who are 60 years of Age as Captain and Co Pilot in the Same Helicopter.** Air Cmde B S Siwach requested the chairman that the existing restriction which does not permit pilots above 60 years of age to fly as pilot and copilot in the same cockpit be waived off in view of the strict medical standards for pilots.

**Decision.** Chairman after consulting Mr.R.P.Sahi Jt DG DGCA agreed with the suggestion and asked RWSI to send the proposal to DGCA on priority for approval.

**14. Co-ordination of Helicopter Operations during Common Wealth Games - 2010.** Wg Cdr Singh Deo informed the Chairman that Helicopter Association International, USA which is a similar organization as RWSI, was given the task of coordination of the helicopter movements during Los Angels Olympics. He suggested that RWSI be given the responsibility of controlling and coordinating the helicopter operations to and from game venues during Common Wealth Games scheduled in 2010.

**Decision.** Chairman appreciated the suggestions and agreed to speak to Jt Secretary in charge, Common Wealth Games to facilitate a meeting between him and RWSI representatives. After having discussed the plans with Jt Sec in charge Common Wealth Games, he asked RWSI to put up the proposal to MOCA.

**15. Development of Helipads / Heliports along National highways for emergency medical services.** Chairman suggested that in view of the loss of lives due to accidents on highways, there is a need to develop Helipads / heliports along the highways for emergency evacuation of accident victims by helicopters. In order to progress the subject, it was appreciated that there is a need to involve National Highway Authority, private highway operators, prominent hospitals and Insurance agencies. Role of Insurance agencies becomes important since not many people can afford evacuation by air. During the meeting, it was suggested that a nominal amount be charged from every vehicle passing through the toll plaza which would provide for insurance cover in case of emergency medical evacuation by helicopters.

**Decision.** Chairman requested RWSI to discuss the matter with various insurance agencies and forward the response to MOCA for further progress on the emergency medical evacuation aspects. He also asked Mr Sanjiv Bahl to involve PHHL in this important subject. Mr.R.P.Sahi Jt DG DGCA offered to take proactive step to visit the Directors of AIIMS, APPOLO, MAX, Fortis , ESCORTS hospitals along with RWSI representative to create awareness about usefulness of helicopters and to encourage them to develop Helipads at the location of the hospitals.

**16. Conclusion.** There being no further points, the meeting came to close at 1700 hrs. Chairman thanked all the participants for fruitful discussions and advised all concerned to take follow up action on priority to make the Year of Helicopter a grand success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BS Siwach', with a horizontal line underneath it.

**Air Commodore BS Siwach AVSM YSM VM®  
Secretary General, RWSI**

05 May 2008