

Fire Helicopter Pilot

Definition:

Under direction, operates a helicopter in support of firefighting, rescue and fire prevention activities as Pilot in Command (PIC). Incumbents are responsible for the safety-of-flight aspects of helicopter operations.

Incumbents may work in adverse conditions and must effectively respond to unexpected and life-threatening events. This classification works rotating shifts as well as remaining on standby or on call, as required.

Essential Functions:

- Operates turbine powered helicopters in urban, desert and mountain environments in the performance of firefighting and rescue activities; including, but not limited to, air tactical missions and reconnaissance, conducting and/or coordinating water/fire retardant chemical drops, transport of personnel and equipment and specialized missions using the hoist rescue equipment and night vision goggles (NVG)
- Prepares weight and balance plans or load calculations for flight loads under standard and non-standard operating conditions
- Instructs personnel on the safety principles to be observed when working on or around helicopters
- Prepares and maintains the flight hour program flight logs and records for assigned helicopters
- Plans, prepares and presents public relations informational materials to the public
- Maintains self and assigned helicopters in constant state of readiness for dispatch
- Uses maps and operates fire and aviation communication and navigational equipment
- Performs reconnaissance in order to assist incident commander and/or air attack officer in the coordination of firefighting activities
- Performs required preventive maintenance and coordinates scheduling of routine and non-routine maintenance and repairs
- Operates aviation accessory equipment; including, but not limited to, external water bucket, short and long lines for external loads, rescue hoist, fixed water tanks, hydraulic snorkel, seeder, helitorch, short haul, rappel and cargo let-down lines
- Uses on-board mapping equipment and operates fire and aviation communication and navigational equipment and night vision goggle (NVG) systems
- Serves as the helicopter aviation safety officer to the Fire Department safety officer

- Instructs personnel on the safety principles to be observed when working around or on helicopters
- Ensures compliance with standard operating procedures for helicopter flights
- Attends training sessions and conducts training sessions with helitack crew and other Fire Department personnel
- Researches, develops and writes procedures for the helicopter program, including the maintenance and operations plans
- Performs other job related duties as required.

Employment Standards:**Minimum Qualifications:**

- High School Diploma, G.E.D. or equivalent

Certifications/License:

- Valid FAA Commercial or Airline Transport Pilot's Certificate with a helicopter instrument rating
- Valid and current FAA Class II Medical Certificate issued by an authorized medical examiner (AME)
- Valid California Motor Vehicle Driver's License may be required for some positions
- Current Interagency Pilot Qualification Card within three (3) months of appointment or be terminated
- Appointees must be certified by the Kern County Fire Department using Night Vision Goggles (NVG) to fly helicopters within six (6) months of appointment or be terminated

Flight experience requirements as a Helicopter Pilot in Command (PIC):

- 2500 hours PIC Helicopter flight time
- 300 hours in medium (Type 2) turbine helicopters
- 500 hours PIC in mountainous terrain, routinely making takeoffs and landings to unimproved landing areas as density altitudes exceeding 5000' msl
- 10 hours mountainous in make and model (UH-1 series, 204, 205, 212 or 412)
- 500 hours PIC performing low-level missions in fire suppression, map survey, power-line patrol, search and rescue, spray and seeding operations over mountainous or forested areas, or comparable military operations
- 50 hours PIC make and model (UH-1 series, 204, 205, 212, or 412)

Preferred Qualifications:

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March 14, 2022
Item No. 4476

- 200 hours as PIC of helicopters carrying sling loads

Knowledge of: Federal Aviation Administration regulations as contained in Section 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (FAA 14 CFR), parts 91, 133, 135, 137; working knowledge of the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide (IHOG) and the Incident Command System (ICS); department operational policies and procedures; Federal Aviation Regulations and Aeronautical Information Manual; FAA, departmental and interagency radio procedures; wildland fire behavior and fire weather; rotary wing flight control systems and equipment.

Ability to: Perform essential tasks in compliance with State and Federal laws, county ordinances and departmental procedures; accurately interpret flight operations manuals to determine appropriate flight operation characteristics, limitations and operation/performance capabilities of the helicopter; compute weight and balance/load calculations for a variety of standard and non-standard load conditions; properly and safely recover from inadvertent instrument meteorological conditions; safely and correctly operate the aircraft in all terrain conditions including desert, mountain and urban areas, and at or near maximum gross weight; operate and maintain as a member of a team and independently at incidents of uncertain duration; pilot the helicopter using night vision goggles; effectively communicate with ground and other air resources on all types of incidents; operate complex helicopter navigational and communications equipment; prepare clear, accurate and concise reports related to air operations; adopt effective and timely courses of action when confronted with hazards or emergency situations; properly perform all emergency procedures associated with the helicopter and anticipate operational needs; work effectively with other agencies, co-workers and the public.

A background check may be conducted for this classification.

All Kern County employees are designated "Disaster Service Workers" through state and local laws (CA Government Code Sec.3100-3109 and Ordinance Code Title 2-Administration, Ch. 2.66 Emergency Services). As Disaster Service Workers, all County employees are expected to remain at work, or to report for work as soon as practicable, following a significant emergency or disaster.