

# HELIBORNE OPERATION

## GENERAL

A Heliborne Operation is an offensive operation in which combat forces and their equipment move about in the battlefield aboard helicopter (UH-1H HUEY HELICOPTER) under the control of the ground force commander, to engage in ground combat. Airmobile Operation is through the use of transport planes like the C-130.

## PURPOSE HELIBORNE OPERATIONS

- The versatility and unique capabilities of the helicopter makes it the most suited aircraft for vertical envelopment missions.
- The utilization of the rotary-winged aircraft increases the battlefield mobility of ground forces.
- Makes the enemy territory deep inside accessible to combat units for conduct of offensive operations.
- Reconnaissance and security operations - to block and screen enemy avenues of approach
- Diversionary actions
- Seizure and retention of key terrain
- Counter-attack of enemy penetrations
- Long-range combat patrols
- Raids

## LIMITATIONS OF HELIBORNE OPERATIONS

- Adverse weather conditions may curtail the use of helicopter
- Limited support weapons, heavy equipment and means of communications
- Limited capability to engage in sustained combat
- Lack of vehicular mobility
- Vulnerability to enemy action during landing, assembly, and pick-up
- Loss of the element of surprise if airmobile operation is often resorted to by the commander since the enemy may learn to counter-act such operations

## PROCEDURES IN CONDUCTING HELIBORNE OPERATIONS

1. **Organization Of Heliteam** - the helicopter team, also referred to as HELITEAM consist of combat equipped troops lifted in one helicopter at one time. The HELITEAM is composed of nine men:

- 1 - Squad leader (Heliteam commander)
- 2 - Fire Teams (A and B)
- 6 - Members of A and B fire teams and their equipment

## **2. Heliteam Commander's Responsibility:**

- a. Inspects each individual member of the heliteam for proper uniform, equipment while in the assembly area.
- b. Musters the members of the heli-team in the assigned assembly area prior to enplaning.
- c. Checks all equipment assigned to the heliteam and sees to it that they are properly located before the team is called to the loading zone.
- d. Ensures that all weapons are in safe position, all loose gears of the men are properly secured and that they do not carry anything higher than their heads.
- e. Leads his heliteam from the assembly area to the control point and departure line in the loading zone.
- f. Supervises the enplaning of his heliteam.
- g. Supervises the deplaning of his heliteam personnel and equipment at the landing site.

## **3. Loading Procedure:**

- a. Within the loading sites, troops will assemble in the assembly area. Here, orders are issued and administrative matters are completed.
- b. Troops are then grouped into heliteams and heliteam commanders make their final briefing.
- c. The heliteams are moved to the control point and from the control point, the loading supervisor directs them to the departure line. The departure lines are alert points from which the heliteams are called to be enplaned.

**4. Enplaning Procedure:** Helicopter loading is conducted with the maximum speed commensurate with safety. In enplaning helicopters, the following procedure may be used as guides:

- a. On signal from the troop loading officer or the signal man who marshaled the helicopter to land, the heliteam commander leads his team on the double from the ready circle to the aircraft. The dangerous rotor blades being in the left rear of the helicopter, the heliteam should always approach the aircraft in column 45 degrees from the left or right directly in front or 90 degrees from the right facing the aircraft. The heliteam should load the helicopter only upon the signal of the loading officer or signal man, and in their absence, the heliteam commander must wait until the aircraft had actually landed or stabilized itself before ordering his men to enplane.
- b. The heliteam commander ensures that the team members are in proper sequence within the column to facilitate rapid enplaning and loading of equipment. They dash to the helicopter at port arms keeping their heads low.
- c. Upon reaching the aircraft, the heliteam commander takes position near the skid of the helicopter and assist team members to enplane.
- d. When seated, each member places his rifle between his knees, fastens his seat belts and raises his right arm to signal the heliteam commander that he is ready for take off.

e. When the heliteam commander sees that all members are strapped and ready to be airborne, he either gives the crew chief a thumbs-up signal or taps the pilot's shoulder and signals him to take off.

**5. Deplaning Procedure:**

a. When approaching the landing zone, the pilot or crew chief will orient the heliteam commander as to the direction of north, south, east, and west. They must also try to establish for the heliteam commander his position in relation t to an object that is well known to him on the ground.

b. When the helicopter is about to land, the pilot signals the heliteam commander and he in turn orders his man to unfasten seat belts.

c. As soon as the helicopter has landed or when it has stabilized into a hover about the ground, the pilot signals the heliteam commander to disembark.

d. On the go signal of the heliteam commander, the members immediately exit from the side of the helicopter.

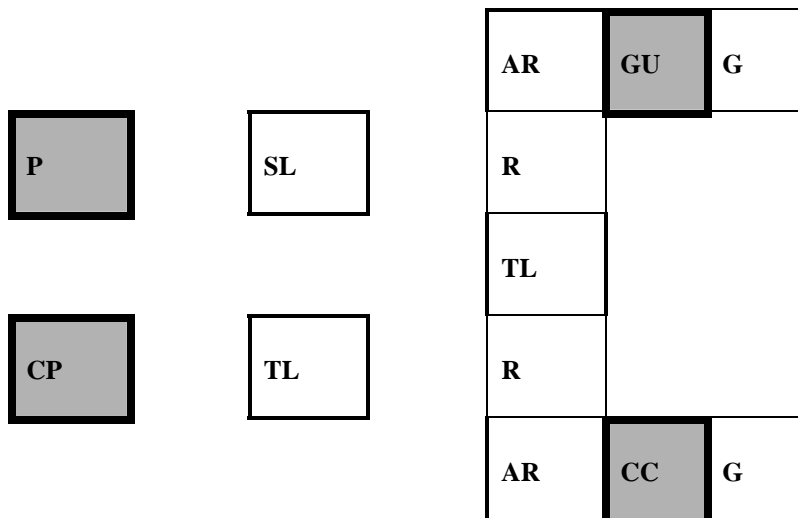
e. They form a tactical formation in front of the helicopter, and assumed the prone firing position until the aircraft had pulled out.

f. The heliteam later regroups and proceed to its objective.

**HELITEAM ORGANIZATION AND SEAT DESIGNATION**

**LOADING SEQUENCE:**

9      8      7      6      5      4      3      2      1  
**G      AR      R      TL      R      AR      G      TL      SL**



- P** - PILOT
- CP** - CO-PILOT
- GU** - GUNNER
- C/C** - CREW CHIEF
- DIRECTION OF SEAT