

**November, 2001**

## **APPENDIX A**

### **NEW BASE START-UP PROCEDURES**

All proposed rappel activities must be fully analyzed and supported by agency-approved planning analysis systems. Rappelling is another tool to expand the usefulness of the helicopter resource. It requires thorough planning and training. The program shall be designed from the beginning to maximize safety while meeting minimum equipment and training requirements as outlined in the Interagency Helicopter Rappel Guide (IHRG), also adhering to Agency Aviation Directives, policies, and procedures. Use of rappelling gives the helicopter crew a means of going directly to areas it would otherwise require additional time to walk to and/or to prepare safe helispots where there would otherwise be marginal ones or none. In policy and practice, rappelling shall supplement, rather than replace, other helicopter use.

After analyzing and justifying the feasibility of a program, the local District/Area Office shall request approval from the appropriate State/Regional Office. The state/regional office shall then coordinate with the local unit on scheduling appropriate training in accordance with IHRG. This process must be documented by an approval letter to the local unit listing any conditions and/or restrictions for the new program. The national office should be notified of any new rappel programs being installed.

Tower design and platform heights must comply with the requirements outlined in the IHRG. Appendix A contains previously approved designs currently in use. It is important to involve local engineering personnel when constructing the rappel platform. These platforms must be structurally sound and able to support force loadings encountered during rappel training. Safety considerations due to adverse weather, earthquakes, winds, etc., will need to be addressed to meet local safety issues. Construction costs for erecting a rappel platform can range from \$8,000.00 to \$30,000.00 depending on design and safety considerations.

Equipment requirements have been outlined in the IHRG. Only approved equipment, as stated in the IHRG, shall be purchased and used for rappel operations. The following table will help in the purchase of this equipment.

With the exception of the Helicopter Rappel Anchor, Snub Strap, Spotter Helicopter Tether Harness, and Figure 8, you should plan to purchase one each of the following pieces of equipment per rappeller as a minimum. If possible, plan to purchase more than the minimum to have extra equipment in the event that replacements are needed.

Depending on the alternatives recommended by your Area, State, or Regional Office, for training new spotters and rappellers, you may need to budget additional dollars to have spotters attend training at an operational rappel base or to pay for travel and per diem to bring qualified instructors to the base to present the training. Plan one week for spotter

training and another week for rappel training. It is not advisable to train first-time spotters and rappellers in the same one-week session.

For bases initiating a rappel program, first-time spotters should not be trained simultaneously with first-time rappellers.

At each new base, a check spotter must be utilized to instruct and certify new spotters and rappellers assuring the new spotter has demonstrated ability to rig helicopter, conduct rappels and cargo let down to the satisfaction of the check spotter. The trainee must meet all the training requirements of IHRG for a spotter.

### EQUIPMENT SOURCE LIST

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Manufacturer</b>	<b>Approximate Cost</b>
Sky Genie Tensile Strength 10,000 lb.	Descent Control Box 6405 Ft. Smith, AR 72906 (501) 646-4832	\$150.00
Sky Genie Rope	Same	\$250.00
Harness, Rappeller, Full Body	High Angle Associates 6002 Calhoun Dr. Fredericksburg, VA 22407 (540) 786-2102	\$225.00
Helmet, Rappellers, SPH-4, SPH-5 or motorcycle type, ANSI Spec. Z-90, DOT approved. (Climbing & modified hardhat types are NOT approved)	Various	\$100.00 - \$500.00
Gloves, Rappel, Double Palm	Sullivan Glove Co. 1315 S.E. Armour Bend, OR 97702 (800) 627-7954 (541) 382-3092	\$25.00 – \$35.00
Rope Bag	BLM, USFS Rappel Bases, Parachute Lofts, and Commercial Sources	\$20.00
Pack Out/Letdown Bags	BLM, USFS Rappel Bases, Parachute Lofts, and Commercial Sources	\$100.00 - \$150.00
Belly Bags/ PG Bags (optional)	BLM, USFS Rappel Bases, Parachute Lofts, and Commercial Sources	\$50.00 - \$100.00
Webbing, Tubular Nylon, ¾" 250' continuous length	Para Gear Lowy Enterprises REI	\$.55/ ft.
Letdown Accordion Pack	BLM, USFS Rappel Bases, Parachute Lofts, and Commercial Sources	\$10.00

New Base Start-Up Procedures

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Manufacturer</b>	<b>Approximate Cost</b>
Safety Snub Strap	BLM, USFS Rappel Bases, Parachute Lofts, or an FAA Certified Master Rigger	\$30.00
Spotter Harness	BLM, USFS Rappel Bases, Parachute Lofts, or an FAA Certified Master Rigger	\$150.00
Jack-the-Ripper Knives	Para Gear 3839 W. Oakton St. Skokie IL, 60076 (847) 679-5905	\$11.00
Carabiner, Steel, Positive Locking	High Angle Associates 6002 Calhoun Dr. Fredericksburg, VA 22407 (540) 786-2102	\$20.00 - \$40.00
Rescue "8"	High Angle Associates 6002 Calhoun Dr. Fredericksburg, VA 22407 (540) 786-2102 and other sources	\$40.00
** Helicopter Rappel Anchor	** MTDC, OAS or FAA STC approval required	\$300.00 - \$3000.00
Gunner Strap	BLM, USFS Rappel Bases, Parachute Lofts, or an FAA Certified Master Rigger	\$75.00 - \$100.00

\*\* All Rappel Anchors need to be approved by one or both agencies, i.e.,  
U.S. Forest Service (Missoula Technology & Development Center) or Office  
of Aircraft Services (Technical Services in Boise office).

Approximate equipment costs per rappeller, not including flight time, is \$900.00.

Plan for approximately one (1) hour flight time for every new rappeller to be trained.

Also plan one (1) hour flight time per rappeller in order to maintain currency requirements. These costs will fluctuate due to the amount of currency rappels required throughout the season.

Plan for approximately 20% above actual equipment need to start up a base. This will allow for replacement/backup equipment.