

PASSENGER GUIDANCE ON THE TRANSPORT OF PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES (PEDS)



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of the UK offshore
energies sector



Introduction

This guidance has been developed by Offshore Energies UK (OEUK) and Step Change in Safety in cooperation with offshore installation duty holders and in consultation with helicopter operators and the aviation safety regulator. It is designed to explain the hazards associated with transporting Portable Electronic Devices (PEDs) in helicopters and the common rules around transportation you will find at heliports when mobilising offshore and must also be followed returning onshore. These must be followed when mobilising offshore and returning onshore.



Installation duty holders and helicopter operators retain the right to enforce more rigorous rules over-and-above those documented here and therefore it is the responsibility of the person travelling offshore to check mobilisation paperwork to ensure that the rules and the requirements for packaging are understood for the safety of all passengers onboard your flight.

A Portable Electronic Device (PED) means any kind of electronic device, typically but not limited to portable electronics brought on board by passengers, or as part of the cargo, that is not included in the configuration of the certified aircraft. It includes all equipment that uses batteries to supply electrical energy including large items such as laptops and tablets down to smaller items such as ear buds, electric toothbrushes and razors.

Failure to follow these rules puts other passengers and the aircraft at risk and deliberate contravention may result in refusal of travel

Hazard

Items containing lithium-ion batteries have the potential to catch fire. They pose a greater risk to helicopters than fixed wing aircraft due to the reduced ability to contain and fight a fire whilst in flight.



Commercial fixed-wing aviation operations have numerous control measures in place to limit the effect of any PED incident. Offshore helicopter flights cannot adopt the same fixed-wing risk mitigation measures and therefore there is a requirement for more stringent rules to limit the likelihood and consequences of a PED fire incident.

It is imperative that everybody travelling in offshore helicopters plays their part in limiting the risk to themselves and colleagues by rigorously following PED policies and rules and restricting their carriage of non-essential PEDs.

Some devices present greater risk than others and require greater control, e.g. e-cigarettes and power banks account for the majority of PED fire or fire-potential events in aviation incidents globally. Power banks have caused serious fires in aircraft resulting in the aircraft being destroyed.

Control measures

The PED risk to offshore helicopters is sufficient to require a restriction on items that travellers may regard as part of normal life and consideration has been given to avoid arbitrary rules.

Number of Devices

Passengers will be encouraged to consider the necessity of PEDs when travelling/ staying offshore and take individual steps to limit the carriage of PEDs in flight. In the UK, there is a limit of 6 PEDs per person. This figure should be respected. Specialised electronic equipment that is required for work purposes is not included in this restriction but must be presented at the heliport as freight and helicopter operators' procedures are then followed. For pocket-sized devices, phones, earbuds, (no cameras, games consoles, kindles etc.) only the number of devices that fit in the survival suit leg pocket can be transported.

Condition and Packaging

All PEDs travelling offshore should be in good condition, functional but free from substantial damage, and contained within a protective case* or protective packaging to reduce the risk of damage and prevent activation during transit. Passengers are responsible for ensuring appropriate cases and packaging. Smart watches or fitness trackers may be worn but must be in flight mode and switched off if possible.

Function

Every PED must be in its safest mode possible, i.e. fully turned off, powered down. Devices that restart on opening should be secured such that this action is not possible, e.g. a laptop or tablet is closed and in a case. Medical equipment that is unable to be fully powered down and switched off must be discussed with the helicopter operator and may be considered for transport.

Communication to Passengers in Advance of Travel

It is essential that information relating to the transport of PEDs is communicated to passengers prior to travel to the respective heliport. This must be communicated by their employing company and/or installation operator as part of mobilisation information. Helicopter operators will ensure passengers are briefed on the actions to take in the event of an incident within the cabin.



* protective case is purpose-built protective packaging that is designed to protect the item from damage, i.e. commonly available hard or soft cases.

Specific Categories of PEDs



Laptops & Tablets

Passengers must ensure laptops and tablets are fully turned off prior to the flight. Laptops and tablets must be placed in a secure, protective case, manufacturers transport bags or suitable pouches to ensure they cannot be accidentally opened and started up. All laptops and tablets will be carried in the helicopter baggage hold.



Mobile Telephones

Mobile phones must be fully turned off prior to flight. These will be carried in the cabin, in the survival suit leg pocket.



Ear Buds

Ear buds should be switched off where possible and stored within their protective cases. These should be carried in the cabin, in the survival suit leg pocket.



Smart Watches and Fitness Trackers

Smart watches and fitness trackers must be switched off and worn or stored in a flight suit leg pocket in a protective case.



Other PEDs

Any other PEDs, e.g. electric shavers, toothbrushes, hand-held games etc., must be fully turned off, stored in a protective case and carried in the helicopter baggage hold.



E-Cigarettes

E-cigarettes are not permitted on helicopters to or from offshore locations. The lack of manufacturing standards and the broad variety of devices make mitigations more difficult to manage.



Power banks and all other spare lithium-ion batteries

Power banks and all other spare lithium-ion batteries present a significant risk due to the power capacity and are therefore not permitted. Batteries required for business purposes should be declared in advance by your company and processed in line with the helicopter operators' procedures.



Spare batteries

Spare batteries must be packaged safely according to helicopter operator rules to avoid short circuits and are to be carried as cargo when pre-agreed with the helicopter operator and contracting company.



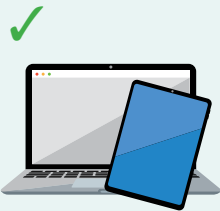
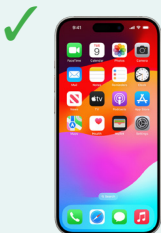
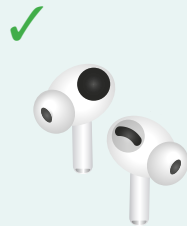
Smart Glasses

Smart glasses refer to a category of glasses that are AI enabled multimodal glasses that usually include some computing and communication elements and recording capability. These are considered PEDs under this policy and are banned due to privacy concerns during travel and offshore in addition to safety related issues common with other PEDs.

Exclusions

Car keys, AirTags and digital watches are not treated as PEDs.

**Every PED must be in its safest mode possible,
i.e. fully turned off and powered down.**

				
Laptops and tablets	Mobile phones	Ear Buds	Smart Watches & Fitness Trackers	Other PEDs
Condition: Good, undamaged Mode: Fully turned off Transport: Protective packaging in helicopter baggage compartment	Condition: Good, undamaged Mode: Fully turned off Transport: Protective case in survival suit leg pocket	Condition: Good, undamaged Mode: Fully turned off where possible Transport: Protective case in survival suit leg pocket	Condition: Good, undamaged Mode: Flight safe and fully turned off where possible Transport: Worn or stored in protective case in survival suit leg pocket	Condition: Good, undamaged Mode: Fully turned off Transport: Protective packaging in helicopter baggage compartment
				
E-cigarettes	Power banks and all other spare lithium-ion batteries	Damaged Mobile Phones or Tablets	Smart Glasses	
NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	NOT PERMITTED	

A **protective case** is purpose-built protective packaging that is designed to protect the item from damage, i.e. commonly available hard or soft cases.



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