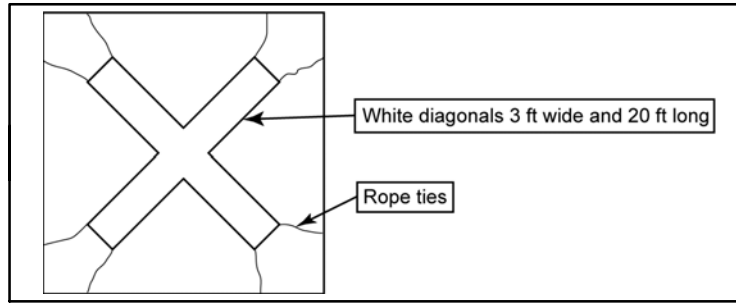


FIG 10-2-2
Closed Helideck Marking



j. Offshore (VFR) Operating Altitudes for Helicopters

1. Background. Mid-air collisions constitute a significant percentage of total fatal offshore helicopter accidents. A method of reducing this risk is the use of coordinated VFR cruising altitudes. To enhance safety through standardized vertical separation of helicopters when flying in the offshore environment, it is recommended that helicopter operators flying in a particular area establish a cooperatively developed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for VFR operating altitudes. An example of such an SOP is contained in this example.

2. Recommended Practice Example

(a) Field Operations. Without compromising minimum safe operating altitudes, helicopters working within an offshore field “constituting a cluster” should use altitudes not to exceed 500 feet.

(b) En Route Operations

(1) Helicopters operating below 750’ AGL should avoid transitioning through offshore fields.

(2) Helicopters en route to and from offshore locations, below 3,000 feet, weather permitting, should use en route altitudes as outlined in TBL 10-2-1.

TBL 10-2-1

Magnetic Heading	Altitude
0° to 179°	750’
	1750’
	2750’
180° 359°	1250’
	2250’

(c) Area Agreements. See HSAC Area Agreement Maps for operating procedures for onshore high density traffic locations.

NOTE-
Pilots of helicopters operating VFR above 3,000 feet above the surface should refer to the current Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR Part 91), and paragraph 3-1-4, Basic VFR Weather Minimums, of the AIM.

(d) Landing Lights. Aircraft landing lights should be on to enhance aircraft identification:

- (1)** During takeoff and landings;
- (2)** In congested helicopter or fixed wing traffic areas;
- (3)** During reduced visibility; or,
- (4)** Anytime safety could be enhanced.

k. Offshore Helidecks/Landing Communications

1. Background. To enhance safety, and provide appropriate time to prepare for helicopter operations, the following is recommended when anticipating a landing on an offshore helideck.

2. Recommended Practices

(a) Before landing on an offshore helideck, pilots are encouraged to establish communications with the company owning or operating the helideck if frequencies exist for that purpose.

(b) When impracticable, or if frequencies do not exist, pilots or operations personnel should attempt to contact the company owning or operating the helideck by telephone. Contact should be made before the pilot departs home base/point of departure to advise of intentions and obtain landing permission if necessary.