Bird Strike Protocol

While bird strikes in helicopters are not a desired event, they are not uncommon. Because of slow airspeed, high inertia rotor system and light weights of most bird populations on Palmyra, the risk from an operational standpoint appears acceptable. In the event of a bird strike, procedures outlined below will be followed to ensure the safety of personnel and equipment and to document the event in accordance with Federal Fish and Wildlife Permit (#MB44187A-0).

Three possible situations are identified to occur in the event of a bird strike:

* The event of the strike is unknown by the pilot, and identified after landing likely by the mechanic during an operational inspection. Termed **“Unknown”**
* The event is felt or observed by the pilot during a flight but has not affected helicopter operations to the pilot knowledge. Termed **“Known”**
* The event triggers an operational failure of the helicopter. Termed **“Strike Emergency”**

In the event an **Unknown** strike is identified,

1. The Incident Commander will be immediately notified by radio.
2. Strike evidence will be photographed by Air Ops Supervisor (AOS). Any feathers or other identifying biologicals will be collected and placed into a ziplock bag for biological inspection and given to the ICC.
3. The helicopter will be thoroughly inspected for structural integrity and flight integrity according to established protocols by the Air Ops (including helicopter maintenance specialist and verified by the pilots).
4. Any mechanical irregularities will be noted and corrected by the mechanic and recorded by the AOS.
5. The Incident Commander will be provided with documentation of corrective actions and go/no go status of aircraft by the AOS prior to next flight.
6. The IAG will discuss the bird strike at nightly IAG briefing and make recommendations as appropriate.

In the event a **Known** strike,

1. Pilot will radio in strike to AOS, and return to LZ if possible or nearest area judged safe to land.
2. AOS will immediately notify Incident Commander by radio.
3. Pilot will provide information of location on helicopter of strike and observed details of the bird and strike incident to AOS.
4. Strike evidence will be photographed by AOS. Any feathers or other identifying biologicals will be collected and placed into a ziplock bag for biological inspection and given to the Incident Commander.
5. Helicopter will be thoroughly inspected for structural integrity and flight integrity according to established FAA protocols by the Air Ops (including helicopter maintenance specialist and verified by the pilots).
6. Any mechanical irregularities will be noted and corrected by mechanic and recorded by AOS.
7. The Incident Commander will be provided with documentation of corrective actions and go/no go status of aircraft by the AOS prior to next flight.
8. The IAG will discuss the bird strike at nightly IAG briefing and make recommendations as appropriate.

In the event a **Strike Emergency**,

1. Pilot will radio in MAYDAY to AOS.
2. Emergency Response is initiated.
3. Incident is reported to off island USFWS by Incident Commander.