Helicopter Rope Suspension Techniques (HRST) Operations

U.S. Marine Corps

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
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FOREWORD

Helicopter rope suspension techniques (HRST) provide Marines with the ability to conduct helicopter insertions and extractions where helicopter landings are impractical. Marine Corps Reference Publication (MCRP) 3-11.4A, *Helicopter Rope Suspension Techniques (HRST) Operations*, establishes standards; serves as a guide for the realistic and safe training of Marines in HRST skills; and outlines the techniques, procedures, and equipment used to perform HRST. It is not intended to teach the basics of rope training or the basics of rappelling as they apply to cliff assault.

MCRP 3-11.4A applies to all Marines involved in HRST operations. It delineates responsibilities among aircrews and HRST personnel regarding the installation and maintenance of HRST equipment and the procedures required to conduct HRST operations. To enhance interoperability, the HRST rigging procedures for helicopters from other Services have been included in this publication.


Reviewed and approved this date.

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

EDWARD HANLON, JR.
Lieutenant General, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding General
Marine Corps Combat Development Command

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Unless otherwise stated, whenever the masculine gender is used, both men and women are included.
HELICOPTER ROPE SUSPENSION TECHNIQUES (HRST) OPERATIONS

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Helicopter rope suspension techniques (HRST) is a high-risk operation that can be conducted safely if the contents of this publication are adhered to and current directives are followed. Noncompliance with this publication or current directives and any unauthorized modifications or installation of unauthorized HRST equipment can result in injury or death to personnel and/or damage to equipment.

Note: This term, HRST, modifies the existing term and is approved for inclusion in the next edition of Marine Corps Reference Publication (MCRP) 5-12C, Marine Corps Supplement to the Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms.

Throughout this publication, the HRST master’s commands are in bold italic text. All other commands are in italic text.

Personnel

A safe HRST evolution is the responsibility of all participants, from the unit commander to the individual roper. To ensure a safe training evolution and to provide a dynamic environment for HRST operations, a clear understanding of the responsibilities of all those involved is required. This chapter tasks and defines specific responsibilities associated with HRST operations.

Unit Commander

A unit commander’s primary responsibility is to ensure that all HRST is accomplished in a safe manner and in accordance with this publication and Marine Corps Order (MCO) 3500.42, Marine Corps HRST Policy and Program Administration. Additional responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Ensuring that HRST within the unit is conducted and supervised by an HRST master and safety insert officer (SIO) who are certified and current in accordance with MCO 3500.42.
- Ensuring that all HRST certifications and currency dates are properly recorded (i.e., in a service record book, officer qualification record, and/or training record) in accordance with MCO 3500.42.
- Ensuring that all personnel conducting HRST from a helicopter have successfully completed static tower training within the parameters established in MCO 3500.42.
- Ensuring that all HRST equipment assigned on the unit’s table of equipment is properly maintained, inspected, and stowed after use.

HRST Master

The HRST master’s primary responsibility is the overall safety of all ropers and the conduct and safety of the HRST operation. Therefore, the HRST master must know and understand this publication and all current HRST policies and directives. Once planning begins, the HRST master oversees safety and continues to monitor safety throughout the entire HRST evolution. HRST equipment serviceability and safety is also the responsibility of the HRST master (see chap. 2).

Descent and extraction authority is the sole responsibility of the HRST master. However, the aircraft commander may abort or cancel a descent/extraction if conditions are considered unsafe. During special patrol insertion and extraction (SPIE), the HRST master informs the aircraft commander when the ropers are connected and ready to lift. The crew chief checks for obstacles and clears the aircraft commander for lift and transition to forward flight. During fast roping