

4. When the helicopter approaches the scene, it will normally orbit at least one time as the flight crew observes the wind direction and obstacles that could interfere with the landing. This is often referred to as the “high reconnaissance” maneuver.

**f. Wind Direction and Touchdown Area**

1. Determine from which direction the wind is blowing. Helicopters normally land and takeoff into the wind.

2. If contact can be established with the pilot, either directly or indirectly through the HEMS ground communications specialist, describe the wind in terms of the direction the wind is *from* and the speed.

3. Common natural sources of wind direction information are smoke, dust, vegetation movement, water streaks and waves. Flags, pennants, streamers can also be used. When describing the direction, use the compass direction from which the wind is blowing (example: from the North–West).

4. Wind speed can be measured by small hand–held measurement devices, or an observer’s estimate can be used to provide velocity information. The wind value should be reported in knots (nautical miles per hour). If unable to numerically measure wind speed, use TBL 10–2–3 to estimate velocity. Also, report if the wind conditions are gusty, or if the wind direction or velocity is variable or has changed recently.

5. If any obstacle(s) exist, ensure their description, position and approximate height are communicated to the pilot on the initial radio call.