



Company: Guardian Helicopters, Inc.  
 Director of Safety: Robert Satz  
 Industry: Helicopter Operator  
 Publish Date: February 26, 2024

# GUARDIAN HELICOPTERS JOURNEY TOWARDS SAFETY WITH IS-BAO REGISTRATION

Guardian Helicopters, Inc. (GHI), a Southern California-based utility FAA 135/133/137 service provider, took a significant step in July 2022 towards solidifying its commitment to safety by achieving Stage 1 International Standard for Business Aircraft Operations (IS-BAO) registration.

This case study explores the rationale behind Guardian's pursuit of IS-BAO, the implementation process, and the potential impact of this achievement on the company and its stakeholders.

Founded in 2001 by entrepreneur Phillip DiFiore, Guardian Helicopters has grown steadily, offering diverse services such as construction support, utility linework, aerial surveys, fire suppression, and personnel transport. Operating a fleet of Bell and Airbus helicopters, Guardian is also an active member of Helicopter Aviation International (HAI), a non-profit association providing advocacy and continuing education for the rotor industry worldwide.

Managed by the International Business Aviation Council (IBAC), IS-BAO is a globally recognized, voluntary code of best practices for managing safety

in business aircraft operations, including helicopters. Developed specifically for and by this aviation sector, IS-BAO allows operators to systematically identify and mitigate risks, promote a culture of safety, and continuously improve their safety performance.

**In the demanding world of helicopter operations, maintaining safety is paramount.**

Robert Satz, Director of Safety

The Guardian team recognized the need for a robust safety management system (SMS) to address the inherent risks associated with their type of operation. Driven by the core values of safety and professionalism, Guardian embarked on the IS-BAO journey in 2022 that involved:

**Commitment from Leadership:** The senior management team actively championed the initiative, providing necessary resources and fostering a safety culture throughout the organization.

**Gap Analysis:** A thorough evaluation of existing safety practices identified areas for improvement and alignment with IS-BAO standards.

**Documentation and Training:** Comprehensive documentation of policies, procedures, and risk assessments was developed, followed by extensive training for all personnel.

**External Audit:** An independent accredited auditor conducted a rigorous on-site assessment to verify compliance with IS-BAO requirements.

In October 2022, Guardian successfully achieved Stage 1 registration, demonstrating that the foundation of their SMS is established and aligns with IS-BAO principles.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON IS-BAO VISIT IBAC.ORG.**

## GUARDIAN HELICOPTERS JOURNEY TOWARDS SAFETY WITH IS-BAO REGISTRATION CONT...

Robert Satz, Director of Safety at Guardian Helicopters said, "Reaching IS-BAO Stage 1 was indeed a testament to our team's commitment to safety and risk mitigation. This achievement has helped us to grow and expand our business with vital safety processes in place. It reduces risks, especially when backfilling positions and training new team members. We look forward to advancing to Stage 2."

Andrew Karas, IS-BAO Programme Director, commented, "Guardian's accomplishment reflects the entire team's dedication and signifies Guardian's commitment to continuous safety improvement."

The IS-BAO registration brings several benefits to Guardian:

**Enhanced Safety:** Implementing a structured SMS based on IS-BAO practices is expected to further reduce risks and improve safety outcomes.

**Operational Efficiency:** Streamlined procedures and improved risk management can increase operational efficiency and productivity.

**Competitive Advantage:** IS-BAO registration demonstrates Guardian's dedication to safety, potentially enhancing its reputation and attracting new clients. In addition, IS-BAO helps Guardian meet contract requirements, allowing for more diverse international business.

**Organizational Culture:** A strong safety culture fostered by IS-BAO can boost employee morale and encourage engagement with operational best practices and continuous improvement.

Looking ahead, Guardian plans to progress towards Stage 2 registration in 2024, which signifies a more mature and integrated SMS. They are also committed to continuously monitoring and improving their safety performance, using IS-BAO as a framework for ongoing assessment and refinement.

By embracing this internationally recognized standard, Guardian has positioned itself for continued growth and success while prioritizing the well-being of its personnel, clients, and the communities they serve. This Guardian story highlights the positive impact that IS-BAO can have on helicopter operators, raising the bar for safety standards in the industry.

### ABOUT GUARDIAN HELICOPTERS

Guardian Helicopters, Inc. has been operating and providing excellence in utility and construction helicopter services since 2001. GHI offers lifting capabilities up to 4000 pounds, using a fleet of light to medium helicopters safely and cost-effectively. GHI recently introduced the BK117B2 light twin engine helicopter to their fleet. This incredible machine adds a level of safety for operations such as Human External Cargo (HEC), over water, and other safety critical flight profiles. Extensive experience and professionalism are the foundation to exceed expectations, and GHI's extensive fleet, versatile capabilities, and commitment to safety means no job is too big or too small. To learn more, go to [GuardianHelicoptersUSA.com](http://GuardianHelicoptersUSA.com).

### ABOUT IS-BAO

The International Standard for Business Aircraft Operations (IS-BAO™) was developed by the business aviation community and supported by the International Business Aviation Council (IBAC), a global non-profit association representing the global business aviation community. Since 2002, IS-BAO has been helping operators apply industry best practices by challenging them to review and compare their safety-related policies, processes, and procedures and then make improvements, elevating them to the worldwide standard for business aviation.

Similar to an ISO-9000 standard of practice, IS-BAO is specifically formulated for business and rotor aviation and accepted worldwide as the benchmark for safety and efficiency in the sector's operations. Hundreds of operators on all continents have adopted IS-BAO as the definitive standard for flight operations. Contact [ISBAO@IBAC.org](mailto:ISBAO@IBAC.org) with questions.



As a non-profit, international trade association, IBAC proudly represents the interests of business aviation – for the industry, by the industry – through its global advocacy, permanent observer status at the ICAO, and by raising the standard for safety with IS-BAO® and IS-BAH® Programmes.

