



VIRGINIA RADIO CONTROLLED HELICOPTER ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS (REVISED JUNE 22, 2008)

Article I: Name

The club shall be known as the Virginia Radio Controlled Helicopter Association, hereinafter referred to as VARCHA and/or Club.

Article II: Purpose

The purpose of this organization is to promote the building and flying of rotary wing aircraft in a friendly environment that stresses fun, learning and mutual respect.

The Club shall accomplish this purpose by:

1. Providing organized educational & social activities relating to model helicopters
2. Representing the hobby and club at both helicopter events, online forums and other hobby related venues.

Article III: Membership

Qualifications

Membership shall be open to the following without regard to race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, or the presence of a disability.:

1. A member in good standing of the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA)

New Members

New membership applications must be accepted by a unanimous vote of the Executive Board. Once accepted by the Executive Board, the new member shall be under a ninety (90) day probationary period, during which time the new member must demonstrate his/her ability to fly in accordance with the pilot checkout guidelines. The new member may not fly solo at the club field until he/she has satisfactorily completed the pilot checkout guidelines. Once all membership requirements have been met the new member shall be promoted to Open/Senior/Youth membership status.

Membership Classes

All members shall be designated a membership class according to the criteria below.

Probationary - Any new member that is within the initial 90 day probationary period.

Open - Any member that is over the age of eighteen years old, as of January 1 of the membership year.

Senior - Any member that is over the age of sixty-five years old, as of January 1 of the membership year.

Youth - Any member that is under the age of eighteen years old, as of January 1 of the membership year.

Initiation Fees

Any person wishing to petition for membership shall be assessed an initiation fee of \$50.00. The Executive Board may waive this fee upon simple majority approval of the Executive Board.

Dues

Dues are \$65.00 per calendar year for Open members, \$35.00 for Senior members and \$25.00 for Youth members.

In order to encourage youth members to engage in this hobby, the Executive Board may elect to offer membership scholarships to any individual under the age of eighteen (18) it deems beneficial to the club or activity. These scholarships can be given only by unanimous decision of the Executive Board.

Resignation

Any member in good standing may resign his/her membership by giving written notice to the Executive Board.

Termination

If any member ceases to have the qualification necessary for membership in the AMA, his/her membership in the Club shall thereby terminate, subject to reinstatement upon restoration of eligibility within the AMA.

Expulsion

The Executive Board may take disciplinary action against any member and any membership may be terminated for cause by affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Executive Board for the following reasons:

- a. Willfully commits any act or omission which is in violation of any of the terms of these Bylaws
- b. Willfully commits any act or omission which is a violation of the Rules of the AMA
- c. Willfully commits any act or omission which is detrimental to the Club or to model aviation.

Reinstatement

A vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the club who are present, or a minimum of 6, which ever is lower is required for reinstatement to VARCHA.

Article IV: Executive Officers

Officers

The executive officers shall consist of four positions:

- a. President
- b. Vice-President
- c. Secretary
- d. Treasurer

All members of the Executive Office are also members of the Safety Committee.

Executive Board

The Executive Board shall consist of the four Executive Officers and shall have responsibility for the control, direction and general management of the affairs and business of the club.

Terms of Office

The term of office for the Executive Officers shall be two years. Officers may not serve more than four consecutive terms, but may be reelected after the lapse of a year.

Duties

President

The President shall be the executive officer of the club and shall preside at all meetings. He/She shall be spokesman for the club and shall appoint standing and special committees as he/she deems necessary. He/She shall cast the deciding vote in any case where a tie is encountered.

Vice-President

The Vice-President shall assist the President in all matters and shall assume the duties of the President if, for any reason, the President is not able to perform his/her duties. He/She shall be responsible for club meeting schedules and other club scheduled events, which may be necessary or requested by the club officers.

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall have charge of all club funds. He/She shall collect dues when they are due and is authorized to pay any and all club obligations from these funds. He/She shall keep appropriate records of all club monetary transactions and shall provide a Treasurers report as requested by the Executive Board.

Secretary

The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all regular scheduled and called club meetings and record meeting attendance. He/She shall maintain an up-to-date membership record of all members including their name, mailing address, AMA membership number, and telephone number.

Appointed Officers

There shall be a minimum of three (3) Appointed Officers of the club, and shall consist of the following positions:

- a. Safety Officer
- b. Field Marshal
- c. Pilot Instructor(s)

Duties

Safety Officer

The Safety Officer is the major developer and enforcer of safety for all VARCHA members, guests and spectators . He/She shall enforce all the requirements as set forth in the AMA Safety Code. In addition, he/she shall oversee and process all violations of the Safety Code, in accordance with Article X: Grievance Procedure.

He/She shall also be a point of contact for any Club member voicing concerns regarding safety of the club or safety of Club members. This includes following the existing grievance procedure documented in the bylaws.

The Safety Officer is also responsible for ensuring all members and guests are safely operating a transmitter on approved frequencies/band(s).

Field Marshal

The Field Marshal shall be responsible for monitoring the condition of VARCHA flying site(s), coordinate flying site maintenance including mowing and building upkeep, recommend flying site improvements, and taking other actions as necessary to insure that AMA and VARCHA operational and safety rules are followed.

The Field Marshal is also responsible for ensuring all members and guests are safely operating a transmitter on approved frequencies/band(s).

The Field Marshal is a member of the Safety Committee and as such has the responsibility to enforce and follow through the grievance procedure as outlined in Article X.

Pilot Instructor(s)

The Pilot Instructor position is appointed by a majority vote of the Safety Committee. These positions are filled on an as-needed basis to ensure timely evaluation of new members as outlined in **Appendix A: Pilot Checkout Guidelines**. Members that hold these positions are required to be available to observe and score a pilot during the Pilot Checkout Procedure.

In addition, Pilot Instructors shall assist new members in obtaining the basics of helicopter flight, and are authorized to assist new pilots via use of a “Buddy Box”.

Vacancies

Officer vacancies are to be filled by vote of the remaining Executive Board

Article V: Meetings

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the members shall be held in December of each year. Elections of Executive Officers shall take place at that meeting.

Mid-Season Meeting

A Mid-Season meeting of the members shall be held in May, June or July of each year.

Special Meetings

Special Meetings of members may be call by the President or by a simple majority vote of the Executive Board, with at least fourteen (14) days advance notice, or such shorter time if in an emergency arises and notice is given to all concerned.

Executive Board Meetings

The Executive Board shall meet at least quarterly at a designated location. Executive Board meetings may be called by the President or a simple majority of the Executive Board.

Quorum

A quorum is necessary to conduct business with the general membership at routine meetings or any special meeting. A quorum shall exist of at least 10% of the members of the club, or a minimum of 6 voting members, whichever is lower, are present.

Article VI: Committees

Standing Committees

Safety Committee

The Safety Committee shall consist of the following:

- a. President
- b. Vice-President
- c. Secretary
- d. Treasurer
- e. Safety Officer
- f. Field Marshal

The Safety Committee is responsible for adjudicating on any safety issues. In addition may appoint Pilot Instructors by a simple majority.

Appointed Committees

Committees shall be designated by the President or simple majority vote of the Executive Board as necessary to carry out the work of VARCHA. The President may designate a Chairperson of each

Committee. Committee members shall be approved by the Executive Board. The Committee Chairperson shall be responsible for the actions of his/her committee and shall report any committee meetings or action to the Executive Board.

Article VII: Election of Officers

The Offices of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be filled by election at the Annual Meeting.

Nominations for officers shall be made by a three-person Nominating Committee appointed by the President at the Executive Board Meeting of the fourth quarter. The Nominating Committee shall present a list of nominations to the Club to be voted on at the Annual Meeting.

Voting

All elections shall consist of secret ballot and the candidate receiving the highest number of votes, for the position in which they are considered shall be elected.

Provisions

No person is eligible to hold office who is not a member of the club. New members are not eligible for the Executive Officer positions until after one (1) year of membership. New members may vote in the Executive Officer elections only after one (1) year of membership.

Article VIII: Amendment of these Bylaws

This Constitution & Bylaws may be amended by submission in writing of the proposed amendment at any regular or special meeting of the club. The proposal shall be received and acted upon at the next succeeding regular meeting of the club.

Amendments may be acted upon at the announced meeting or by mail ballot. A two-thirds majority of the members present at the meeting or responding by mail or electronic ballot shall be required to adopt an amendment.

Written notice of the meeting shall be given three weeks prior to the meeting at which the amendment is voted upon.

Article IX: Dissolution

The Club may be dissolved at any time by the written consent of not less than a simple majority of the members. In the event of the dissolution other than for purposes of reorganization of the Club whether voluntary or involuntary or by operation of law, none of the property of the Club nor any proceeds thereof nor any assets of the Club shall be distributed to any members of the Club but after payment of the debts of the Club. Any remaining fund/assets shall be distributed equally amongst the then current VARCHA members in good standing.

Article X: Grievance Procedure

The grievance procedure provides a mechanism to enforce existing safety rules by providing a progressive disciplinary system when needed. Although most complaints can be resolved informally, if a complaint is serious or cannot be resolved informally, the matter should be referred to the Safety Committee for its consideration by means of a Grievance Form to be filled out and turned into the Safety Committee Chairman. At least one witness is required to sign the Grievance Form.

The Safety Officer and Executive Board by majority vote shall carry out action on the following:

A grievance form shall be filled out and turned into the Safety Officer/Committee Chairman. At least one witness is required.

1. First Violation

Viewpoints of both complainants and accused shall be considered. Complainant's name shall be disclosed. The Safety Officer/Committee shall give a verbal reprimand to the accused, and this shall be recorded in the Club records.

2. Second Violation

Complainant's name shall be disclosed. The accused has the right to a written rebuttal, to be reviewed by the Club Safety Officer/Committee. If the Committee so decides, the flying privileges of the accused shall be suspended for thirty (30) days.

3. Third Violation

The Safety Office/Committee shall notify the accused in writing and the Club members via the Club newsletter or website that the club shall vote on the expulsion of the accused at the next meeting. Said expulsion shall last for a one-year minimum. A member may be expelled from the Club only upon a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the membership present at the meeting. Voting shall be by secret ballot at a regular or special meeting. The expelled member may reapply for membership after the expiration of the expulsion time period.

The three actions shall not be enforced unless they are accumulated within a two-year period of time.

Any member receiving a grievance, who directs any retaliation action against the person filing said grievance, shall be subject to immediate expulsion from the Club. This is to include threats, intimidation, physical harm, intentional equipment damage, or any other action deemed to be retaliatory by the Club Officers.

Appendix A: Pilot Checkout Guidelines

Adapted from the IRCHA Pilot Proficiency Program

The Pilot Checkout Guidelines are the minimum guidelines set forth by the Virginia Radio Controlled Helicopter Association for a pilot/member to be allowed solo flight at the club field. These guidelines are enacted for not only the safety of the members and spectators, but for the pilot as well.

In order for a member to receive his/her Pilot Checkout, the petitioning member must complete the following maneuvers under the observation of an Safety Committee member or Pilot Instructor.

These guidelines represent the most basic maneuvers and is characterized by the pilot becoming safe and proficient in the hover and its related phases.

Maneuver Descriptions

Each of these maneuvers shall be started with the helicopter oriented either tail-in or nose-in, at the discretion and comfort of the pilot.

Take-Off

1. A take-off should be performed straight up from the landing area*, at a constant rate of climb with little or no lateral deviations.
2. Bring the helicopter to a vertical stop at a height of about six (6) to eight (8) feet (eye height). The helicopter should come to a complete stop with little vertical bounce or dip, and a little to no lateral wobble or drifting.

**The landing area is defined as a 36" diameter circle, positioned approximately 15 - 20' centered in front of pilot.*

Stationary Hover

1. After take-off the helicopter should come to a complete stop with little or no vertical bounce, dip, lateral drifting or wobble.
2. Hold the helicopter in a Stationary Hover for one (1) minute
3. The stationary hover should give the appearance of being under total control.

Hover Laterally

1. From take-off area hover forward ten (10) feet, hold for ten (10) seconds.
2. From there hover backward twenty (20) feet, hold for ten (10) seconds.
3. From there hover forward ten (10) feet until you are over the landing area, then hover to the left ten (10) feet, hold for ten (10) seconds.
4. From there hover to the right twenty (20) feet, hold for ten (10) seconds.
5. From there hover back to the left ten (10) feet until you are over the landing area.
6. Land with the skids completely within the landing area.

Multiple-level Hover

1. Take-off, hover for five (5) seconds.
2. Climb straight up to a height of about twenty (20) feet; hold for five (5) seconds.
3. Descend vertically about ten (10) feet; hold for five (5) seconds.
4. Land with the skids completely within the landing area.

Three Quarter View Hovering

1. Take-off to Hover, Hold for five (5) seconds.
2. Rotate the nose of the helicopter either left or right forty-five (45) degrees, hold for five (5) seconds.
3. Rotate the nose of the helicopter back to straight ahead, hold for five (5) seconds.

4. Continue rotating the nose of the helicopter forty-five (45) degrees to the other side, hold for five (5) seconds.
5. Rotate the nose back to straight ahead, hold for five (5) seconds.
6. Land with the skids completely within the landing area.

Diagonal Hovering

1. After take-off from the landing area within center of a 10 yard box, from Stationary Hover, maintaining a constant heading, move the helicopter diagonally to a corner of the box, hold for five (5) seconds, then return to the center of the box.
2. Repeat with the remaining 3 corners of the box.
3. Land with the skids completely within the landing area.

Constant Heading Circle Hovering

1. Take-off, hold hover for five (5) seconds.
2. Move the helicopter to the right, keeping the tail pointed in the same direction; complete a ten (10) yard circle in front of the pilot until the helicopter is hovering over the take-off point.
3. Move the helicopter to the left, repeating step 2 above.
4. Land with the skids completely within the landing area