5/30/2024 **FOR YOUR INFORMATION** 2024-107/8-8

2110800

To: Airport Manager, Kennedy Intl, (JFK), NY, FAA (ATM JFK Tower)

Info: FAA (AAS-1, AAS-300, AVP-1, AVP-200, AJI-144, AJV-A, AEA-600, AFS-260, AFS -200, Director of Air Traffic Operations ESA North, Runway Safety Team), A4A, AAAE, ALPA, AOPA, APA, ASAP, CAPA, ATSAP, ATSG, IATA, IBT, ICAO, ICASS, IFALPA, IPA, NATCA, NBAA, NTSB, RAA

From: Becky L. Hooey, Director
NASA Aviation Safety Reporting System

Re: JFK ATC Procedures

We recently received ASRS reports describing a safety concern that may involve your area of operational responsibility. We do not have sufficient details to assess either the factual accuracy or possible gravity of the report. It is our policy to relay the reported information to the appropriate authority for evaluation and any necessary follow-up. We feel you should be aware of the enclosed deidentified report.

To properly assess the usefulness of our alert message service, we would appreciate it if you would take the time to give us your feedback on the value of the information that we have provided. Please contact Dr. Becky Hooey at (408) 541-2854 or email at becky.l.hooey@nasa.gov.

Aviation Safety Reporting System
P.O. Box 189 | Moffett Field, CA | 94035-0189

ACN 2110800

DATE / TIME	
Date of Occurrence	202404
Local Time Of Day	1201 to 1800
PLACE	
Locale	JFK.Tower
State	NY
Altitude - MSL	500
ENVIRONMENT	
Flight Conditions	VMC
AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X	
ATC / Advisory - Tower	JFK
Make Model Name	Helicopter
Operating Under FAR Part	135
PERSON 1	
Function - Flight Crew	Captain
Function - Flight Crew	Pilot Not Flying
ASRS Report Number	2110800
EVENTS	
Anomaly	ATC Issue - All Types
Anomaly	Deviation - Altitude - Excursion From Assigned Altitude
Anomaly	Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Clearance
Anomaly	Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Published Material / Policy
Anomaly	Inflight Event / Encounter - CFTT / CFIT
Detector - Person	Flight Crew
Miss Distance - Horizontal	500
Miss Distance - Vertical	200
Result - Flight Crew	Requested ATC Assistance / Clarification
Result - Flight Crew	Returned To Clearance
Result - Flight Crew	Took Evasive Action

NARRATIVE 1

Flying eastbound from JRB to ZZZ via helicopter TRACK route with class B clearance from JFK Tower, 119.1. Normally when JFK is landing Runway 22, clearance issued is maintain 1000, cross BELMONT at 500. On this flight, the clearance issued and read back was to cross JAMAICA station at 500 ft. Upon realizing this clearance didn't seem to allow for adequate separation from the newly constructed buildings charted at 386 ft., I attempted to contact the Tower but due to frequency congestion was unable. Also there was police helicopter traffic behind us that we had on TCAS but not visually, so slowing or turning around was not practical. We had to deviate south of course and up to approximately 700 ft. (about 200 ft. above clearance limit) to maintain a safe distance from obstacles. There was no traffic above, and we were an adequate distance west of the Runway 22 corridor with no other traffic in sight. After safe passage, we immediately returned to cleared route and altitude without further incident.

Due to the ongoing frequency congestion, was unable to discuss with JFK Tower, they made no mention of it either. Also I attempted to reach the Tower by phone to discuss, but both numbers were constant busy signals.

I have traveled this route often, and have never been issued a clearance limit of 500 ft. at JAMAICA. Also it seems that either the buildings are higher than charted or there is an altimeter discrepancy between JFK and that area. I think 500 ft MSL is too low for safe transition in that immediate area, going forward I will not accept that clearance and take an alternate route if that is to become the norm.

SYNOPSIS

Air taxi helicopter pilot reported JFK Tower issued them a clearance to cross Jamaica reporting point at 500 feet which placed them in unsafe proximity to newly constructed buildings. The reporter could not verify their clearance with JFK Tower due to frequency congestion.