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Canadian Helicopter Pilot Logbook: Flight Time vs Air Time

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Executive Summary

A Canadian helicopter pilot can hold three different durations for the same sortie: a rotor or engine meter interval, the sum of airborne intervals, and a span that includes ground stops with the pilot at the controls. They are not interchangeable, and which one belongs in a personal logbook depends on the aircraft configuration and on facts that a trip sheet rarely states. This report, current as of 17 November 2026, sets out a way to compare them without overwriting any original.

The binding Canadian text separates two terms. The **Canadian Aviation Regulations (CARs)** define **"air time"**, with respect to keeping technical records, as the time from the moment an aircraft leaves the surface until it contacts the surface at the next point of landing (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca). They define **"flight time"** as the time from the moment an aircraft first moves under its own power for the purpose of taking off until it comes to rest at the end of the flight (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca). The personal log required by **CAR 401.08** lists "the flight time" among its per-flight particulars (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca).

Transport Canada's **Advisory Circular (AC) 700-052**, Issue 01, effective **1 August 2019**, is guidance and not regulation (tc.canada.ca). For skid-equipped helicopters it says flight time includes intermediate stops where the pilot remains at the controls (tc.canada.ca), and it directs that logging follow the CARs definitions and not the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) definition (www.tc.gc.ca). Wheeled helicopters calculate flight time in the same manner as aeroplanes (tc.canada.ca). The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) uses a rotor-start-to-rotor-stop wording for helicopters (www.easa.europa.eu), and the United States rule uses "moves under its own power for the purpose of flight" (www.law.cornell.edu). Neither can be imported into a Canadian entry.

A stipulated, hypothetical skid-equipped example shows the arithmetic: rotor start at 08:00, first departure at 08:10, a full intermediate landing at 08:30 with the pilot remaining at the controls, next departure at 08:40, final rest with shutdown intended at 09:00, and rotors stopped at 09:05. The candidate flight interval is **50 minutes**,

the airborne intervals total **40 minutes**, and the rotor-running interval is **65 minutes**. The 10-minute gap between 50 and 40 is the marked ground stop; the 15-minute gap between 65 and 50 is the start-up and shutdown interval. These are educational timestamps, not a ruling on any pilot's credit.

The practical conclusion is procedural. Keep each source figure in its own field, label the configuration, mark ground-stop facts, hold unknowns as unknown, and send unresolved edge cases to the operator or Transport Canada. A paper ledger can do this, and so can an electronic logbook with custom fields, once the pilot has checked which fields exist.

Introduction and Background

Helicopter pilots in Canada work with records where one sortie generates several clocks. A meter may run with the engine or rotor system. A journey log or trip sheet may carry an air-time figure used for technical records. A company system may export a block-style duration. The pilot's own logbook needs one flight-time figure per flight, and a pilot importing totals from another system must decide whether that figure supports the entry.

This report addresses that reconciliation question for professional pilots, including charter and aerial-work pilots and those documenting experience toward a licence or rating. It is a personal-record article. It does not explain how to operate a helicopter, how to land, or how to choose a surface, it is not maintenance or duty-limit advice, and it does not replace an operator's approved procedures or a decision by Transport Canada.

Three source types are kept apart. **Binding law** is the CARs text on the Justice Laws site. **Guidance** is Transport Canada's AC 700-052, which says it "on its own does not change, create, amend or permit deviations from regulatory requirements" (www.tc.gc.ca). **Vendor statements** are what logbook and meter suppliers say on their own pages. Foreign rules appear only as contrast, each labelled with its jurisdiction.

The research found no superseding guidance. The Transport Canada advisory circular index, modified 10 November 2026, still lists AC 700-052, "Recording of Flight Time for Skid-Equipped Helicopters" (tc.canada.ca). The AC's own page carries a modification date of 9 August 2019 (www.tc.gc.ca). A negative search result is not proof that nothing changed, so a reader preparing a formal submission should check the index again. The AC is also seven years old, and that age is part of its scope.

Definitions and Source Hierarchy in Canada

What the CARs say

Subsection 101.01(1) of the CARs defines both terms. Air time, "with respect to keeping technical records", runs from the moment an aircraft leaves the surface until it comes into contact with the surface at the next point of landing (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca). Flight time runs from the moment an aircraft first moves under its own power for the purpose of taking off until the moment it comes to rest at the end of the flight (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca). The record-keeping qualifier matters: the AC repeats that air time "is used primarily for technical component record keeping" (www.tc.gc.ca).

The definitions cover "aircraft", which the AC notes includes both aeroplanes and helicopters. The flight-time definition contains no helicopter-specific wording, so helicopter interpretation comes from guidance.

What CAR 401.08 requires of the personal log

CAR 401.08 applies to every applicant for, and every holder of, a flight crew permit, licence or rating (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca). The personal log must contain the holder's name and particulars for each flight. For a helicopter flight these include the place of departure and the place of arrival (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca) and the flight time. The requirement to list "all of the intermediate take-offs and landings" is limited by its own wording to aeroplane flights (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca), so the regulation does not require a helicopter pilot to list intermediate landings, although intermediate stops matter to the flight-time figure under the AC.

Only the holder, or a person the holder authorizes, may make an entry (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca). That is why this report treats the personal log as the pilot's own record: the pilot decides the entry, and source figures are evidence for it. CAR 401.08(1) requires the log to be maintained in accordance with subsection (2) and with the personnel licensing standards, so questions about format or field layout go to Transport Canada; as read on 17 November 2026, the text of 401.08 itself states no retention period. The retention period found in the neighbouring provisions belongs to the aircraft journey log, which an owner keeps for not less than one year (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca).

What the journey log carries

CAR 605.92 requires every owner of an aircraft to keep technical records, and the journey log is among them (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca). Schedule I, item 4, calls for "Air time of each flight or series of flights and cumulative total air time" (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca), entered by the pilot-in-command or a person designated by an air operator, private operator or flight training unit. A separate provision has the pilot-in-command of an aircraft engaged in a commercial air service on an international flight record the flight time in the journey log in particular cases. In short, the journey log is built around air time.

That asymmetry is the root of the reconciliation problem. The personal log asks for flight time; the journey log asks mainly for air time. A pilot who copies a journey-log air-time total into a personal log has used a technical-record figure for a personal-record field.

What the Advisory Circular adds

AC 700-052 says its purpose is guidance on recording flight time for skid-equipped helicopters in the aircraft journey log book and pilot log book, and it applies to all operators of helicopters. Its core statements are these:

- **Start (skid-equipped):** initial movement under the aircraft's own power occurs when the skids leave the supporting surface (www.tc.gc.ca); movement during start-up does not count.
- **End:** "comes to rest" means the chosen place for shutdown, or where no further flight is intended (tc.canada.ca).
- **Intermediate stops:** stops where the pilot remains at the controls are included in flight time (www.tc.gc.ca), and reducing throttles to idle between sectors does not stop the clock.
- **Partial ground contact:** holding position in toe-in operations, slope landings or one-skid hover exits is air time and not flight time (www.tc.gc.ca) (tc.canada.ca).
- **Wheeled helicopters:** flight time is calculated as for aeroplanes, including intermediate stops without shutdown (www.tc.gc.ca).
- **Float and other non-wheeled helicopters:** the AC applies equally.

- **Operator guidance:** operators must give pilots specific company guidance.

The AC states that logging must follow the CARs definitions and not the ICAO definition (tc.canada.ca), and that a 2005 policy letter supporting the ICAO wording was never incorporated in the CARs. For this report, the consequence is that rotor start and stop is not the Canadian logging definition.

Contrast: other jurisdictions

The ICAO helicopter wording that the AC rejects runs from the moment a helicopter's rotor blades start turning until it comes to rest and the rotors are stopped (www.tc.gc.ca). The AC notes that ICAO's Annex 6 version adds a note allowing a State to give guidance on practices such as crew change without stopping the rotors. EASA's Part-FCL text, as published in 2020, defines helicopter flight time from rotor start to rotor stop (www.easa.europa.eu), EASA's Easy Access Rules carry the same wording (www.easa.europa.eu), and the UK Civil Aviation Authority's consultation copy of the UK aircrew regulation repeats it (consultations.caa.co.uk). EASA's logbook rule, FCL.050, requires a reliable record of all flights in a form and manner established by the competent authority (www.easa.europa.eu), and its guidance repeats the rotor-based helicopter wording (www.easa.europa.eu). An EASA-hosted 2009 comparison table reproduces the same ICAO Annex 1 helicopter wording (hub.easa.europa.eu).

The United States differs in kind. Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations, section 1.1, defines flight time as pilot time that commences when an aircraft moves under its own power for the purpose of flight and ends when it comes to rest after landing (www.law.cornell.edu). A 2007 FAA Chief Counsel letter applies that definition to helicopters, saying flight time commences the moment the helicopter moves under its own power away from its parking position (www.faa.gov). None of these is the Canadian helicopter rule. They explain why a rotor-based or aeroplane-style total imported from a foreign logbook may not match a Canadian entry.

Building the Event Worksheet

The first step in reconciliation is to list events instead of durations. A duration is a computed difference between two timestamps, and each timestamp has a source, a meaning and a precision. Recording those separately lets the pilot see why two durations differ without deciding in advance which one is right.

Fields the worksheet needs

- **Date, tail and configuration:** the registration mark and the landing gear (skids, floats, wheels or mixed). The AC treats skid-equipped and wheeled helicopters differently.
- **Source:** the trip sheet, journey log, personal note, meter export or company system.
- **Event meaning as stated:** the source's own wording, copied and not interpreted.
- **Timestamp and time basis:** the value, and whether it is local time, UTC or a meter reading in hours and tenths.
- **Confidence:** stated by the source, inferred by the pilot, or unknown.
- **Associated segment:** the leg or ground stop to which the event belongs.
- **Reason retained:** why the event stays on the sheet even if the final entry does not use it.
- **Unresolved facts:** what must be established before the event can be used.

Keeping the unknown state

A meter label does not prove its trigger. A device labelled "flight" may run from rotor turning, from weight-off-skids, or from another input, and the label cannot say which. The same caution applies to the word "taxi". The AC's Appendix A has a row labelled "Taxi" at 08:10 marking where flight time commences, while its narrative example says flight time commences when the helicopter takes off to hover taxi from the hangar pad. Whether a source's "taxi" means hover movement or ground movement is a fact about that sortie, so this report does not copy that appendix row into the worksheet.

Meter vocabulary also varies by vendor. MyFlightbook lists Hobbs start and end as separate columns (myflightbook.com) and a "flight meter" described as like a Hobbs meter but only active in flight (myflightbook.com). LogTen describes several bases for total time, including Out/In, Hobbs, Tach, Off/On and taxi start and stop (support.logten.com). Each is a trigger claim by a software vendor, not a Canadian regulatory definition.

Marking ground-stop facts

Not every interval between two flights is the same. The worksheet should separate a stop where the pilot remains at the controls without shutdown, a stop where shutdown begins, a stop where the pilot leaves the controls, and a stop with partial ground contact held by power and control inputs. The AC adds the first to flight time, ends flight time at the second, and counts the fourth as air time (www.tc.gc.ca). The third is not addressed by name in the AC passages read for this report, so it belongs in the unresolved-facts column and is not assigned by assumption.

The AC shows how this changes totals. In its crew-change example the pilot lands and remains at the controls with the engine idling, and the ground time is added to flight time. In its swamp-landing example, air time includes the actual time in the air and the time in partial contact with the ground (www.tc.gc.ca).

Worked Reconstruction (Hypothetical Example)

Table 1 below sets out a hypothetical skid-equipped sortie as an event worksheet. The timestamps are stipulated for education and describe no real pilot's flight. They are not an eligibility ruling, a billing practice, a safety benchmark or permission to fly. Partial-contact cases are left out, because a real sortie would need those facts and their interpretation established.

Event	Date, tail, configuration	Source	Event meaning as stated	Timestamp and basis	Confidence	Segment	Reason retained	Unresolved facts
E1	Example date, tail X, skid-equipped	Meter export	Rotor start	08:00 (meter, converted to clock time)	Stated by source; trigger unknown	Pre-departure	Start of rotor-running interval	Meter trigger; precision

Event	Date, tail, configuration	Source	Event meaning as stated	Timestamp and basis	Confidence	Segment	Reason retained	Unresolved facts
E2	Same	Pilot note	First departure from the supporting surface	08:10	Inferred by pilot	Leg 1 start	Flight-time start under the AC skid reading	Whether hover movement preceded it
E3	Same	Pilot note	Full intermediate landing, pilot remains at controls, no shutdown	08:30	Inferred by pilot	Leg 1 end; **ground stop**	Ends airborne interval 1, starts ground stop	Crew-change facts, if any
E4	Same	Pilot note	Next departure	08:40	Inferred by pilot	Leg 2 start; end of **ground stop**	Ends the ground stop	None stipulated
E5	Same	Pilot note	Final rest, shutdown intended	09:00	Inferred by pilot	Leg 2 end	Flight-time end under the AC skid reading	When shutdown actions began
E6	Same	Meter export	Rotors stopped	09:05 (meter, converted)	Stated by source; trigger unknown	Post-shutdown	End of rotor-running interval	Meter trigger; precision

Each result answers a different question. From first departure at 08:10 to final rest at 09:00 is 50 minutes. That is the candidate flight interval for a skid-equipped helicopter under the AC reading, because flight time commences when the skids leave the supporting surface, includes the intermediate stop where the pilot remained at the controls (www.tc.gc.ca), and ends at rest with the intention of shutdown. The two airborne intervals are 08:10 to 08:30 (20 minutes) and 08:40 to 09:00 (20 minutes), so they sum to 40 minutes. The rotor-running interval from 08:00 to 09:05 is 65 minutes.

Each difference has one explanation. The 10 minutes between 50 and 40 is the full intermediate landing from 08:30 to 08:40. The 15 minutes between 65 and 50 is the 10 minutes before first departure plus the 5 minutes between final rest and rotors stopped. The AC's reasoning for rejecting the rotor-based definition is that counting from rotors start to rotors stopped negatively impacts the actual time spent in flight (tc.canada.ca).

For a wheeled helicopter the same event list cannot yet produce a candidate figure. The AC says wheeled helicopters calculate flight time as aeroplanes do, so the starting event is a movement under the aircraft's own power for the purpose of taking off, which may precede lift-off. The example stipulates no such movement, and a wheeled version would need one more timestamp.

The bridge table

Table 2 bridges each source duration to a proposed personal-logbook value, with the rule or guidance basis, the reviewer and the retained evidence. The proposed values are conditional on the stipulated facts.

Quantity	Original source duration	Proposed personal-logbook entry	Arithmetic	Rule or guidance basis	Reviewer	Retained evidence
Rotor-running interval	65 min (meter)	Not entered as flight time; kept in a separate rotor-time field	09:05 minus 08:00	AC: rotor start and stop is not the Canadian logging definition (www.tc.gc.ca)	Pilot	Meter export, plus supplier statement of trigger
Sum of airborne intervals	40 min (journey-log style air time)	Not entered in the flight-time field; kept as air time	20 + 20	CARs air time; Schedule I item 4 (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca)	Pilot; operator if figures disagree	Journey log page or trip sheet
Candidate flight interval	50 min (derived from pilot note)	0:50 flight time, pending confirmation of the Table 1 facts	09:00 minus 08:10	CARs flight time (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca); AC skid reading	Pilot; operator or Transport Canada for edge cases	Event worksheet and notes
Flight minus air	10 min	Explained as ground stop with pilot at controls	50 minus 40	AC intermediate stops	Pilot	Statement that the pilot remained at the controls
Rotor minus flight	15 min	Explained as start-up and post-rest interval	65 minus 50	AC rejects rotor start and stop for logging (www.tc.gc.ca)	Pilot	Meter timestamps for E1 and E6

No row overwrites another. The 65-minute and 40-minute figures stay where they were found, and the proposed 0:50 sits in a different field with its own basis. The reviewer column names roles, not people: "operator" or "Transport Canada" identifies who could confirm an edge case and does not imply anyone has.

Comparing the Result With Trip Sheets, Journey Logs and Personal Exports

Which figure supports which entry

A trip sheet or journey-log air-time figure supports the airborne component of the sortie. Schedule I makes the journey log's field air time, and the CARs air-time definition applies with respect to keeping technical records. If the figure equals the sum of the airborne intervals, it corroborates events E2 to E5 at the level of leg boundaries. It does not corroborate a flight-time entry by itself, because it says nothing about the ground stop.

A meter export, including a Hobbs-style hour-meter reading, supports the rotor-running or engine-running interval only to the extent the supplier states the trigger. It is useful evidence that the sortie occurred and bounds the start and end, but the AC says rotor start and stop times are not the basis for logging. A meter figure that happens to match the flight-time interval is a coincidence of that sortie, not a verification.

A personal export from an electronic logbook shows what an entry said, not why. LogTen says Total Time can always be filled in manually (support.logten.com), and Flight Logbook says every flight is recorded with block times in UTC (www.flightlogbook.com). These are product descriptions; they show that a "total" can have

several origins and that the origin is not visible in the number.

When the figures disagree

The governing rule is to retain disagreement and missing facts for clarification and not to auto-correct. Five outcomes are common:

- **Figures match the expected relationships:** air time at or below flight time, flight time at or below the rotor interval, and each gap explained by worksheet facts. The entry proceeds on the pilot's own judgement.
- **Air time exceeds the candidate flight time:** unexpected under the definitions unless partial ground contact has been counted, as in the AC's swamp example where air time and flight time are equal (tc.canada.ca). Locate the source of the excess before entering anything.
- **Flight time equals air time despite a known ground stop:** the AC says that in some instances the two are equal and in others they differ. In its hovering-autorotation example the pilot chooses to log the flight as air time only (www.tc.gc.ca). Note which reading the operator uses.
- **A figure cannot be traced:** keep it, mark confidence as unknown, and request evidence as set out below.
- **Company rule differs from the pilot's reading:** operators must ensure pilots record flight time in accordance with the AC, so a written company instruction is evidence and belongs beside the worksheet.

Hot refuelling, crew changes and other rotors-running stops

The AC addresses a crew change in which the pilot lands and remains at the controls with the engine idling, and it adds the ground time to flight time (www.tc.gc.ca). It also quotes an ICAO note naming rotors-running engine wash as an example of a practice a State may address by guidance. The AC passages read for this report do not name refuelling, so a refuelling stop cannot be classified by label. What matters under the AC is already on the worksheet: whether the aircraft had come to rest at the chosen place for shutdown, whether the pilot remained at the controls, and whether shutdown actions began. Where those facts are missing, the stop is an unresolved fact for the operator's written guidance or Transport Canada.

Configuration cuts the comparison

For a skid-equipped or float-equipped helicopter the AC places the start at skid lift-off and extends the reading to other non-wheeled helicopters. For a wheeled helicopter it says to calculate as for aeroplanes. The AC's **Appendix A** gives a skid or float example (tc.canada.ca) and Appendix B a wheeled one. Both reach a flight-time total of **1 hour 56 minutes**, from 08:10 to 10:06, while the air-time totals are 1 hour 36 minutes and 1 hour 15 minutes. The first leg's air time is 30 minutes in the skid example and 20 minutes in the wheeled example, a 10-minute difference equal to the gap between the 08:10 and 08:20 rows. The table labels do not settle what that interval represents, which is why this report does not copy them.

Data Analysis and Evidence

The quantitative material for this question is small and mostly arithmetic on definitions. It is worth stating which numbers are source figures, which are derived and which are stipulated.

Numbers taken from sources

- **AC status dates:** Issue 01, effective 1 August 2019 (tc.canada.ca); page modified 9 August 2019 (www.tc.gc.ca); listed in the Transport Canada index modified 10 November 2026. A law firm's rehosting of a Transport Canada "recently issued documents" notice lists AC 700-052 with the same subject line (ehlaw.ca). That is one rehosted regulator bulletin, evidence of distribution of the original text and not independent endorsement.
- **AC appendix totals:** flight time of 1 hour 56 minutes against air time of 1 hour 36 minutes (skid or float) and 1 hour 15 minutes (wheeled), as in the section above. The six narrative examples carry labels for flight time exceeding air time and for the two being equal, with no minute totals.
- **Licensing experience context:** Transport Canada's Standard 421 asks for a minimum of 100 hours pilot flight time in helicopters for the commercial pilot licence, helicopter (tc.canada.ca), of which a minimum of 35 hours is pilot-in-command flight time. The standard has amendment notes, so a pilot documenting experience for an application should check the live page.
- **Journey-log retention:** not less than one year per entry, an owner's duty and not a rule for the personal log.
- **Electronic records:** CAR 605.93 allows technical record entries to be kept as electronic data (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca), which concerns technical records and not the personal log. Transport Canada's licence application page says an applicant can email an e-logbook or a scanned copy of a paper logbook (tc.canada.ca), and its foreign-pilot page says digital logbooks or digital copies of paper logbooks can be used. Those describe submission, not approval of any format.

Numbers derived in this report

For the hypothetical sortie in Table 1 the derived quantities are 50 minutes of candidate flight interval, 40 minutes airborne, 65 minutes of rotor running, a 10-minute ground stop, a 10-minute pre-departure interval and a 5-minute post-rest interval. Airborne time is 80 per cent of the candidate flight interval (40 of 50), and that interval is about 77 per cent of the rotor interval (50 of 65). These ratios belong to one invented sortie and are not benchmarks.

What is not known

- The text of CAR 401.08 read for this report states no retention period, and it requires the personal log to follow the personnel licensing standards; this report did not review those standards for format or field requirements.
- No source read establishes what any vendor's meter or timer field triggers on, or how a vendor's total maps to the Canadian definitions.
- No superseding Transport Canada guidance was found after Issue 01, a negative result of a bounded search.

Record Tools: Paper Ledger, Established Logbooks and Blue Hour Logbook

A separate paper ledger can hold the original figures side by side in three columns and a notes field, and an electronic logbook can do the same if it has fields for the extra durations. Whether either format meets the personnel licensing standards that CAR 401.08(1) references is a question for Transport Canada. *Table 3* summarizes what each product's own public pages say that bears on this need. It describes statements, not tested behaviour, and silence on one page is not a statement that a feature is missing.

Record method	What its own pages say that bears on the three-duration problem	Limits of that evidence
Paper ledger	Any ruled columns can hold rotor, air and flight values with source and basis notes.	Totals and cross-checks are manual.
Blue Hour Logbook (invitation-only; request an invite)	The product page describes personal flight entries, custom summaries, print layouts and full export.	The public page does not describe helicopter-specific timer semantics or a dedicated air-time or rotor-time ledger, so field suitability should be confirmed in the product before use. It does not validate Canadian helicopter credit.
LogTen	Total Time can be calculated on several bases and manually overridden (support.logten.com); custom fields can be added and rearranged (logten.com).	No helicopter-specific or Transport Canada statement was found on the pages read.
MyFlightbook	Separate Hobbs and in-flight meter fields (myflightbook.com), a tachometer property (myflightbook.com) and helicopter sling-load properties (myflightbook.com).	Field triggers are the vendor's descriptions, not Canadian definitions.
ForeFlight Logbook	Custom fields (foreflight.com); imports must be CSV or TSV files (support.foreflight.com).	Detail reports turn entries into a printable traditional format (foreflight.com); helicopter timing semantics are not stated on the pages read.
Flight Logbook	Built for airline, general aviation and helicopter pilots (www.flightlogbook.com); users can add their own fields (www.flightlogbook.com); data leaves as CSV (www.flightlogbook.com).	Its pages describe EASA, FAA and plain PDF reports (www.flightlogbook.com); no Canadian helicopter treatment or Transport Canada format is stated.
capzlog	Dedicated logbooks for aeroplane, helicopter and glider categories (www.capzlog.aero).	Each device keeps a complete offline copy of the data (www.capzlog.aero).
Garmin Pilot	A 2015 release says logbook fields can include Hobbs and tachometer entries (www.garmin.com).	The page is dated, and no current helicopter description was found. The same release names TCCA currency types (www.garmin.com), which concern currency and not time definitions.

Table 3 is not a ranking. It shows that several products offer custom or separate fields, which is what a three-duration worksheet needs, and that none of the pages read claims to implement the Canadian helicopter definitions. The converse is not claimed: a page silent on those definitions has not been shown to handle them

incorrectly. Blue Hour Logbook's row rests on the product page's own description and not on a measurement by this report. A print layout is not an approval by any authority, and Transport Canada accepting an e-logbook with an application is a statement about submission, not format validation.

Evidence Request for the Employer or Record Supplier

Where a figure cannot be traced, the pilot can ask for a short, neutral set of facts. The request concerns records, not how any flight is flown.

- **Aircraft and configuration:** the registration mark and whether the helicopter is skid, float, wheeled or another arrangement, for each date.
- **Meter and timer definitions:** for each figure, the event that starts and stops the clock, the precision (minutes, tenths, rounded or truncated) and the time basis.
- **Journey-log entry basis:** whether the air-time figure is the sum of airborne intervals, and who entered it, since Schedule I assigns the entry to the pilot-in-command or a designated person.
- **Intermediate stop facts:** for each stop, whether the pilot remained at the controls, whether shutdown actions began, and whether a crew change or refuelling took place, as stated in the operator's records.
- **Company guidance:** a copy of any written instruction on applying the flight-time definition, which the AC requires operators to provide (tc.canada.ca).
- **Source dates:** the date and version of each export, so an original can be told from a later edit.
- **Authority questions:** a note of any edge case, such as partial ground contact, for the operator's flight standards contact or for the Commercial Flight Standards office named in the AC.

Implications and Future Directions

For individual pilots, the implication is a change in the unit of record. The unit is the event with its source and meaning, and durations are derived views. A later question, such as how a different interpretation would change a total, can then be answered without re-deriving the history.

For operators, the AC places a duty on them to give specific company guidance, so a pilot's most useful reconciliation document may be a one-page company statement of how flight time and air time are recorded in that operation.

For logbook software, the open point is field semantics. Vendor pages describe Hobbs, tachometer, engine, flight-meter and block-time concepts (support.logten.com), whereas the Canadian helicopter reading depends on configuration, on whether the pilot remained at the controls and on whether shutdown began. A product that stored both air time and flight time with a basis note for each would fit the worksheet.

For the rules themselves, no change is claimed. The CARs definitions read on 17 November 2026 match the wording quoted in the 2019 AC, and the 2019 text said there were no plans to change the interpretation (tc.canada.ca). That remains a statement of the time it was issued. In the author's inference, pilots holding Canadian and European records may need to keep a separate total for each jurisdiction's definition (www.easa.europa.eu); that source gives only the EASA wording, and separate fields would help keep the totals from being merged.

Blue Hour Logbook is an electronic pilot logbook that, according to its own page, was built by a line pilot and is opened to others by invitation. This paragraph relies on the product's self-description alone; this report has not tested the product. Readers who want to evaluate whether its fields suit a three-duration worksheet can request an invite. A paper ledger or one of the established products above is equally workable.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is the difference between flight time and air time for a Canadian helicopter pilot?

Under CARs 101.01, air time (for technical records) runs from leaving the surface to contact with the surface at the next point of landing (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca), and flight time runs from first movement under the aircraft's own power for the purpose of taking off to coming to rest at the end of the flight (laws-lois.justice.gc.ca). For a skid-equipped helicopter, the AC reads flight time as including intermediate stops where the pilot remains at the controls.

Is rotor running time the same as flight time in Canada?

No. AC 700-052 says logging must follow the CARs definitions and not the ICAO definition, and the ICAO wording is the rotor-start-to-rotor-stop wording. EASA uses that wording for helicopters (www.easa.europa.eu), which is a different jurisdiction.

Which CARs section requires a personal log?

CAR 401.08 requires one from every applicant for, and holder of, a flight crew permit, licence or rating, and it lists the flight time among the per-flight particulars.

How does this differ from the FAA rule?

The FAA definition in 14 CFR 1.1 ends flight time when the aircraft comes to rest after landing (www.law.cornell.edu), and 14 CFR 61.51 requires an entry for each flight or lesson logged (www.law.cornell.edu). That is a different jurisdiction, and an FAA aeroplane Hobbs and OUT/IN case is a different aircraft case again.

Can a Canadian pilot keep an electronic logbook?

Transport Canada's licence application page says applicants can email an e-logbook or a scanned paper logbook (tc.canada.ca). CAR 401.08(1) requires the personal log to be maintained in accordance with the personnel licensing standards, so a specific question about format or acceptance goes to Transport Canada or the employer.

What about hot refuelling or other rotors-running stops?

The AC passages read do not name refuelling, so the stop is classified by facts: whether the pilot remained at the controls, whether the helicopter came to rest at the chosen place for shutdown, and whether shutdown began. Missing facts stay unresolved.

Conclusion

The CARs distinguish air time, tied to technical records, from flight time, which the personal log requires. Transport Canada's 2019 guidance gives the helicopter reading, treats skid and wheeled aircraft differently, and rejects rotor start and stop as the Canadian logging definition. It is guidance and not regulation, and it is seven years old.

The practical method is to list events before durations, keep rotor or meter, air-time and flight-time values in separate fields, label the configuration, mark ground-stop facts, and hold unknown triggers as unknown. In the stipulated example the durations of 65, 40 and 50 minutes are each correct for what they measure, and named intervals explain the differences. Where a real sortie cannot be explained that way, the disagreement stays on file and goes to the operator or Transport Canada. Each original figure remains where it was found, so a later correction, a company instruction or a clarification from the authority can be applied to the derived entry without losing the evidence behind it.

Source links

Links cited in this article, in order of first appearance. Full addresses are provided for readers using extracted text.

1. https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/SOR-96-433/page-1.html
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