



Understanding Regulation

ARKSHIRE
ICOPTERS

Disclaimer!

Some of the information and links provided may become broken or out of date as the publications are updated regularly.

EASA & THE UK CAA

EASA stands for European Aviation Safety Agency.

EASA works with the EU member states' national aviation authorities (NAAs) such as the UK CAA but has taken over many of their functions in the interest of aviation standardisation across the EU.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is the statutory corporation which oversees and regulates all aspects of civil aviation in the United Kingdom.

The CAA directly or indirectly regulates all aspects of aviation in the UK. In some aspects of aviation it is the primary regulator; in other areas, where the responsibility for regulation has passed to the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), the CAA acts as EASA's local office, implementing the regulations.

A list of publications you should be aware of

PART-FCL (Flight Crew Licensing)

PART-NCO (Non-Commercial Operations)

SERA (Standardised European Rules of the Air)

UK Rules of the Air Regulations 2015

ORS4 (OFFICIAL RECORD SERIES)

ANO (Air Navigation Order)



PART-FCL

This document tells us all we need to know about our EASA licenses and ratings, how to gain them, and how to maintain them.

For Example:

'FCL.210.H PPL(H)

Experience requirements and crediting

(a) Applicants for a PPL(H) shall have completed at least 45 hours of flight instruction on helicopters'

[Here you can get to grips with the Easy Access Rules for Part-FCL](#)

PART-NCO

Part-NCO lays down the rules and requirements for carrying out 'private flights' in EASA Aircraft (that's aircraft holding a Certificate of Airworthiness granted by EASA). It covers items such as: Pilot-in-Command responsibilities, Passenger briefing and Documents to be carried in flight.

[Go to the 'Easy Access Rules' for Air Operations which includes Part-NCO](#)

The Rules of the Air



SERA

The Standardised European Rules of the Air.

SERA applies to every aircraft operating in UK airspace regardless of type or state of registration. But as the rules do not cover all aspects of the Rules of the Air, Member States may keep supplementary rules that complement SERA. They may also permit routine operations such as VFR flight at night, and grant exemptions from SERA's requirements. The UK publishes its supplementary rules in the form of The Rules of the Air Regulations 2015, and exemptions are contained in the Official Record Series.

[Click to go to the 'Easy Access Rules' for SERA](#)

The Rules of the Air Regulations 2015

The UK's supplementary Rules of the Air. In addition to what you read in SERA, the UK's Rules of the Air still apply.

For example reading SERA.5005(f) would have you believe that you can land in a congested area when necessary for taking off and landing:

'Except when necessary for take-off or landing, or except by permission from the competent authority, a VFR flight shall not be flown: (1) over the congested areas of cities, towns or settlements or over an open-air assembly of persons at a height less than 300 m (1 000 ft) above the highest obstacle within a radius of 600 m from the aircraft;'

However the UK Rules of the Air state that:

'Landing and taking off within congested areas and near open-air assemblies

5.—(1) An aircraft must not take off or land within a congested area of any city, town or settlement except— (a) at an aerodrome in accordance with procedures notified by the CAA; or (b) at a landing site which is not an aerodrome in accordance with the permission of the CAA.'

[Click to redirect to the Rules of the Air Regulations 2015](#)

ORS4

The Official Record Series 4 is a selection of miscellaneous publications that includes further information concerning the UK's exemptions to the Rules.

For example, while SERA.5005(f) prohibits any aircraft flying at a height of less than 500 feet above ground or water, **ORS4 No. 1174** states:

- 'a) The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) permits an aircraft to fly elsewhere than as specified in SERA.5005(f)(1) at a height of: i) less than 150 metres (500 feet) above the ground or water; or ii) less than 150 metres (500) above the highest obstacle within a radius of 150 metres (500 feet) from the aircraft.
- b) The aircraft must not be flown closer than 150 metres (500 feet) to any person, vessel, vehicle or structure except with the permission of the CAA.'

See the full list of publications contained in Official Record Series 4 [here](#)

The Air Navigation Order

The Air Navigation Order (ANO), or sometimes referred to as CAP 393, provides the foundation for a simpler and more proportionate approach to the regulation of many GA activities that fall under national (and not European) regulation.

It covers things like 'responsibilities and obligations of the pilot in command' for pilots flying non-EASA aircraft and covers the legal basis for national (rather than EASA) flight crew licensing. These would otherwise be covered in Part-NCO and Part-FCL respectively.

You can find it using the link [here](#)

So what are the rules of the air in the UK and where do we find them?

The rules of the air that apply in the UK may be as a direct result of SERA, an exemption from SERA (found in ORS4), or may be as a result of the supplementary information in the 'UK Rules of the Air Regulations 2015'. The key is having a general understanding of the rules and knowing where to look if you aren't sure of something.

Table S5-1 (*)			
Altitude band	Airspace class	Flight visibility	Distance from cloud
At and above 3 050 m (10 000 ft) AMSL	A (**), B, C, D, E, F, G	8 km	1 500 m horizontally 300 m (1 000 ft) vertically
Below 3 050 m (10 000 ft) AMSL and above 900 m (3 000 ft) AMSL, or above 300 m (1 000 ft) above terrain, whichever is the higher	A (**), B, C, D, E, F, G	5 km	1500 m horizontally 300 m (1 000 ft) vertically
At and below 900 m (3 000 ft) AMSL, or 300 m (1 000 ft) above terrain, whichever is the higher	A (**), B, C, D, E	5 km	1500 m horizontally 300 m (1 000 ft) vertically
	F, G	5 km (***)	Clear of cloud and with the surface in sight

Visual Flight Rules

The visual flight rules determine minimum weather conditions to fly legally under VFR. These mostly stem from SERA with the odd exception published through the Official Record Series. The table below is taken directly from SERA.

Visual Flight Rules continued

ORS4 No. 1341.

The following allows visibilities down to 1500m in Class G Airspace.

Standardised European Rules of the Air - Visual Meteorological Conditions (VMC) Visibility and Distance from Cloud Minima within Class G airspace by day

- 1) The Civil Aviation Authority permits, under paragraph SERA.5001 of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 923/2012 ('the Standardised European Rules of the Air' (SERA)), flight visibilities reduced to not less than 1,500 m within Class G airspace by day for flights operating subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 2.
- 2) The conditions specified in paragraph 1 are that the aircraft is:
 - a) flying at and below 900m (3,000 ft) above mean sea level, or 300m (1,000 ft) above terrain, whichever is the higher; and
 - b) flying at speeds of 140 kt Indicated Airspeed (IAS) or less to give adequate opportunity to observe other traffic or any obstacles in time to avoid collision.
- 3) This permission supersedes Official Record Series 4 No. 1067, which is revoked with effect from 2359 UTC on 25 March 2020.
- 4) This permission has effect from 26 March 2020 until it is revoked.

SERA.5005 Visual flight rules

Regulation (EU) 2016/1185

- (a) Except when operating as a special VFR flight, VFR flights shall be conducted so that the aircraft is flown in conditions of visibility and distance from clouds equal to or greater than those specified in [Table S5-1](#).
- (b) Except when a special VFR clearance is obtained from an air traffic control unit, VFR flights shall not take off or land at an aerodrome within a control zone, or enter the aerodrome traffic zone or aerodrome traffic circuit when the reported meteorological conditions at that aerodrome are below the following minima:
 - (1) the ceiling is less than 450 m (1 500 ft); or
 - (2) the ground visibility is less than 5 km.

Visual Flight Rules continued

If visibility and cloud drop below the minimums then the ATS Provider may inform you that a 'special VFR clearance' will be offered rather than a 'VFR clearance'. This is to allow you to enter controlled airspace provided you are happy to accept special VFR.

- (f) Except when necessary for take-off or landing, or except by permission from the competent authority, a VFR flight shall not be flown:
 - (1) over the congested areas of cities, towns or settlements or over an open-air assembly of persons at a height less than 300 m (1 000 ft) above the highest obstacle within a radius of 600 m from the aircraft;

The 1 000 foot rule.

SERA

Landing and taking off within congested areas and near open-air assemblies

5.—(1) An aircraft must not take off or land within a congested area of any city, town or settlement except—

- (a) at an aerodrome in accordance with procedures notified by the CAA; or
- (b) at a landing site which is not an aerodrome in accordance with the permission of the CAA.

(2) An aircraft must not land or take-off within 1,000 metres of an open-air assembly of more than 1,000 persons except—

- (a) at an aerodrome in accordance with procedures notified by the CAA; or
- (b) at a landing site which is not an aerodrome in accordance with procedures notified by the CAA and with the written permission of the organiser of the assembly.

**UK RULES OF THE AIR
REGULATIONS 2015**

- (f) Except when necessary for take-off or landing, or except by permission from the competent authority, a VFR flight shall not be flown:
- (1) over the congested areas of cities, towns or settlements or over an open-air assembly of persons at a height less than 300 m (1 000 ft) above the highest obstacle within a radius of 600 m from the aircraft;
 - (2) elsewhere than as specified in (1), at a height less than 150 m (500 ft) above the ground or water, or 150 m (500 ft) above the highest obstacle within a radius of 150 m (500 ft) from the aircraft.

The 500 foot rule

SERA

2) General (SERA.5005(f)(2))

- a) The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) permits, under SERA.3105 and SERA.5005(f), subject to the condition set out in subparagraph (b), an aircraft to fly elsewhere than as specified in SERA.5005(f)(1) at a height of:
 - i) less than 150 metres (500 feet) above the ground or water; or
 - ii) less than 150 metres (500) above the highest obstacle within a radius of 150 metres (500 feet) from the aircraft.

- b) The aircraft must not be flown closer than 150 metres (500 feet) to any person, vessel, vehicle or structure except with the permission of the CAA.

ORS4 No. 1174 - exceptions to
the minimum height requirements

...continued

3) Approaches to Landing or Forced Landings

The Civil Aviation Authority permits, under SERA.3105, SERA.5005(f) and SERA.5015(b), an aircraft to fly below the heights specified in SERA.5005(f) and SERA.5015(b) if it is flying in accordance with normal aviation practice and:

- a) practising approaches to land at or checking navigational aids or procedures at an aerodrome;
- b) practising approaches to forced landings other than at an aerodrome if it is not flown closer than 150 metres (500 feet) to any person, vessel, vehicle or structure; or
- c) flying in accordance with a notified procedure or when specifically authorised by the CAA in accordance with SERA.5015.

'Rule 11' - Flight within Aerodrome Traffic Zones – from the Rules of the Air Regulations 2015

(2) An aircraft must not fly, take off or land within the aerodrome traffic zone of an aerodrome unless the commander of the aircraft has complied with paragraphs (3), (4) or (5), as appropriate.

(3) If the aerodrome has an air traffic control unit the commander must obtain the permission of that unit to enable the flight to be conducted safely within the aerodrome traffic zone.

(4) If the aerodrome provides a flight information service the commander must obtain information from the flight information centre to enable the flight to be conducted safely within the aerodrome traffic zone.

(5) If there is no flight information centre at the aerodrome the commander must obtain information from the air/ground communication service to enable the flight to be conducted safely within the aerodrome traffic zone.

(6) The commander of an aircraft flying within the aerodrome traffic zone of an aerodrome must—

- (a) cause a continuous watch to be maintained on the appropriate radio frequency notified for communications at the aerodrome; or
- (b) if this is not possible, cause a watch to be kept for such instructions as may be issued by visual means; and
- (c) if the aircraft is fitted with means of communication by radio with the ground, communicate the aircraft's position and height to the air traffic control unit, the flight information centre or the air/ground communications service unit at the aerodrome (as the case may be) on entering the aerodrome traffic zone and immediately prior to leaving it.

Other essential knowledge

The following is essential knowledge taken from Part-FCL about staying legal and current.

FCL.045 Obligation to carry and present documents

Regulation (EU) 2018/1065

- (a) A valid licence and a valid medical certificate shall always be carried by the pilot when exercising the privileges of the licence.
- (b) The pilot shall also carry a personal identification document containing his/her photo.
- (c) A pilot or a student pilot shall without undue delay present his/her flight time record for inspection upon request by an authorised representative of a competent authority.

Obligation to carry your licence, medical and photo ID

The 90-day rule

FCL.060 Recent experience

Regulation (EU) 2020/359

- (b) Aeroplanes, helicopters, powered-lift aircraft and airships. A pilot shall not operate an aircraft in commercial air transport or to carry passengers:
 - (1) as PIC or co-pilot unless he/she has carried out, in the preceding 90 days, at least 3 take-offs, approaches and landings in an aircraft of the same type or class or an FFS representing that type or class. The 3 take-offs and landings shall be performed in either multi-pilot or single-pilot operations, depending on the privileges held by the pilot; and
 - (2) as PIC at night unless he/she:
 - (i) has carried out in the preceding 90 days at least 1 take-off, approach and landing at night as a pilot flying in an aircraft of the same type or class or an FFS representing that type or class; or
 - (ii) holds an IR;

FCL.740 Validity and renewal of class and type ratings

Regulation (EU) 2019/1747

(a) Validity

The validity period of class and type ratings shall be 1 year, except for single-pilot single-engine class ratings for which the validity period shall be 2 years, unless otherwise determined in the OSD. If pilots choose to fulfil the revalidation requirements earlier than prescribed in [FCL.740.A](#), [FCL.740.H](#), [FCL.740.PL](#) and [FCL.740.As](#), the new validity period shall commence from the date of the proficiency check.

Validity of type ratings

FCL.740.H Revalidation of type ratings – helicopters

Regulation (EU) No 1178/2011

- (a) Revalidation. For revalidation of type ratings for helicopters, the applicant shall:
- (1) pass a proficiency check in accordance with [Appendix 9](#) to this Part in the relevant type of helicopter or an FSTD representing that type within the 3 months immediately preceding the expiry date of the rating; and
 - (2) complete at least 2 hours as a pilot of the relevant helicopter type within the validity period of the rating. The duration of the proficiency check may be counted towards the 2 hours.

Revalidation of your type ratings

(b) Renewal

For the renewal of a class or type rating the applicant shall comply with all of the following:

- (1) complete a proficiency check in accordance with [Appendix 9](#) to this Annex;
- (2) prior to the proficiency check referred to in point (1), complete a refresher training at an ATO if deemed necessary by the ATO to reach the level of proficiency to safely operate the relevant class or type of aircraft, except if it holds a valid rating for the same class or type of aircraft on a pilot licence issued by a third country in accordance with Annex 1 to the Chicago Convention and if it is entitled to exercise the privileges of that rating. The applicant may take the training:
 - (i) at a DTO or at an ATO, if the expired rating concerned a non-high-performance single-engine piston class rating, a TMG class rating or a single-engine type rating for helicopters referred to in point DTO.GEN.110(a)(2)(c) of Annex VIII;

Renewal of expired type ratings
