



Policy Statement

REDUCTION IN NOTIFIED HOURS OR DISESTABLISHMENT OF AIRSPACE RESTRICTIONS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is required, under Section 70 of the Transport Act 2000¹, to exercise its air navigation functions in order to secure the most efficient use of airspace consistent with the safe operation of aircraft and the expeditious flow of air traffic, whilst satisfying the requirements of all airspace users and taking into account of the interests of any person in relation to the use of any particular airspace or the use of airspace generally.
- 1.2 The requirements of, and for, airspace restrictions (Danger, Restricted and Prohibited Areas, plus Flight Restriction Zones) may change over time, such that if left unchanged, these will represent unnecessary restrictions on airspace users.

2. Scope

- 2.1 The purpose of this Policy Statement is to provide policy and guidance regarding the reduction in the notified activation hours, or disestablishment of, Danger Areas, Restricted Areas, Protected Prohibited Areas and Flight Restriction Zones.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 Responsibility for the initiation of a reduction in the notified hours, or disestablishment of Danger, Restricted and Prohibited Areas, plus Flight Restriction Zones lies with the airspace controlling authority, or in the case of Flight Restriction Zones either the operator of the aerodrome around which these are established, or the CAA.
- 3.2 Where the CAA considers either the notified hours of, or requirement for, an airspace restriction to be in doubt, it may seek justification from the airspace controlling authority of the continued need for the restriction in its current form.
- 3.3 Reductions in the notified activation hours, or disestablishment of, airspace restrictions will be overseen by CAA Safety and Airspace Regulation Group's (SARG) Airspace Regulation (AR) team. SARG AR is responsible for processing Airspace Change Proposals (ACP) and for making regulatory decisions on airspace change matters that fall within the scope of this policy statement.

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/38/contents>

4. Policy

- 4.1 Any reduction in the notified activation hours or the disestablishment of airspace restrictions will be progressed as a Level 0 airspace change in through submission of CAA form [DAP1916](#) Statement of Need in accordance with CAP 1616. The completed DAP1916 is to contain the following information:
- a. Identification of the affected airspace restriction, confirming its name, location and the reason why the change is required.
 - b. Identification of parties that may be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed changes to the affected airspace restriction. This should include users of the airspace restriction and adjacent airspace structures.
 - c. Identification of all Aeronautical Information Publication content (including en-route and VFR charts) affected by the airspace restriction changes.
 - d. Identification of any legislation (e.g. Statutory Instruments) that would be affected by the change.
 - e. The proposed effective AIRAC date for the changes to the airspace restriction.
 - f. Environmental impact assessment or statement as outlined below
- 4.2 The CAA will acknowledge receipt of the complete DAP1916 and will request the aerodrome operator to upload the Statement of Need to the CAA's [airspace change portal](#)².
- 4.3 CAP1616's Level 0 ACP process does not require formal consultation with affected stakeholders. However, when considering the disestablishment of an airspace restriction, notification of intent may be required. This should be proportionate to the change being proposed and will be decided on a case-by-case basis; if required this should be commensurate with the intended change and to that end the sponsor may be required to complete the following:
- a. Draft a letter of notification of change to those affected parties identified at paragraph 4.1(b). This is to include details of the affected airspace restriction, the intent to disestablish it (and when) and contact details for affected parties to respond to.
 - b. If deemed required by SARG AR due to the complexity of the restriction and surrounding arrangements, draft an Airspace Information Circular (AIC) notifying disestablishment of the airspace restriction.
 - c. Submit the draft notification letter and if required the AIC to SARG AR for approval.
- 4.4 Subject to SARG AR approval the sponsor is to upload the notification letter to the CAA airspace change portal, distribute the notification letter to all identified parties

² See <https://www.caa.co.uk/Commercial-industry/Airspace/Airspace-change/Permanent-airspace-change-proposals-under-CAP1616/>

and submit the AIC to [NATS AIS](#)³. Notification of an airspace restrictions disestablishment should be at least 12 weeks prior to the actual date of disestablishment, in accordance with the [AIC Publishing Schedule](#). The AIC may be cancelled 4 weeks after the actual date of the airspace restrictions disestablishment.

- 4.5 At the end of the notification period the sponsor is to collate any responses received and for submitting these to the SARG AR within 4 weeks of the end of the notification period.
- 4.5 The degree of resulting activity within the revised airspace arrangements may not be quantifiable and therefore difficult to predict the environmental impact of any given change. Where it is not possible to determine the environmental impact, an environmental assessment will not be required by SARG AR. In such cases it will be necessary for sponsors to explain why an environmental assessment is not possible and to provide a statement on the anticipated environmental impact based on the likely activity that might be experienced as a consequence of the change.
- 4.6 In reaching a decision on a proposal to reduce the notified activation hours or disestablishment of an airspace restriction, SARG AR will need to be assured that there are no consequential changes to adjacent airspace arrangements. If there were to be an impact on existing arrangements within controlled airspace, then the Airspace Change Process would apply, as set out in [CAP 1616](#)⁴.
- 4.7 The CAA will inform the National Air Traffic Management Advisory Committee of any reduction in the notified activation hours, or disestablishment of airspace restrictions and publish the details by the most appropriate means. As there are likely to be changes to published mapping/charting and other associated aeronautical data, promulgation of the change will be coordinated through the AIRAC process.

5. Review

- 5.1 In order to satisfy its Statutory Duties, the CAA may also require controlling authorities to initiate reductions in the notified activation hours, or disestablishment of airspace restrictions to ensure that existing arrangements continue to be fit for purpose.

6. CAA Contact

- 6.1 SARG Airspace Regulation,
Civil Aviation Authority
Aviation House
Beehive Ringroad
Crawley
West Sussex
RH6 0YR

Email – airspace@caa.co.uk

³ See [Submitting a UK AIP Change Request](#)

⁴ www.caa.co.uk, and also see [Guidance on changes to the use or classification of airspace in the UK](#).