

**CAA Decision to adopt GM for UK Reg (EU) No 923/2012 pursuant to Article 76(3) UK Reg (EU) 2018/1139**

**DECISION No. 11**

**Publication date: 5 May 2022**

---

**Decision introducing Guidance Material (GM) for UK Reg (EU) No 923/2012 Standardised European Rules of the Air (SERA) regarding Section 11 Interference, Emergency Contingencies and Interception**

**Background**

1. Regulation (EU) No 923/2012 as retained (and amended in UK domestic law) under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (“**UK Reg (EU) No 923/2012**”) lays down the common rules of the air and operational provisions regarding services and procedures in air navigation services. The Annex to UK Reg (EU) No 923/2012 contains and is referred to as the UK Standardised European Rules of the Air (“**UK SERA**”).
2. SERA.11001 (contained within Section 11 of UK SERA) details rules pertaining to airborne emergencies and their handling by air traffic services. The extant guidance material (“**GM**”) to SERA.11001, GM1 SERA.11001 General, deals specifically with aircraft undertaking emergency descents and was based on material contained within the ICAO Regional Supplement which has now been withdrawn. Additionally, the UK has a long-standing difference to these ICAO procedures which was not reflected in the GM. The CAA has decided to publish an amendment to GM1 SERA.11001 General to ensure that the withdrawn ICAO procedure is no longer referenced, and to align the GM with extant UK requirements.

**Decision**

1. The CAA, under Article 76(3) of Regulation (EU) No 2018/1139 as retained (and amended in UK domestic law) under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, has decided to adopt the GM attached at Schedule 1.
2. The revised GM in Schedule 1 corrects information that is now erroneous and provides details of the UK requirements for pilots and air traffic service units dealing with aircraft undertaking emergency descents.
3. This Decision will remain in force unless revoked or amended by the CAA.
4. The GM attached at Schedule 1 to this Decision comes into force on 16 June 2022.

**Definitions**

All references to UK Reg (EU) 2018/1139 and to UK Reg (EU) No 923/2012 are to those Regulations as retained and amended in UK domestic law pursuant to the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rob Bishton', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rob Bishton  
For the Civil Aviation Authority and the United Kingdom

Date of Decision: 5 May 2022

Date of Decision Coming into force: 16 June 2022

## Schedule 1

### Includes the Guidance Material (GM) documents referenced below.

The text of the amendment is arranged to show deleted text, new or amended text as shown below:

- (a) ~~Text to be deleted is shown struck through;~~
- (b) **New text is highlighted in grey;**
- (c) ~~Text to be deleted is shown struck through~~ **followed by the replacement text which is highlighted in grey.**

## GM1 SERA.11001 General

### EMERGENCY DESCENT PROCEDURES

- (a) When an aircraft operated as a controlled flight experiences sudden decompression or a malfunction requiring an emergency descent, the aircraft should, if able:
  - (1) ~~initiate a turn away from the assigned route or track before commencing the emergency descent;~~ remain on the assigned route or track whilst carrying out the emergency descent unless doing so would endanger the aircraft, in which case navigate as deemed appropriate by the pilot.
  - (2) advise the appropriate ATC unit as soon as possible of the emergency descent, **and, if able, intentions;**
  - (3) set transponder to Code 7700 and, **if applicable,** select the **appropriate** emergency mode on the automatic dependent surveillance/controller–pilot data link communications (ADS/CPDLC) system, ~~if applicable;~~
  - (4) turn on aircraft exterior lights;
  - (5) watch for conflicting traffic both visually and by reference to airborne collision avoidance system (ACAS) (if equipped); and
  - (6) coordinate its further intentions with the appropriate ATC unit.
- (b) The aircraft is not to descend below the lowest published minimum altitude that will provide a minimum vertical clearance of 300 m (1 000 ft) or, in designated mountainous terrain, of 600 m (2 000 ft) above all obstacles located in the area specified.
- (c) Immediately upon recognising that an emergency descent is in progress, ATC units are to acknowledge the emergency on radiotelephony.

In particular, when recognising that an emergency descent is in progress, ATC may, as required by the situation:

- (1) suggest a heading to be flown, if able, by the aircraft carrying out the emergency descent in order to achieve separation from other aircraft concerned;
- (2) state the minimum altitude for the area of operation, only if the level-off altitude stated by the pilot is below such minimum altitude, together with the applicable QNH altimeter setting; ~~and~~
- (3) as soon as possible, provide separation from conflicting traffic, or issue essential traffic information, as appropriate; **and**

(4) inform any other ATS units which may be affected by the emergency descent.

When deemed necessary, ATC will broadcast an emergency message, or cause such message to be broadcast, to other aircraft concerned to warn them of the emergency descent.

(d) Pilots receiving an emergency descent broadcast on the ATC frequency should:

(1) maintain radio silence on the frequency in use and listen for any further instructions from ATC; and

(2) watch for conflicting traffic both visually and by reference to ACAS (if equipped), and respond, as appropriate, to ACAS advisories.