



Miscellaneous

No: 1596

[UK Regulation \(EU\) 2018/1139](#)

Publication date: 18 April 2024

General Exemption E 6128

UK Standardised European Rules of the Air – VFR Flights Within the Manchester Low Level Route

Background

- 1) The change to the visual meteorological conditions (VMC) minima introduced by the Aviation Safety (Amendment) Regulations 2021 necessitated the stipulation of an enhanced VMC minima for operation within the Manchester Low Level Route consisting of class D airspace. This is alongside the necessity to maintain the historic operation of the Manchester Low Level Route (MLLR) such that visual flight rules (VFR) flights, operating in accordance with the specified conditions for flight within the route, may proceed without an air traffic control (ATC) clearance.
- 2) Working closely with stakeholders, including Manchester Airport and Liverpool Airport and their air traffic control providers, as well as the local general aviation community, the CAA has reviewed the Manchester Low-Level Route (MLLR) in order to develop alternative arrangements that will improve this volume of airspace and remove the requirement for an exemption.
- 3) The purpose of this exemption is to provide certainty for airspace users by maintaining the operation of the MLLR beyond the expiry of the current exemption (contained within Official Record Series 4 No 1545), until these alternative arrangements can be implemented. This work is now coming to fruition, and we anticipate that it will be completed prior to 31 May 2025.

Interpretation

- 4) In this exemption:
 - a) “(UK) SERA” means the Annex to UK Reg (EU) No. 923/2012 the ‘(UK) Standardised European Rules of the Air (SERA)’, and references to SERA followed by a number mean the corresponding provision within the (UK) SERA.
 - b) ‘Emergency Services Helicopter’ means any helicopter operated under an Air Operator Certificate or Police Air Operator Certificate granted by the CAA; for Search and Rescue operations on behalf of the UK Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA); for a Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) under a SPA.HEMS approval; or in the service of a UK police authority.

Exemption

- 5) The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), pursuant to Article 71(1) of UK Regulation (EU) 2018/1139, exempts the pilot-in-command of any flight within the Manchester Low Level Route (as notified in the United Kingdom Aeronautical Information Publication at EGCC AD2.22) from the requirement at SERA.6001(4) (Classification of airspaces) to be subject to an ATC clearance when flying in accordance with the conditions in paragraph 6.
- 6) The conditions specified in paragraph 5 are that the aircraft is flown:
 - a) in accordance with SERA.5005 (Visual flight rules) (VFR);
 - b) at a speed which, according to its airspeed indicator, is 140 knots or less, in order to give adequate opportunity to observe other traffic and any obstacles in time to avoid a collision;
 - c) in a flight visibility of at least 5 kilometres; and,
 - d) in accordance with the radiocommunications and secondary surveillance radar transponder operation procedures applicable to the Manchester Low Level Route as notified at UK AIP EGCC AD2.22.
- 7) The CAA, pursuant to article 71(1) of UK Regulation (EU) 2018/1139, exempts Manchester ATC from the requirement at SERA.8001(b) (Application) to provide an ATC service to VFR flights operating within the Manchester Low Level Route, when those flights are flying in accordance with the conditions in paragraph 6.
- 8) The pilot of an Emergency Services Helicopter is permitted to depart from the condition specified in paragraph 6c) to the extent necessary to achieve the purpose of the flight, in accordance with the procedures and minima specified in the operations manual of the operator of the helicopter.
- 9) This exemption supersedes Official Record Series 4 No. 1545, which is revoked.

Date in Force

- 10) This exemption has effect from the date it is signed, until 31 May 2025, both dates inclusive, unless previously revoked.

R Daniel

for the Civil Aviation Authority

18 April 2024

Explanatory Notes:

- 1) SERA Article 2(28) defines 'air traffic control (ATC) clearance' as the means of authorisation for an aircraft to proceed under conditions specified by an air traffic control unit.
- 2) This exemption does not include exemption from the requirements of SERA.5005(b) (Visual Flight Rules) for flight elsewhere within the Manchester Control Zone or in the Liverpool Control Zone. Nor does it include exemption from the requirement for special VFR flights to be in receipt of an ATC clearance for flight within the Manchester Low Level Route.
- 3) Aviation Safety (Amendment) Regulation 2021 introduced alternative VMC visibility and distance from cloud minima into SERA.5001 table S5-1. Pilots of aircraft (including helicopters) operating in accordance with VFR within the Manchester Low Level Route and without an ATC clearance are required to operate in a flight visibility of at least 5 kilometres.
- 4) Pilots of aircraft (other than helicopters) intending to operate within the Manchester Low Level Route with a flight visibility of less than 5 km are to request a Special VFR clearance and be in receipt of an ATC service from Manchester ATC.
- 5) Pilots of helicopters intending to operate within the Manchester Low Level Route with a flight visibility of less than 5 km are to request a VFR or Special VFR clearance and be in receipt of an air traffic control service from Manchester ATC.
- 6) ORS4 No 1496 'Standardised European Rules of the Air – Exceptions to the Minimum Height Requirements' Paragraph 8(c) permits an aircraft be flown below the minimum height requirements specified in SERA.5005 and SERA.5015 if it is flown in accordance with normal aviation practice and is flying in accordance with a notified procedure. The CAA considers the procedures described in UK AIP EGCC AD2.22 for the Manchester Low Level Route to be notified for the purposes of ORS4 No 1496 Paragraph 8(c).
- 7) Pilots of aircraft flown within the Manchester Low Level Route in accordance with the VFR are responsible at all times for their own separation from all other flights when flying along the Low-Level Route.