

Statement on the Regulation of Licensing Pilots of Crewed VTOL Aircraft Performing Commercial Air Transport Operations

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Introduction

This document presents the UK Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA) current position on how we will apply existing regulations to the licensing of pilots for crewed VTOL aircraft performing commercial air transport operations. This follows a call for input from industry that was open from 16th October 2023 to 20th November 2023. The call for input and response documents can be found on the CAA Citizen Space website.

For now, existing legislation will enable and form the basis of our regulation of VTOL operations. Both CAA and industries' collective understanding of these new technologies will grow as designs mature and actual operations commence. These experiences and increased understanding will inform the CAA's work of amending existing legislation in the future to better enable deployment of new aviation technologies such as VTOL operations.

In the meantime, the CAA has developed this statement on how we will apply existing regulations in this area to inform and enable stakeholders' planning operations now. Amendments to the existing regulatory framework in the future will involve industry input and formal consultation as per [Introduction to UK aviation safety policy and rule development | Civil Aviation Authority \(caa.co.uk\)](#).

Scope

This statement is applicable to all prospective operators of crewed VTOL aircraft including OEMs, training organisations, and prospective VTOL aircraft pilots intending to conduct commercial air transport (CAT) operations. It does not apply to uncrewed/remotely piloted aircraft.

This policy statement only concerns pilots who possess either Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL/A or CPL/H) or Air Transport Pilot License (ATPL/A or ATPL/H) licence. It does not currently provide for a licensing path for those with other types of licences or no previous flying experience, which will be developed in due course.

Interpretation

In this document, references to EU regulations are to those regulations as retained and amended in UK domestic law under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 and now known as assimilated EU law following the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023. They are referenced as "UK Regulation (EU) year/number" or "UK Regulation (EU) No. number/year".

Definitions

'aeroplane' means an engine-driven fixed-wing aircraft heavier than air that is supported in flight by the dynamic reaction of the air against its wings;

'helicopter' means a heavier-than-air aircraft supported in flight chiefly by the reactions of the air on one or more power-driven rotors on substantially vertical axes;

'VTOL aircraft' means a heavier-than-air aircraft, capable of performing vertical procedures by means of more than two lift/thrust units;

'commercial air transport' means an aircraft operation to transport passengers, cargo or mail for remuneration or other valuable consideration;

Requirements and Applicable Regulation

All CAT operations must comply with UK Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 (the UK Basic Regulation) and the associated Essential Requirements and Implementing Rules (IRs). Annex 5 of the Basic Regulation lays down the Essential Requirements for Air Operations.

VTOL aircraft pilots seeking to perform CAT operations will need to hold a valid Class 1 medical certificate.

VTOL aircraft may have a combination of airplane and helicopter characteristics. Accordingly, fixed winged pilots may benefit from some rotary familiarisation, and vice versa for rotary pilots. Such familiarisation should not be overly extensive and should be supplemented by type-specific training to impart piloting skills relevant to specific VTOL being flown.

Training syllabuses containing all the training requirements for the VTOL will be developed by the OEM and approved by the CAA as part of the process of developing the Operational Suitability Document. The training programme should be able to account for the differences in initial piloting experience and background among the candidate pilots.

Those developing the training syllabus should refer to [Operational Suitability Data: Flight Crew Data \(CS-FCD\)](#) to see the required minimum syllabus for pilot type rating training as well as other related training aspects. The privilege will be endorsed on the licence as a type rating, in a format as agreed by the Airworthiness, Design and Certification Team and Flight Operations, Licensing Policy, as part of the type certification process under UK Regulation (EU) 748/2012.

There will be a requirement for type rating for each type of VTOL a pilot operates.

Pilots and operators engaged in CAT operations shall operate the aircraft in accordance with the provisions specified in Implementing Regulation (UK) 1178/2011 on Aircrew Regulation

Pilots and operators engaged in CAT operations shall operate the aircraft in accordance with the provisions specified in UK Regulation (EU) 965/2012

Related Documents

- [UK Regulation \(EU\) 2018/1139 \(the UK Basic Regulation\)](#)
- [UK Regulation \(EU\) No. 1178/2011 \(the UK Aircrew Regulation\)](#)
- [UK Regulation \(EU\) No. 965/2012 \(the UK Air Operations Regulation\)](#)
- [Easy Access Rules for Operational Suitability Data \(OSD\) Flight Crew Data \(CS-FCD\)](#)

Review of Policy

The CAA will keep this statement under review having regard to technological developments, research and evidence it receives from stakeholders.

Point of Contact

Any queries or further guidance required on the content or implementation of this Pilot Licensing Policy Statement should be addressed to: AAMEnquiries@caa.co.uk