

AIRSPACE CO-ORDINATION NOTICE

Safety and Airspace Regulation Group



ACN Reference:	Version:	Date:	Date of Original
AR-2025-17	1.0	06/01/2025	06/01/2025

Civil Aviation Authority

MET RESEARCH FLIGHTS (SONDE DROPS) UK WIDE

CAT Z

Subject to NOTAM: No**Date(s) of activity/Validity:**

6 Jan 25 – 31 Jan 26

Times (ALL TIMES UTC)

Day or Night

Vertical Limits:SFC – FL350 **RVA****Allocated Mode 3A (SSR):**

Tactically Issued by ATC

Aircraft Details:

Type: BAe146-301
Callsign: AIRTASK 146 (DCT146)

NDS Approved:

Not applicable

Event Sponsor(s):

Directflight Ltd
ARA Ops Co-ordinator (Attn: Mr B. Black)
Building 146
Cranfield Airport
Bedfordshire
MK43 0AL
01234 817930 / 07464549161
ara.ops@airtask.com

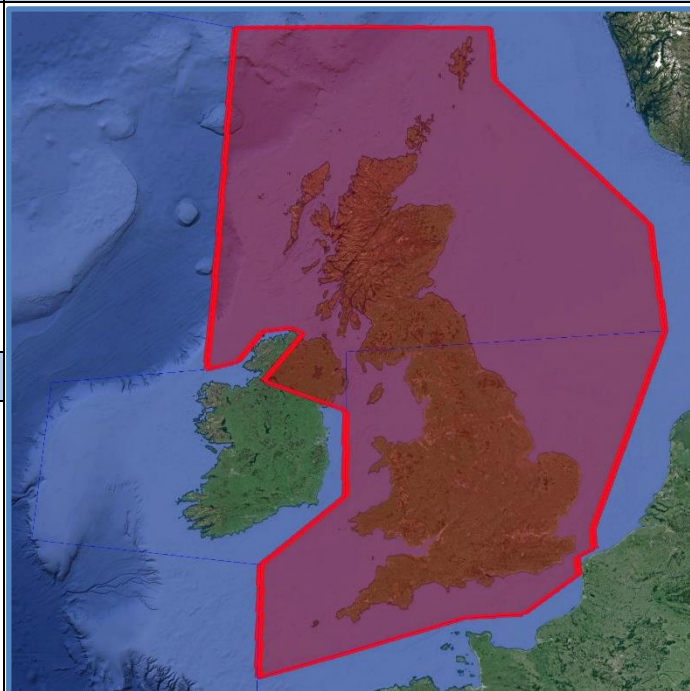
Aircraft Operator(s):

Directflight Ltd
Building 146
Cranfield Airport
Bedfordshire
MK43 0AL
01234 817930
ara.ops@airtask.com

**ATS Units/
Controlling Agencies:**

Swanwick Mil (78 Sqn) – East	01489 612495
Swanwick Mil (78 Sqn) – North	01489 612943
Swanwick Mil (78 Sqn) – West	01489 612408

Info: CRC Boulmer (19 Sqn), Plymouth Mil, Prestwick ACC, Swanwick ACC, Western Radar

Geographical Limits:**Airspace Reservations:**

Due to the unknown profile of this flight, no assessment has been made against notified UK Airspace Reservations

Departure/Destination Aerodrome(s)

EGTC

ACN Issued by:

AU2

SECTION 1: CO-ORDINATION ARRANGEMENTS (GENERAL)

1. The pilot/operator is requested to telephone the ATC authorities on the cover prior to departure in order to notify or update the sortie details including area(s) of operation and planned levels (quoting the ACN Reference). A minimum of 24 hours' notice should be given unless specified in Section 2.
2. There may be other aircraft and/or activities outside Controlled/Regulated Airspace unknown to ATC.
3. The carriage and operation of a serviceable transponder (including Mode 'C') has been specified.
4. The pilot will be responsible for obtaining all necessary ATC clearances and for maintaining R/T contact with appropriate ATC authorities.
5. The pilot/operator will be responsible for obtaining prior clearances to enter any UK Danger Areas affected by the flight profile from the appropriate Range Control Authority unless this is specifically detailed in Section 2.
6. Other Unusual Aerial Activities (UAAs) may be notified to the CAA Safety and Airspace Regulation Group (SARG) and may take place within the airspace encompassed by this flight. The pilot/operator is to ensure that UK Daily NOTAM Nav Warnings are consulted prior to each flight.
7. All flights within Controlled Airspace are subject to the requirements of a Flight Plan in accordance with UK AIP ENR1.10. The ACN Reference should be entered into Field 18 of the Flight Plan together with any relevant 'special handling' codes.
8. Flight prioritisation and Non-Deviating Status is in accordance with the information specified on the ACN Cover. Such status may be afforded to part or all of the flight – see Section 2.
9. Availability of an ATS from Plymouth Military, Swanwick Military (78 Sqn) or Western Radar is subject to unit capacity, priorities and limitations of radar and radio coverage. Minimum pre-flight notification as per UK AIP ENR 1.6 unless otherwise specified in Section 2 of this ACN.
10. The CAA actively encourages the use of Moving map technology in the planning and flying phases of flights to reduce the risk of airspace infringements.

PUBLICATIONS AND CHANGES

11. The activity area may lie within Controlled and Uncontrolled Airspace as well as airspace reserved for military use. Aircrew are to thoroughly familiarise themselves with UK airspace structures and procedures, in particular those laid down within the UK Aeronautical Information Publication (UK AIP), ENR 1.1 and be fully conversant with UK Flight Information Services in accordance with UK CAP 493 (MATS Pt 1).
12. The CAA VFR 1:500,000 and 1:250,000 charts and the UK AIP ENR 5 depict some, but not all aviation activity sites and amendments should also be checked. Please refer to <http://www.nats-uk.ead-it.com>
13. This ACN details specific coordination essential to the activity taking place and does not remove the need for aircraft operators to comply with national flight planning and notification procedures. Pilots and ANSPs are required to ensure that all related aviation sites are aware of this planned activity and of subsequent changes not captured within this document.
14. The Sponsor or Event Organiser should co-ordinate any changes to this ACN with SARG quoting the ACN Reference at the top of the page.

Airspace Regulation (Utilisation) – AU2
Email: AROps@caa.co.uk
Tel: 01293 983880

SECTION 2: CO-ORDINATION ARRANGEMENTS (SPECIFIC)

15. This ACN details the four operating areas used in support of airborne metrological research, by Directflight.

16. **This ACN replaces AR-2024-1069.**

17. **Notification.** The sponsor is to notify the agencies listed on page one of this ACN no later than 15:00 UTC the day prior to any planned flight. In addition, the pilot is to contact the appropriate agencies at least 2 hours prior to departure to confirm final details and availability of an ATS.

18. Where the flight is planned to take place withing an AIAA, or within an area designated for off-shore helicopter operations, the appropriate ATS provider for that area is to be informed of the anticipated route.

19. **NOTAM.** The sponsor is required to submit a NOTAM request the CAA (Airspace Regulation Operations), via the following [link](#) for publication at least 24 hours prior to the ETD¹ and within AROps operating hours².

20. **Flight Plan.** A flight plan with the anticipated routing is to be filed by the Operator. This is to allow for Prestwick ACC, Swanwick ACC and the UK CRC to identify reference the flight. The Operator is to add the following to Field 18.

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21. **Priority.** This flight has been categorised as CAT Z, ([CAP 493](#) – Section 1, Ch4, Para 10c refers,) and attracts no priority. Subject to the prevailing traffic conditions on the day, there may be level restrictions, or the aircraft may be provided vectors / requested to hold to allow most efficient use of airspace.

22. **Air Traffic Service (ATS) Provision.** 78 Squadron at Swanwick have agreed in principle to provide an ATS, subject to controller workload and higher priority taskings. The appropriate Swanwick Mil controller is requested to coordinate with adjacent ATS providers, where appropriate.

23. **ATS Provision – CAS.** Access to controlled airspace is subject to the prevailing traffic situation and controller workload. The pilot is responsible for obtaining a clearance to enter controlled airspace prior to penetration.

24. **ATS Provision – Outside CAS.** Due to the vast operating area, it is not possible to list all units who may provide an ATS. As such, the sponsor should refer to the [UK AIP](#) ENR 1.6 – Para 4.1 for LARS providers, or AD2 – Section 2.18 (both [UK AIP](#) and [Mil AIP](#)) for suitably equipped radar units.

25. Availability of an ATS service from a unit is not guaranteed, is subject to controller availability, unit workload and possible reduced hours of operations. Amendments to the published hours of availability, shall be notified via NOTAM.

26. **The permission for dropping sondes, when operating outside CAS, requires the aircraft to be in receipt of a Deconfliction Service (DS) ([CAP 774: UK Flight Information Services](#)),** where this is available. Should a DS not be available, this is to be recorded in the ATC Watch Log by the ATS provider, on the flight record by the Operator.

¹ The NOTAM is to be published at least 24 hours prior to ETD, iaw the requirements stated in the UK AIP. As such the sponsor should ensure that AROps are notified in sufficient time, (considering their operating hours,) to process the application.

² AR Ops – Hours of operation: Monday-Friday 08:30 -16:30, excluding Public Holidays and other periods, as notified by NOTAM.

27. **ATS Provision above FL100.** This service is available to all aircraft flying outside Controlled Airspace in the UK FIRs between FL 100 and FL 190, and within active TRAs and is subject to Unit capacity. The Units providing this service together with their boundaries are depicted within the UK AIP on the chart ENR 6-12. ENR 1.6 (4.2) lists their hours of operation, the RTF operating frequency on which this service is normally provided and a telephone number for pre-flight contact. A FPL should be filed and include the following addresses:

- a. EGZYOATT Swanwick Mil (78 Sqn)
- b. EGTTFZC Western Radar

28. Amendments to the published hours of availability, as listed in the UK AIP ENR 1.6 – Para 4.2, shall be notified via NOTAM.

29. Between the hours of 18:00 to 08:00 (local time) on a weekday, at any time on a weekend or during a UK public holiday, Swanwick Mil (78 Sqn) require at least two weeks prior notice in order to obtain an ATS in support of this task.

30. **Danger Areas (DAs).** Access to any DA is subject to military/delegated operator requirements and access is not guaranteed. The sponsor is to engage with the DA Authority at the earliest opportunity to coordinate access, noting that access may only be possible outside notified operating hours.

31. **Operating Areas.** The operating areas are listed in the [UK AIP](#) (ENR 5.3), but replicated below for reference:

- a. Area A:

533000N 0010000W - 500000N 0010000W following the line of latitude to -
500000N 0020000W - 485000N 0080000W - 510000N 0080000W - 522000N
0053000W - 533000N 0053000W - 533000N 0010000W

- b. Area B:

533000N 0030000W following the line of latitude to - 533000N 0053000W -
535500N 0053000W - 542500N 0081000W - 552000N 0065500W - 552600N
0072000W - 552000N 0081600W - 544500N 0090000W - 543500N 0100000W -
610000N 0100000W following the line of latitude to - 610000N 0030000W -
533000N 0030000W

- c. Area C:

533000N 0030000W - 610000N 0030000W following the line of latitude to -
610000N 0000000E - 600000N 0000000E - 570000N 0050000E - 550000N
0050000E - 533000N 0034000E - 533000N 0030000W

- d. Area D:

533000N 0010000W following the line of latitude to - 533000N 0034000E -
513000N 0020000E - 510700N 0020000E - 510000N 0013000E - 504000N
0013000E - 500000N 0001500W following the line of latitude to - 500000N
0010000W - 533000N 0010000W

32. **RVSM Status.** The aircraft is RVA for the duration of the flight, including when dropping sondes.

33. **Dropping of Articles.** The ACN is only valid when the sponsor is in possession of an Article 89(2) exemption from the Air Navigation Order 2016 and is limited as follows:

- a. The only articles that may be dropped are RD type dropsondes, retarded by parachutes and used for atmospheric sampling purposes.
- b. The dropsondes shall be deployed such that the predicted touchdown point of the dropsonde is not within a congested area.
- c. The Operator is to ensure that flights pursuant to this Permission are promulgated in advance by NOTAM (See Para 17), and operated under a Deconfliction Service where this is available.
- d. A record of each flight, containing the dates and places of departure and arrival, time of dropsonde release and touchdown, aircraft position and altitude at dropsonde deployment, dropsonde touchdown position, total flying time and names of the crew. The record, or summary of it, shall be preserved by the Operator for one year from the date of each flight listed thereon and shall be made available for inspection by the CAA when required.

SECTION 3

Area of Operation

34. The chart below highlights the four areas of operation. This is for illustrative purposes only, not for operational planning and is extracted from the UK AIP – ENR 6 (Chart 6-22).

Chart 1 – Met Research / Drop Sonde Flight Operating Areas

