

# Supplementary Instruction (SI)

## CAP 493 MATS Part 1

Safety and Airspace Regulation Group  
Future Safety



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### Expiry of ORS4 1312: Standardised European Rules of the Air - Visual Meteorological Conditions (VMC) Visibility and Distance from Cloud Minima within Class D Airspace

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this Supplementary Instruction (SI) is to remind air traffic service providers that Official Record Series (ORS) 4 General Exemption No. 1312 is planned to expire at 2359 UTC on 25 March 2020. Consequently, from 26 March 2020 the requirements of SERA.5001 Table S5-1 and SERA.5005(a) will apply without variation and reference to ORS4 No 1312 is removed from the Manual of Air Traffic Services (MATS) Part 1 (CAP 493).

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 Pursuant to article 71(1) of Regulation (EU) No. 2018/1139, the Civil Aviation Authority issued ORS4 No. 1312, which exempts pilots operating in accordance with VFR from the visibility and distance from cloud minima detailed within SERA.5001 Table S5-1 and SERA.5005(a) for flight within class D airspace as notified within the UK at or below 3,000 feet subject to specified conditions.
- 2.2 This exemption reflects a filed United Kingdom 'Difference' to Annex 2 (Rules of the Air) to the Convention on International Civil Aviation with regards to the Class D VMC.
- 2.3 This exemption is planned to expire at 2359 UTC on 25 March 2020. At the same time, the related Difference to Annex 2 is planned to be removed.
- 2.4 Once ORS4 No. 1312 expires SERA.5001 and SERA.5005(a) will apply. This change effects the Visual Meteorological Condition (VMC) applicable to pilots intending to operate in accordance with VFR within class D airspace. The expiry of ORS4 No. 1312 does not change the criteria governing when a VFR clearance may be issued, however controllers may experience an increase in requests for Special VFR clearances. There are no changes to separation requirements associated with Special VFR flights or the criteria governing when a SVFR clearance may be issued.
- 2.5 The expiry of ORS4 No. 1312 has also introduced the following consequential changes:
- (a) ORS4 No. 1067 is replaced by ORS4 No. 1341. This is an administrative change with no effect to ATC operations;
  - (b) ORS4 No. 1125 replaced by ORS4 No. 1342. This is an administrative change with no effect to ATC operations; and
  - (c) ORS4 No. 1222 replaced by ORS4 No. 1343 and 1344. This is mainly an administrative change. The only change to effect ATC operations is ORS4 No. 1344 extends the general exemption and permission granted to helicopters conducting pipeline and powerline inspection flights to rail track inspection flights

in helicopters. ANSPs and controllers are encouraged to review ORS4 No. 1344 for further details.

### 3. Revised MATS Part 1 Procedures

3.1 On this occasion it has not been possible to provide 60 days' notice of this change. With effect from 26 March 2020, references to ORS4 No. 1312 are deleted from the MATS Part 1 at the following locations as shown at Appendix A:

- (i) Section 1, Chapter 2, Paragraph 4.1, Table 2;
- (ii) Section 1, Chapter 2, Paragraph 4.1, Note 5;
- (iii) Section 2, Chapter 1, Paragraph 6A.2, Note 2; and
- (iv) Section 3, Chapter 1, Paragraph 8.6, Note 2.

3.2 In addition, references to ORS4 No. 1067 and ORS4 No. 1125 have been amended to ORS4 No. 1341 and ORS4 No. 1342 respectively. ORS4 No. 1222 has been also replaced by ORS4 No. 1343 and 1344.

3.3 This change will be incorporated into CAP 493 at its next amendment.

3.4 In addition, Supplementary Instruction SI 2019/04 will be withdrawn on 26 March 2020.

### 4. Queries

4.1 Any queries or further guidance required on the content of this SI should be addressed to:

ATS Enquiries  
Future Safety  
Civil Aviation Authority  
Safety and Airspace Regulation Group  
Beehive Ringroad  
Crawley  
West Sussex  
RH6 0YR  
E-mail: [ats.enquiries@caa.co.uk](mailto:ats.enquiries@caa.co.uk)

4.2 Any queries relating to the availability of this SI should be addressed to:

ATS Documents  
Future Safety  
Civil Aviation Authority  
Safety and Airspace Regulation Group  
Beehive Ringroad  
Crawley  
West Sussex  
RH6 0YR  
E-mail: [ats.documents@caa.co.uk](mailto:ats.documents@caa.co.uk)

### 5. Cancellation

5.1 This SI shall remain in force until incorporated into CAP 493 or is cancelled, suspended or amended.

## Appendix A

### Section 1, chapter 2:

## 4. Visual Flight Rules

- 4.1 The pilot of an aircraft is responsible for determining whether or not the meteorological conditions permit flight in accordance with the Visual Flight Rules. The criteria for determining Visual Meteorological Conditions are summarised in the tables below.

**Table 2:**

By Day	Distance from Cloud		Flight Visibility
	Horizontal	Vertical	
<b>At and Above FL 100.</b> (SERA.5001) Class B, C, D, E, F and G airspace	1500 m	300 m (1 000 ft)	8 km
<b>Below FL 100 and above 900 m (3 000 ft) AMSL, or above 300 m (1 000 ft) above terrain, whichever is the higher</b> (SERA.5001) Class B, C, D, E, F and G airspace	1500 m	300 m (1 000 ft)	5 km
<b>At and below 900 m (3 000 ft) AMSL, or 300 m (1 000 ft) above terrain, whichever is the higher</b> (SERA.5001) Class B, C, D and E airspace	1500 m	300 m (1 000 ft)	5 km
Class F and G airspace	Clear of cloud and with the surface in sight.		5 km
<b>Alternatively, at or below 900 m (3 000 ft) amsl.</b> <i>For aircraft including helicopters, flying at 140 kt IAS or less</i> Class G airspace (ORS4 no. <a href="#">1341</a> )	Clear of cloud and with the surface in sight.		1500 m

**Table 3:**

By Night	Distance from Cloud		Flight Visibility
	Horizontal	Vertical	
<b>At and Above FL 100.</b> (SERA.5001) Class B, C, D, E, F and G airspace	1500 m	300 m (1 000 ft)	8 km
<b>Below FL 100 and above 900 m (3 000 ft) AMSL, or above 300 m (1 000 ft) above terrain, whichever is the higher</b> (SERA.5001) Class B, C, D, E, F and G airspace	1500 m	300 m (1 000 ft)	5 km
<b>At and below 900 m (3 000 ft) AMSL, or 300 m (1 000 ft) above terrain, whichever is the higher</b> (SERA.5001 and SERA.5005(c)(3)(iii)) Class B, C, D, E, F and G airspace	1500 m	300 m (1 000 ft)	5 km

**Note 1:** VMC minima for Class A airspace is:

At or above FL100	8 km flight visibility, 1500 m horizontal and 300 m (1 000 ft) vertical away from cloud.
Below FL100	5 km flight visibility, 1500 m horizontal and 300 m (1 000 ft) vertical away from cloud

**Note 2:** For the purposes of gliders crossing airways in VMC by day the minima will be:

At all levels	8 km flight visibility, 1500 m horizontal and 300 m (1 000 ft) vertical away from cloud
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**Note 3:** UK General Permission ORS4 no. 1341 permits the pilot in command of an aircraft to operate in accordance with VFR within Class G airspace during day with a flight visibility of at least 1500 m when flying at or below 900 m (3000 ft) above mean sea level, clear of cloud and in sight of the surface with an indicated airspeed of 140 kt or less.

**Note 4:** UK General Permission ORS4 no. 1342 permits VFR flight within a control zone at night.

**Note 5:** UK General Exemption ORS4 no. 1343 exempts operations of helicopters conducting Police; HEMS; Search and Rescue (SAR) flights, including SAR training flights operating in accordance with a Letter of Agreement with the Air Traffic

Service Provider, from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(b), and air traffic control units from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(c) when controlling such flights.

**Note 6:** UK General Exemption ORS4 no. 1344 exempts operations of helicopters conducting powerline, pipeline and rail track inspection flights, from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(b), and air traffic control units from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(c) when controlling such flights.

## **8B. Weather**

8B.1 When the reported meteorological conditions at aerodromes in Class D airspace reduce below a ground visibility of 1500 m and/or a cloud ceiling of 600 ft, both by day or night, ATC shall advise pilots of aircraft intending to operate under Special VFR to or from such aerodromes, and request the pilot to specify the type of clearance required.

8B.2 Except for helicopters using Police; Helimed; Rescue; Electricity; Grid; Powerline, or Pipeline callsigns, or a SAR training flight operating in accordance with MATS Part 2, or rail track inspection flights, controllers shall not issue a SVFR clearance to aircraft wishing to operate under SVFR to or from an aerodrome within a control zone, or enter the aerodrome traffic zone or aerodrome traffic circuit, when the official meteorological report at that aerodrome indicates:

(1) By day or night:

- (a) Aircraft other than helicopters: ground visibility less than 1500 m and/or cloud ceiling less than 600 feet (SERA.5010(c));
- (b) Helicopters: ground visibility less than 800 m and/or cloud ceiling less than 600 feet (SERA.5010(c)).

**Note 1:** When the reported ground visibility at the aerodrome is less than 1500 m, ATC may issue a Special VFR clearance for a flight crossing the control zone and not intending to take off or land at an aerodrome within a control zone, or enter the aerodrome traffic zone or aerodrome traffic circuit when the flight visibility reported by the pilot is not less than 1500 m, or for helicopters, not less than 800 m (GM1 SERA.5010(c))

**Note 2:** UK General Permission ORS4 no. 1342 permits SVFR flight within a control zone at night.

**Note 3:** UK General Exemption ORS4 no. 1343 exempts operations of helicopters conducting Police; HEMS; Search and Rescue (SAR) flights, including SAR training flights operating in accordance with a Letter of Agreement with the Air Traffic Service Provider, from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(b), and air traffic control units from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(c) when controlling such flights.

**Note 4:** UK General Exemption ORS4 no. 1344 exempts operations of helicopters conducting powerline, pipeline and rail track inspection flights, from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(b), and air traffic control units from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(c) when controlling such flights.

**Note 5:** For the purpose of observing the meteorological conditions at an uncontrolled and/or unlicensed aerodrome or operating site located within a control zone, and

assessing whether those conditions satisfy the minima specified in SERA.5005(b) and SERA 5010(c) as appropriate, the Civil Aviation Authority deems the following to be competent to act as 'accredited observers' as required within Regulation (EU) 923/2012 Article 2(28) for their flight:

- (a) The holders of valid EASA Flight Crew Licences, valid National Flight Crew Licences and Certificates issued by, or on behalf of, the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority, and third country licences deemed valid in accordance with Article 150 of the Air Navigation Order 2016; and
  - (b) A student pilot-in-command (SPIC) who has passed the theoretical knowledge examination in meteorology toward the grant of an EASA Flight Crew Licence or National Flight Crew Licence or Certificate issued by, or on behalf of, the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority within the preceding two years.
- 8B.3 When the reported ground visibility consists of two values, the lower of the two values shall be used when determining if a Special VFR clearance can be issued.
- 8B.4 Procedures for operations into subsidiary aerodromes will be found in MATS Part 2.
- 8B.5 Aircraft flying along promulgated routes may encounter deteriorating weather conditions. Controllers should be prepared to provide an alternative route to enable the pilot to comply with the conditions of a Special VFR clearance.

## Section 2, chapter 1:

### 6. Effect of Weather on Operations

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6.1 When the reported visibility consists of two values, the lower of the two values shall be used when determining whether or not to implement the procedures below.

#### 6A. Class D

6A.1 When the reported meteorological conditions at aerodromes in Class D airspace reduce below a ground visibility of 5 km and/or a cloud ceiling of 1500 ft, both by day or night, ATC shall advise pilots of aircraft intending to operate under VFR to or from such aerodromes, and request the pilot to specify the type of clearance required.

6A.2 Except for helicopters using Police; Helimed; Rescue; Electricity; Grid; Powerline, or Pipeline callsigns, or an SAR training flight operating in accordance with MATS Part 2, or rail track inspection flights, controllers shall not issue any further VFR clearances to aircraft wishing to operate in accordance with VFR to or from an aerodrome, or enter the aerodrome traffic zone, or aerodrome traffic circuit, of an aerodrome within Class D airspace when the official meteorological report at that aerodrome indicates, by day or night, a ground visibility less than 5 km and/or a cloud ceiling less than 1500 ft (SERA.5005(b)(1)&(2)).

**Note 1:** UK General Permission ORS4 no. 1342 permits VFR flight within a control zone at night.

**Note 2:** UK General Exemption ORS4 no. 1343 exempts operations of helicopters conducting Police; HEMS; Search and Rescue (SAR) flights, including SAR training

flights operating in accordance with a Letter of Agreement with the Air Traffic Service Provider, from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(b), and air traffic control units from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(c) when controlling such flights.

**Note 3:** UK General Exemption ORS4 no. 1344 exempts operations of helicopters conducting powerline, pipeline and rail track inspection flights, from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(b), and air traffic control units from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(c) when controlling such flights.

**Note 4:** For the purpose of observing the meteorological conditions at an uncontrolled and/or unlicensed aerodrome or operating site located within a control zone, and assessing whether those conditions satisfy the minima specified in SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(c) as appropriate, the Civil Aviation Authority deems the following to be competent to act as 'accredited observers' as required within Regulation (EU) 923/2012 Article 2(82) for their flight:

- (a) The holders of valid EASA Flight Crew Licences, valid National Flight Crew Licences and Certificates issued by, or on behalf of, the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority, and third country licences deemed valid in accordance with Article 150 of the Air Navigation Order 2016; and
- (b) A student pilot-in-command (SPIC) who has passed the theoretical knowledge examination in meteorology toward the grant of an EASA Flight Crew Licence or National Flight Crew Licence or Certificate issued by, or on behalf of, the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority within the preceding two years.

6A.3 When the reported ground visibility consists of two values, the lower of the two values shall be used when determining whether to implement the above procedures.

6A.4 Procedures for operations into subsidiary aerodromes will be found in MATS Part 2.

### Section 3 chapter 1:

## 8. VFR Flights

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- 8.1 Approach Control shall retain all arriving VFR flights under its control until appropriate traffic information on IFR flights and other VFR flights has been issued and co-ordination effected with Aerodrome Control.
- 8.2 A particular watch should be kept for situations where a VFR flight may approach the aerodrome in a sector in which other aircraft are letting down on an instrument approach aid, or where sequencing is in operation. D/F indications, where available, will assist in this respect. In these circumstances the pilot of the VFR flight should not be given clearance for a straight-in approach and should be advised to avoid the initial and final approach areas.
- 8.3 Approach Control must ensure that VFR flights are transferred in sufficient time for Aerodrome Control to pass additional information in respect of local traffic.
- 8.4 Visual Reference Points (VRPs) are established to assist ATC in routing VFR traffic and to integrate VFR flights with IFR flights. Where VRPs are established outside controlled airspace, controllers should not instruct aircraft to hold over such

VRPs. This does not apply to VRPs established within controlled airspace where a known traffic environment exists. Controllers should not direct VFR traffic over VRPs unless the IFR traffic situation specifically demands this.

- 8.5 When the reported meteorological conditions at aerodromes in Class D airspace reduce below a ground visibility of 5 km and/or a cloud ceiling 1500 ft, both by day or night, ATC shall advise pilots of aircraft intending to operate under VFR to or from such aerodromes, and request the pilot to specify the type of clearance required.
- 8.6 Except for helicopters using Police; Helimed; Rescue; Electricity; Grid; Powerline, or Pipeline callsigns, or an SAR training flight operating in accordance with MATS Part 2, or rail track inspection flights, controllers shall not issue any further VFR clearances to aircraft wishing to operate in accordance with VFR to or from an aerodrome, or enter the aerodrome traffic zone, or aerodrome traffic circuit, of an aerodrome within Class D airspace when the official meteorological report at that aerodrome indicates, by day or night, a ground visibility less than 5 km and/or a cloud ceiling less than 1500 ft (SERA.5005(b)(1)&(2)).

**Note 1:** UK General Permission ORS4 no. 1342 permits VFR flight within a control zone at night.

**Note 2:** UK General Exemption ORS4 no. 1343 exempts operations of helicopters conducting Police; HEMS; Search and Rescue (SAR) flights, including SAR training flights operating in accordance with a Letter of Agreement with the Air Traffic Service Provider, from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(b), and air traffic control units from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(c) when controlling such flights.

**Note 3:** UK General Exemption ORS4 no. 1344 exempts operations of helicopters conducting powerline, Pipeline and rail track inspection flights, from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(b), and air traffic control units from complying with SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(c) when controlling such flights.

**Note 4:** For the purpose of observing the meteorological conditions at an uncontrolled and/or unlicensed aerodrome or operating site located within a control zone, and assessing whether those conditions satisfy the minima specified in SERA.5005(b) and SERA.5010(c) as appropriate, the Civil Aviation Authority deems the following to be competent to act as 'accredited observers' as required within Regulation (EU) 923/2012 Article 2(82) for their flight:

- (a) The holders of valid EASA Flight Crew Licences, valid National Flight Crew Licences and Certificates issued by, or on behalf of, the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority, and third country licences deemed valid in accordance with Article 150 of the Air Navigation Order 2016; and
  - (b) A student pilot-in-command (SPIC) who has passed the theoretical knowledge examination in meteorology toward the grant of an EASA Flight Crew Licence or National Flight Crew Licence or Certificate issued by, or on behalf of, the United Kingdom Civil Aviation Authority within the preceding two years.
- 8.7 When the ground visibility consists of two values, the lower of the two values shall be used when determining whether to implement the above procedures.
- 8.8 Procedures for operations into subsidiary aerodromes will be found in MATS Part 2.