



Miscellaneous

No: 1174

Regulation (EU) No. 923/2012

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General Permissions

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**Standardised European Rules of the Air – Exceptions to the Minimum Height Requirements**

**1) Definition**

In these permissions:

- a) 'SERA' means the Annex to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 923/2012 ('the Standardised European Rules of the Air' (and references to SERA followed by a number mean the corresponding provision of SERA)).
- b) 'licensed aerodrome' means an aerodrome licensed under the Air Navigation Order 2009 or an aerodrome certificated under Commission Regulation (EU) No.139/2014 of 12 February 2014 and
- c) 'Government aerodrome' means any aerodrome in the United Kingdom which is in the occupation of any Government Department or visiting force (as defined in article 255(1) of the Air Navigation Order 2009).
- d) 'notified' has the same meaning as in article 255(1) of the Air Navigation Order 2009.

**2) General (SERA.5005(f)(2))**

- a) The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) permits, under SERA.3105 and SERA.5005(f), subject to the condition set out in subparagraph (b), an aircraft to fly elsewhere than as specified in SERA.5005(f)(1) at a height of:
  - i) less than 150 metres (500 feet) above the ground or water; or
  - ii) less than 150 metres (500) above the highest obstacle within a radius of 150 metres (500 feet) from the aircraft.
- b) The aircraft must not be flown closer than 150 metres (500 feet) to any person, vessel, vehicle or structure except with the permission of the CAA.

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### **3) Approaches to Landing or Forced Landings**

The Civil Aviation Authority permits, under SERA.3105, SERA.5005(f) and SERA.5015(b), an aircraft to fly below the heights specified in SERA.5005(f) and SERA.5015(b) if it is flying in accordance with normal aviation practice and:

- a) practising approaches to land at or checking navigational aids or procedures at an aerodrome;
- b) practising approaches to forced landings other than at an aerodrome if it is not flown closer than 150 metres (500 feet) to any person, vessel, vehicle or structure; or
- c) flying in accordance with a notified procedure or when specifically authorised by the CAA in accordance with SERA.5015.

### **4) Glider Hill-Soaring**

The Civil Aviation Authority permits, under SERA.3105 and SERA.5005(f) a glider to fly below 150 metres (500 feet) above the ground or water or closer than 150 metres (500 feet) to any person, vessel, vehicle or structure if it is hill-soaring.

### **5) Picking Up and Dropping at an Aerodrome**

The Civil Aviation Authority permits, under SERA.3105 and SERA.5005(f) an aircraft picking up or dropping tow ropes, banners or similar articles at an aerodrome to fly below 150 metres (500 feet) above the ground or water or closer than 150 metres (500 feet) to any person, vessel, vehicle or structure.

### **6) Manoeuvring Helicopters**

- a) The Civil Aviation Authority permits, under SERA.3105 and SERA.5005(f) a helicopter to fly below 150 metres (500 feet) above the ground or water or closer than 150 metres (500 feet) to any person, vessel, vehicle or structure if it is conducting manoeuvres, in accordance with normal aviation practice, within the boundaries of an aerodrome, permitted sites detailed at subparagraph (c) or, if the operator or pilot-in-command of the aircraft has the written permission of the CAA, at other sites, subject to subparagraph (b).
- b) When flying in accordance with this permission the helicopter must not be operated closer than 60 metres to any persons, vessels, vehicles or structures located outside the aerodrome or site.
- c) Permitted sites
  - i) Great Yarmouth.
  - ii) Any helicopter landing site which is the main operating base of a PAOC or AOC operator.
  - iii) Any helicopter landing site used by an AOC operator for a helicopter A-to-A operation in accordance with the provisions of the operator's operations manual.

- iv) Any helicopter landing site located at the premises of a CAA-approved aircraft maintenance organisation.
- d) In subparagraph c):
  - i) 'AOC operator' means a person holding a valid air operator certificate issued by the CAA under Part 2 of the Air Navigation Order 2009 (other than a PAOC operator) or under Commission Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 of 5 October 2012,
  - ii) 'PAOC' means a person holding a valid air operator certificate issued by the CAA under article 13(5) of the Air Navigation Order 2009, and
  - iii) 'A-to-A operation' means a commercial air transport or public transport helicopter operation starting and ending at the same place (as defined in article 255(1) of the Air Navigation Order 2009).

## **7) Dropping Articles with CAA Permission**

The Civil Aviation Authority permits, under SERA.3105, SERA.5005(f) and SERA.5015(b), an aircraft to fly below 150 metres (500 feet) above the ground or water or closer than 150 metres (500 feet) to any person, vessel, vehicle or structure if it is flying in accordance with:

- a) article 129(3)(f) of the Air Navigation Order 2009 (dropping of articles); or
- b) an aerial application certificate granted by the CAA under article 131(2) of the Air Navigation Order 2009.

## **8) Captive Balloons and Kites**

- a) The Civil Aviation Authority permits, under SERA.3105, SERA.5005(f) and SERA.5015(b), a captive balloon or kite to be flown at heights below the minimum height requirements specified in SERA.5005 and SERA.5015.
- b) For the purposes of this permission, a captive kite is a kite that, when in flight, is attached by a restraining device to the surface.

## **9) Balloons over Congested Areas**

The Civil Aviation Authority permits, under SERA.3105 and SERA.5005(f), a free balloon to be flown below 1,000 feet above the highest obstacle within a radius of 600 metres from the balloon within the congested areas of cities, towns or settlements or over an open air assembly of persons by day if it is landing because it is becalmed.

## **10) Special Visual Flight Rules (VFR) Flight and Notified Route**

- a) Subject to subparagraph (b), the Civil Aviation Authority permits, under SERA.3105, SERA.5005(c) and SERA.5005(f), an aircraft to fly below 1,000 feet above the highest obstacle within a radius of 600 metres from the aircraft within the congested areas of cities, towns or settlements if:
  - i) it is flying on a special VFR flight; or

- ii) it is operating in accordance with the procedures notified by the CAA for the route being flown.
- b) Unless the permission of the CAA has been obtained, landings may only be made by an aircraft flying under this permission at a licensed aerodrome or a Government aerodrome.
- c) In subparagraph a) a 'special VFR flight' means a special VFR flight conducted in accordance with Sections 5 or 8 of SERA.

## 11) Revocation

These permissions replace Official Record Series 4 Number 1124 which is revoked with effect from 18 August 2016.

## 12) Validity

These permissions have effect from 18 August 2016 until they are revoked.

P Clarke  
for the Civil Aviation Authority

6 June 2016

### Explanatory Notes:

**Flying Displays, Air Races and Contests.** The removal of flying displays, air races and contests from the scope of these General Permissions follows publication on 10 March 2016 of Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB) Special Bulletin S1-2016 and the recommendation to the Civil Aviation Authority contained therein that it removes the general exemptions to flight at minimum heights issued for Flying Displays, Air Races and Contests outlined in Official Record Series 4 No 1124. Operators of civil-registered ex-military jet aircraft have, since publication of CAP1400 (UK civil air display review: final report (CAA April 2016) been required to seek formal approval from the CAA to perform aerobatic manoeuvres below 500 feet.

**Training Aerodromes.** Following the introduction of SERA and after reviewing the Minimum Height rules, the CAA has determined that the previous provisions for specific requirements for operations to Training Aerodromes are no longer necessary. The minimum height requirements and permissions for all operations are now contained within SERA, the Rules of the Air 2015 and the General Permissions.