



- 1 INTRODUCTION
- 2 PROCEDURES
- 3 INTERCEPTING AIRCRAFT SIGNALS AND YOUR RESPONSES
- 4 SIGNALS INITIATED BY YOUR AIRCRAFT AND RESPONSES BY INTERCEPTING AIRCRAFT
- 5 COMMUNICATION
- 6 AFTER FLIGHT

### 1 **INTRODUCTION**

a) The Air Navigation Order 2009 includes an item in Schedule 9 – ‘Documents to be carried’. This requires that on **INTERNATIONAL** flights **ALL** aircraft must carry a copy of ‘Signals for Use in the Event of Interception’. These are detailed in the UK [AIP ENR](#) 1.12, and may also be used in the event of an aircraft straying towards a sensitive area within UK airspace. **This leaflet is intended to expand on the AIP and may be carried by pilots whose international flights require details of the Signals and Procedures.**

b) Under Article 9 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation, each contracting state reserves the right, for reasons of military necessity or public safety, to restrict or prohibit the aircraft from other states from flying over certain areas of its territory.

c) The regulations of a state may prescribe the need to investigate the identity of aircraft. Accordingly, it may be necessary to lead an aircraft, of its own or another nation, which has been intercepted, away from a particular area (such as a prohibited area) or the aircraft may for security

reasons be required to land at a particular aerodrome.

d) In order to reduce the possibility of interception, pilots should **adhere to flight plans and ATC procedures**, as well as maintaining a listening watch on the appropriate ATC frequency and selecting the appropriate transponder code with ALT if possible. If details of your flight are in doubt, all possible efforts will be made to identify it through the appropriate Air Traffic Services Units.

e) If you see projectiles, showing on bursting red and green lights or stars, being fired in your direction from the ground, you are approaching restricted or prohibited airspace. Alter heading to avoid it, and contact an ATC unit, as in paragraph 2c below.

f) As interception of civil aircraft can be potentially hazardous, interception procedures will only be used as a last resort. If you are fired upon, there is little advice that can be offered!

g) The word 'interception' does **not** include the intercept and escort service provided on request to an aircraft in distress in accordance with Search and Rescue procedures. However, the signals used by an assisting military aircraft are likely to be the same.

h) Remember, the intercepting aircraft may not be able to fly as slowly as a low speed general aviation aircraft.

## 2 PROCEDURES

If you are intercepted by another aircraft you must immediately:

- a) follow the instruction given by the intercepting aircraft, interpreting and responding to visual signals in accordance with paragraph 3;
- b) notify, if possible, the appropriate Air Traffic Services Unit;
- c) attempt to establish radio communication with the intercepting aircraft or with the appropriate intercept control unit, by making **a general call on the emergency frequency 121.50 MHz**, giving your identity and the nature of the flight. If no contact has been established and if UHF is fitted, repeat the call on the emergency frequency 243 MHz; and
- d) **select Mode A, code 7700 and Mode C** if equipped with a transponder, unless otherwise instructed by the appropriate Air Traffic Services Unit.

### 3 INTERCEPTING AIRCRAFT SIGNALS AND YOUR RESPONSES

a) **'You have been intercepted,  
follow me'**

Day - the intercepting aircraft rocks its wings from a position slightly above and ahead of, and normally to the left of, your aircraft and, after acknowledgement, makes a slow level turn, normally to the left, onto the desired heading.

Night - same, also flashes navigation lights at irregular intervals.

Note 1 – Meteorological conditions or terrain may require the intercepting aircraft to take up a position slightly above and ahead of, and to the right of, your aircraft and to make the subsequent turn to the right.

Note 2 – If your aircraft can't keep pace with the intercepting aircraft, he is expected to fly a series of racetrack patterns and to rock his wings each time he passes your aircraft.



Your response to show you have understood and will comply:

Aeroplanes:

Day - rock your wings and follow him.

Night - same and in addition flash navigation lights at irregular intervals.

Helicopters:

Day or Night - rock your helicopter, flash navigation (or landing) lights at irregular intervals and follow him.

Note: You must also try to communicate as in paragraph 2 above.

b) **'You may proceed'**

Intercepting aircraft signals by day or night with an abrupt break away manoeuvre away from your aircraft consisting of a climbing turn of 90° or more without crossing the line of flight of your aircraft.



Your response to show you have understood and will comply:

Aeroplanes:

Day or Night - **rock your wings.**

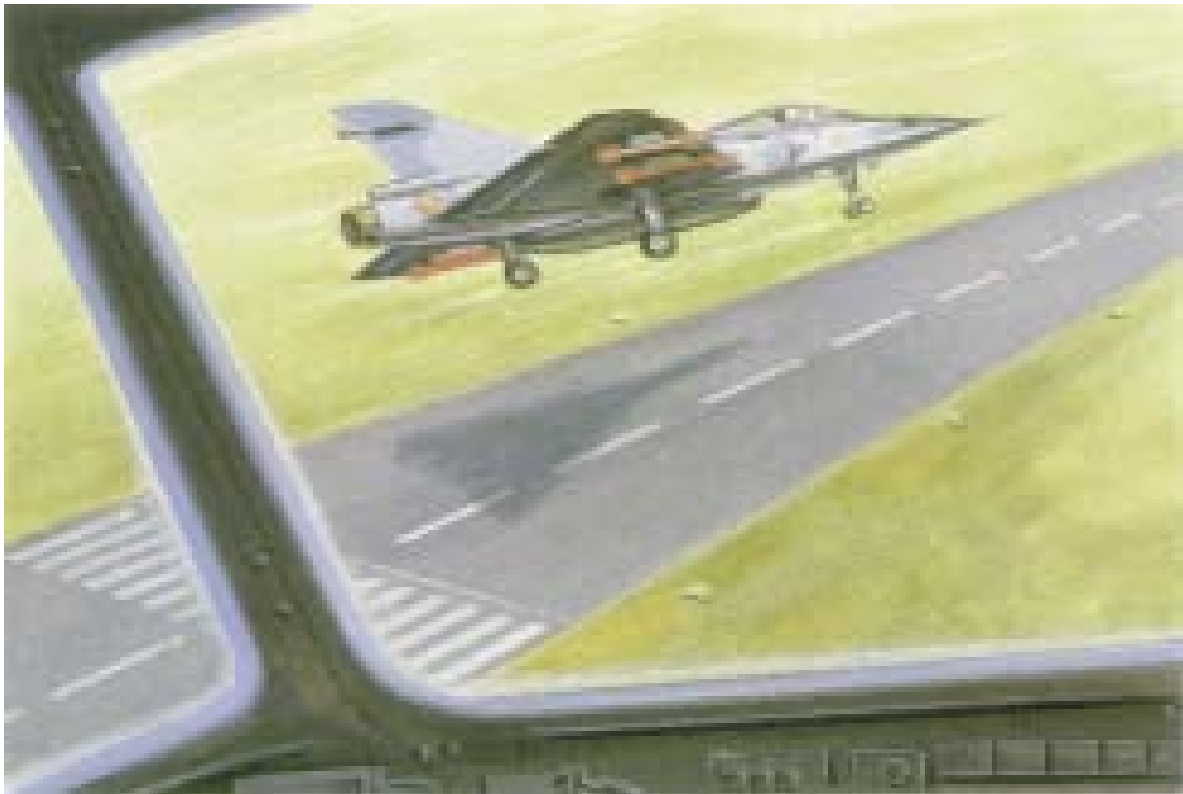
Helicopters:

Day or Night - **rock your helicopter.**

c) **'Land at this aerodrome'**

**Day** - the intercepting aircraft signals by circling the aerodrome, lowering his landing gear and over-flying runway in direction of landing, or if your aircraft is a helicopter he signals by over-flying the helicopter landing area.

**Night** - same and, in addition, shows steady landing lights.



Your response to show you have understood and will comply:

Aeroplanes:

**Day** - lower landing gear (if possible), following the intercepting aircraft and, if after over-flying the runway you consider landing is safe, proceed to land.

**Night** - same and, in addition, show steady landing lights (if fitted).

Helicopters:

**Day or Night** - following the intercepting aircraft and proceeding to land showing a steady landing light (if fitted).

#### 4 SIGNALS INITIATED BY YOUR AIRCRAFT AND RESPONSES

##### a) 'Aerodrome designated is inadequate for my aeroplane'

Day - raise landing gear (if possible), while passing over landing runway at a height exceeding 300 m (1,000 ft) but not exceeding 600 m (2,000 ft) above the aerodrome level, and continue to circle the aerodrome.

Night - in addition, flash landing lights while passing over landing runway as above. If unable to flash landing lights, flash any other available lights.

The intercepting aircraft responds to show he has understood.

– If it is desired that you follow him to an alternate aerodrome, he will raise his landing gear and use the signals prescribed for intercepting aircraft in paragraph 3(a). However, if he has understood and decides you may proceed, he will use the manoeuvre prescribed in paragraph 3(b).

##### b) 'I cannot comply'

Day or Night - switch all available lights on and off at regular intervals but in such a manner as to be distinct from flashing lights.

The intercepting aircraft responds to show he has understood by using the manoeuvre at paragraph 3(b).

##### c) 'I am in distress'

Day or Night - flash all available lights at irregular intervals.

The intercepting aircraft responds to show he has understood by using the manoeuvre described in paragraph 3(b).

## 5 COMMUNICATION

a) If radio contact with the intercepting aircraft is established, but communication in a common language is not possible, you should attempt to convey essential information and acknowledgement of instructions by using the following phrases and pronunciations (ICAO Annex 2, Appendix 2 and Attachment A refer):

Phrase	Pronunciation	Meaning
CALL SIGN	<b>KOL SA- IN</b>	My call sign is (call sign)
WILCO	<b>VILL- CO</b>	Understood - I will comply
CAN NOT	<b>KANN NOTT</b>	Unable to comply
REPEAT	<b>REE- PEET</b>	Repeat your instruction
AM LOST	<b>AM LOSST</b>	Position unknown
MAYDAY	<b>MAYDAY</b>	I am in distress
HIJACK	<b>HI-JACK</b>	I have been hi-jacked
LAND (place name)	<b>LAAND</b> (place name)	I request to land at (place name)
DESCEND	<b>DEE- SEND</b>	I require descent

b) The following phrases should be used by the intercepting aircraft in the circumstances prescribed above:

Phrase	Pronunciation	Meaning
CALL SIGN	<b>KOL SA- IN</b>	What is your call sign?
FOLLOW	<b>FOL- LO</b>	Follow me
DESCEND	<b>DEE- SEND</b>	Descend for landing
YOU LAND	<b>YOU LAAND</b>	Land at this aerodrome
PROCEED	<b>PRO- SEED</b>	You may proceed

c) If any instructions received by radio from other sources conflict with those given by the intercepting aircraft's visual signals or radio instructions, you must request immediate clarification while **continuing to comply with the visual instructions**.

d) Beware of making hand gestures, these could be misinterpreted!

## 6 AFTER FLIGHT

As interceptions are very rare, others may learn from your experience. Please tell the CAA's Safety Investigation and Data Department.

## **7 SUMMARY**

### **ON ALL INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS:**

- 1) Keep the Interception Procedures easily available.
- 2) Follow your Flight Plan and ATC procedures, including transponder settings.
- 3) Obey warning signals.

### **IF INTERCEPTED:**

- 1) Obey the interceptor.
- 2) Tell ATC then try to call the interceptor on 121.5 MHz.
- 3) Consider your and your passengers' safety at all times.