

News Release



6 May 2008

IMPLEMENTATION DATE FOR CHANGED UK AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES OUTSIDE CONTROLLED AIRSPACE CONFIRMED

The Airspace and Safety Initiative (ASI)* today confirmed that the introduction of new UK Air Traffic Control Services Outside Controlled Airspace (ATSOCAS) will take place on 12 March 2009.

The four new services that make up the changed ATSOCS, which has been the subject of full industry consultation, will completely replace the existing services.

Richard Taylor, Head of the CAA's Air Traffic Standards Division, said: "The CAA has now considered and incorporated comments from the consultation, and the resulting procedures, together with extensive educational material on the changes, will be published in June."

The official CAA publication (CAP 774) will be available on the CAA website in June and a fully interactive guide to the services will be posted at www.airspacesafety.com. This interactive guide will also be available on a CD which will be sent directly to all UK CAA licensed air traffic controllers, Flight Information Service Officers and pilots. All CDs will be despatched during June with the exception of those for non-commercial pilot licence holders, who will receive the CD in the autumn to enable them to train nearer the implementation date.

John Clark, Assistant Director Airspace Policy 2 in the CAA, said: "The new project 'O' date takes into account the requests from air traffic service providers to allow sufficient time to train staff outside the peak summer months.

"The CAA and other members of ASI will also provide continued guidance and assistance to the UK aviation community to help ensure the transition to the new procedures is as smooth as possible."

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ASI's full plans for the publicity and education of the changes will be published at the beginning of June.

For more media information please contact Jonathan Nicholson on 020 7453 6027.

Notes to Editors:

In the UK ATSOCAS are provided by both civil and military air traffic control units to a variety of airspace users ranging from commercial airliners to military fast jets and private pilots.

*The Airspace & Safety Initiative (ASI) is a joint CAA, NATS, Airport Operator's Association, General Aviation and Ministry of Defence effort to investigate and tackle the major safety risks in UK airspace.

It emerged from a top-level discussion between the CAA Chairman, NATS Chief Executive and MoD Assistant Chief of the Air Staff following a number of incidents where light aircraft infringed controlled airspace, or military and commercial flights conflicted outside controlled airspace.

The ASI is a major review covering a number of different areas, with the aims of:

- Enhancing safety outside controlled airspace
- Identifying the hazards associated with the use of UK airspace
- Identifying the needs of all airspace users
- Prioritizing the hazards and
- Developing a strategy to mitigate those risks while meeting the needs of all airspace users.