RA 1021 - Release To Service Authorities - Roles and Responsibilities

Rationale

On behalf of the Senior Duty Holder (SDH), the Release To Service Authority (RTSA) assures an Air System's Release To Service Recommendations (RTSR)►◄ and ►ensures◄ that ►identified◄ Risks to Life (RtL) have been ►◄ brought to the attention of the Operating Duty Holder (ODH), before issuing the Release To Service (RTS)[1]. When an Air System enters service or is subject to a ►Design Change◄ or change in limitation, it is important that the ODH understands the Risks associated with operating the Air System within the defined envelope and puts in place appropriate mitigation to manage RtL to an As Low As Reasonably Practicable and Tolerable level before acceptance of said Risks. This Regulation details the roles and responsibilities of the RTSA to ensure that this communication and acceptance of Risk is rigorously undertaken and that the integrity►◄ of the RTS is maintained.

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►◄ Roles and Responsibilities

1021(1) The RTSA **shall** authorize, issue, and maintain the integrity ►of the RTS◄ through-life ►◄ to provide the Aviation Duty Holder (ADH) chain with independent Air Safety Assurance of the Air Systems for which the SDH is responsible.

Acceptable Means of Compliance 1021(1)

►◄ Roles and Responsibilities

1. The RTSA **should**:

   a. Authorize and issue an initial RTS and subsequent RTS amendments.

   b. Provide Assurance of the RTSR including that all RtL apparent at the point of RTS issue and subsequent amendments, have been identified and brought to the attention of the ODH.

   c. ►Provide◄ independent Assurance ►to the SDH◄ that Defence Lines of Development (DLoD) ►and the Air System Safety Case (ASSC) are sufficiently mature for the RTS to be issued.◄

   d. Have an Air Safety Management System (ASMS) ►◄ that describes how ►the RTSA assess◄ changes to an Air System, and any associated limitations and procedures ►◄. The RTSA ASMS interfaces with those of the Type Airworthiness Authority and the ODH.

   e. Be engaged with an ODH's ASSC governance structure (including the Air System Safety Working Group (ASSWG) process) and provide Assurance to the SDH that the integrity►[2]◄ of the RTS is maintained.

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►◄ Roles and Responsibilities

2. The RTSA for each Service's Air Systems will receive appropriate letters from their Service SDH delegating the authority to issue and amend the Air System RTS documents for their Service.

3. Delegation of any aspect of responsibility to Delegated RTSA (DRTSA) ►will◄ be via a Letter of Delegation (LoD) specifying clearly the limits of authority. ►The LoD from RTSA to DRTSA will include the terms of the delegation by which the DRTSA is empowered to authorize Operational Emergency Clearances and Clearances with Limited Evidence.◄

4. The RTSA has a responsibility to maintain the integrity of the Air System RTS.

[1] Refer to RA 1300 – Release To Service.
[2] ►Assure correctness, completeness and consistency.◄

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5. Where a platform is operated by more than one Service a single RTSA may be identified to issue and amend the Air System's RTS on behalf of the other Service(s). This will be agreed by the relevant SDHs and underpinned by a Service Level Agreement (SLA) which will include the periodicity of review of the SLA. For Remotely Piloted Air Systems (RPAS) requiring an RTS[3], the single RTSA to issue and amend the Air System's RTS will be agreed by the relevant DRTSAs and underpinned by a DRTSA letter, which will specify the limits of authority and the review timings.

6. Any amendments to the RTS will require active and close consultation between the interested parties to ensure that any RtL is being appropriately captured and managed. This will form part of the ODH's ASSC governance. In considering amendments to an RTS, the RTSA will ultimately act in the interests of the SDH.

Operating and support elements

7. The RTSA will need to assure the DLoD assessment ►◄[4] covers as a minimum:

a. A statement from DLoD owners describing the degree to which each DLoD is ready to support the operation of the Air System.

b. Evidence of analysis that identifies gaps in DLoD requirements.

c. Evidence of analysis that identifies RtL associated with such gaps or lack of appropriate evidence.

d. Evidence of analysis that identifies measures to mitigate RtL.

e. Evidence that appropriate levels of Test and Evaluation[5] have taken place.

8. The MOD Knowledge in Defence[6] provides guidance on the responsibilities of Project and Programme Boards. Programme / Project Boards will have the authority to ensure that Capability Integration Working Groups (CIWG) are established to take the lead in pan-DLoD integration activity. Implicit in this integration task is a requirement to ensure that the work and outputs of CIWGs benefit from the inclusion of Air Safety expertise and scrutiny.

9. By including a Risk Assessment as part of the formal DLoD declaration, the DLoD owner provides to the RTSA and ODH the necessary evidence to allow them to assure themselves that the Air System ►is safe to operate and◄ can be operated safely ►◄.

[3] Open category and Specific S1 sub-category RPAS do not require an RTS. Specific S2 sub-category and Certified Category RPAS require an RTS.
[4] Refer to RA 1205 – Air System Safety Cases.
[5] Refer to RA 2370 – Test and Evaluation.
[6] ►https://www.gov.uk/guidance/knowledge-in-defence-kid◄, see "Programme Governance and Management Roles".