

► This RA has been substantially re-written; for clarity, no change marks are presented – please read RA in entirety ◀

RA 1345 - The Compendium of Airborne Equipment Release Certificates

Rationale

The information in the Compendium of Airborne Equipment¹ Release Certificates (CAERC) underpins the Airworthiness of Airborne Equipment (AE) when carried in, and dispatched from, an aircraft; and it informs the Air System's Release To Service (RTS) on the carriage and operation of the equipment concerned. The carriage and dispatch of AE from aircraft presents additional Risks to Life to users, the public, and military personnel. To ensure AE are correctly and completely identified and understood; Safety Assessments are required, within the CAERC, for each aircraft and all special requirements, modifications and limitations (speed, height, flaps, etc).

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Regulation 1345(1)

The Compendium of Airborne Equipment Release Certificates

1345(1) All AE **shall** have a certificate describing the conditions and limitations for safe carriage and dispatch from an aircraft.

Acceptable Means of Compliance 1345(1)

The Compendium of Airborne Equipment Release Certificates

1. AE **should** be certified through the issuance of AE Release Certificates which are to be included in the CAERC by the AE Type Airworthiness Authority (TAA).
2. The CAERC **should**:
 - a. Be issued by the AE TAA and Delegated Release To Service Authority (DRTSA).
 - b. Conform to the CAERC held on the MAA websites.
 - c. Record all Special Clearances including Operational Emergency Clearances (OEC) and Clearances with Limited Evidence (CLE), and be suitably marked.
 - d. Include an audit trail of amendments.
 - e. Be subject to a formal review on a routine basis.
3. The AE TAA **should** provide and maintain an auditable trail for all changes to Airworthiness documentation and ensure the equipment and the associated reference documents are trackable and preserved throughout the life of the affected equipment plus 5 years².
4. Where civilian or non-UK military aircraft are to be used as the dispatching aircraft, a rigorous Safety Assessment **should** be made by the AE TAA of the aircraft, its suitability, the interaction of the AE with the aircraft and all special requirements, modifications and limitations (speed, height, flaps etc). The Safety Assessment **should** be listed in the CAERC. The CAERC lists these aircraft that have been assessed as suitable by type or, if required, registration number. Particular attention **should** be made where the intention is to use static line Airborne Forces Equipment (AFE).
5. The AE TAA **should** inform the Aviation Duty Holder (ADH) of all identified operating risks.

¹ Defined in MAA02.

² Refer to RA 1225 – Air Safety Documentation Audit Trail.

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6. AE is the generic term covering the wide variety of parachuting assemblies for personnel and equipment, airdrop platforms, supply dropping equipment and ancillary items that are used for the insertion of personnel and equipment onto Drop Zones. This equipment can be split into three areas: Airborne Forces Equipment (AFE), Aerial Delivery Equipment (ADE), and Ancillary Equipment.

7. The AE defined in the CAERC allow for peacetime training, exercise, contingency, threat and war conditions.

The AERC and the AE Documentation Set (AEDS)

8. The MOD must ensure that all safety-related risks have been identified, and are managed. A key process of Safety Management is the dissemination of authorized limits, procedures and operating information to the personnel involved with AE, be these the aircrew in the aircraft from which the dispatch takes place, the parachutists, the equipment / parachutist dispatchers, or maintainers of AE. This function is fulfilled by the AEDS.

9. The CAERC is central to the Airworthiness of the AE. It is the apex document in a suite of documents and publications which make up the AEDS, and is used to ensure the safe operation of the equipment. The supporting documentation within the AEDS includes the various operators' publications, the equipment support policy statements and the technical publications; some of these items may be aircrew / aircraft-specific. The CAERC provides the authority to various elements of the AEDS, with the RTS providing authority to any associated, aircraft-specific publications.

Target Audience

10. The target audience for the CAERC is the operators and engineers specifically associated with the equipment concerned, as well as those associated with the aircraft within which the equipment will be carried and from which it will be dispatched.

Structure and Control of the CAERC

11. The Compendium of CAERC is a controlled document under the management of the AE TAA. The individual clearances are contained within the relevant Part of the Compendium. Each Part provides, or refers to the location of, the information necessary for the safe use of the equipment concerned. The information pertinent to the safe use of the equipment from a specific aircraft or aircraft type will be found in an associated Annex.

12. The document itself is built up of preliminary pages and seven specific parts as detailed in the template held on the MAA websites.

Management of the CAERC / Configuration Control

13. The master copy of the CAERC is held by the Release To Service Authority (RTSA)³ and is available on the MOD Intranet. The master copy contains all original signatures. All pages within the CAERC will show the issue status of the document and AL status for the specific page. The AE TAA is responsible for holding all superseded master copies throughout the life of the AE plus 5 years beyond its Out of Service Date. Similarly, the AE TAA is responsible for maintaining the original CAERC Acknowledgement Sheets (held on the MAA websites). The RTSA Desk Officer is responsible for maintaining the relevant intranet website as CAERC is amended.

Endorsement / Approval of the CAERC

14. The CAERC will be amended once all necessary evidence has been collated. Recommended amendments, with supporting evidence, will be presented to the AE TAA for endorsement. The AE TAA will provide a recommendation to the DRTSA.

15. The DRTSA approval process will take into consideration the aircraft that the AE is to be dispatched from.

16. The CAERC determines that the equipment is safe to use, not that it is authorized to use from any specific aircraft.

³ ACAS-RTSA-FW3 SO2.

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17. The CAERC, signed by the AE TAA and approved by the DRTSA (along with supporting evidence), will be passed to the TAAs of the dispatching aircraft.
18. The TAA of the dispatching aircraft will:
 - a. Provide recommendation to the DRTSA of the dispatching aircraft to authorize the use of the AE within their aircraft RTS.
 - b. Return the completed Acknowledgement Sheet to the AE TAA, detailing the acceptance of the AE for use on the aircraft or stating the reason for non-acceptance.
19. A Matrix, controlled by the RTSA, will be maintained on the MOD Intranet alongside the CAERC⁴; this Matrix will be referenced from the CAERC and will identify what elements of the CAERC have been accepted by aircraft TAAs.

Guidance on the Content of the CAERC

20. In addition to the guidance material contained within RA 1300⁴ and RA 1325⁵, the following guidance material is relevant:

- a. **Limitations.** The CAERC will outline the limitations imposed on the use of the AE, with the AEDS detailing the general usage of the equipment. Where there is inter-dependency of limits, by default the most restrictive apply. Where a variety of equipment configurations exist, and each has differing limitations, a matrix of configurations / limitations will be constructed.

Note:

Modifications are not normally shown in the CAERC unless they change any of the operating characteristics / limitations of the equipment. Details of modifications can be found in the AEDS and, where appropriate, the operators' manuals.

- b. **Ancillary Equipment.** It is fundamental that all equipment fitted to, or used in direct support of, the primary AE is included in the CAERC. aircraft-specific role equipment used in conjunction with AE need not be directly covered within the CAERC, but the items must appear within the Air System Document Set⁶ and must be at least referred to in the AEDS. Some equipment, where used in multiple aircraft roles or in support of more than one AE, can have their own entry in the CAERC. This equipment appears in Part D of the CAERC.

⁴ Refer to RA 1300 – Release To Service.

⁵ Refer to RA 1325 – Release To Service Limitations.

⁶ Refer to RA 1310 – Air System Document Set.

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