

## RA 2306 - Authorization of Flights

### Rationale

*Authorization is the authority given to an Aircraft Commander to fly a particular Air System on a specified mission or duty. In the course of normal operations a disregard for the direction that is implicit within Authorization may increase the Risk to Life to a level that is not As Low As Reasonably Practicable and Tolerable. This Regulation provides Aviation Duty Holders (ADH) and Accountable Managers (Military Flying) (AM(MF)) with an immediate level of assurance and direction.*

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### Regulation 2306(1)

#### Authorization of Flights

2306(1) All flights by UK Military Air Systems **shall** be Authorized.

### Acceptable Means of Compliance 2306(1)

#### Authorization of Flights

1. ADH and AM(MF) **should** publish, by appointment, those personnel who may delegate powers of Authorization.
2. ADH and AM(MF) **should** promulgate lists of individuals who have powers of Authorization by name or appointment and any limitations that apply. Authorizing Officers **should** receive Terms of Reference detailing their responsibilities.
3. ADH and AM(MF) **should** detail in orders the processes to be followed for the Authorization of flights.
4. **Duties of the Authorizing Officer.** The Authorizing Officer **should** as a minimum:
  - a. Detail the Aircraft Commander, and if applicable, the Formation Leader.
  - b. Ensure that the Aircraft Commander, and/or the Formation Leader or leaders understand the aims of the tasked mission or duty.
  - c. Ensure that the Aircraft Commander, and if applicable, the Formation Leader is capable of carrying out ► **their** ◀ responsibilities as detailed in these regulations or other applicable directives or orders issued by a subordinate authority.
  - d. Ensure that the Aircraft Commander or Formation Leader has thoroughly planned ► **their** ◀ mission, alternate mission or duty.
  - e. Ensure that the crew or formation members are qualified, in current flying practice, and capable of executing the tasked mission, alternate mission or duty as planned without undue hazard.
  - f. Define the duties of each member of Aircrew (eg P1, Commander) in the flight authorization record<sup>1</sup>, before flight.
  - g. Accurately state in the flight Authorization record the nature of the planned duty or exercise.
  - h. If necessary, alter the mission or crew, place further limitations on, or ultimately cancel the sortie.
  - i. Ensure that all aspects of the authorization are recorded in sufficient detail in an appropriate Authorization record;
  - j. ► **Consider the impact of any synthetic training conducted immediately prior to the flight on the authorized sortie content, particularly practice and simulated emergency handling.** ◀

<sup>1</sup> Colloquially known as the authorization sheet.

### Acceptable Means of Compliance 2306(1)

5. **Methods of Authorization.** UK Military Air Systems **should not** be flown unless the flight has been ► **Authorized** ◀, normally in writing, and the Aircraft Commander has signified that ► **they** ◀ understand the mission or duty by initialling the appropriate Authorization record. Electronic Authorization **should** only be used where it is at least as robust as written Authorization; in particular it **should** be capable of immediate audit and hard copy reproduction. Exceptionally, if an Authorizing Officer and/or Aircraft Commander is unable to carry out the procedure for written Authorization, verbal Authorization **should** be given instead. The Authorization record **should** be annotated to reflect the granting of verbal Authorization as soon as possible.
6. **Aircrew Capability.** Authorizing Officers **should** pay particular attention to Aircrew competency and qualifications, and apply Aircrew fatigue management considerations when Authorizing a flight.
7. **Day/Night Flying Considerations.** Unless prior arrangements have been made for night flying, Aircrew **should** only be Authorized for ► ◀ flight if the Authorizing Officer is satisfied that they will arrive at their destination before the end of evening civil twilight. Furthermore, where bad weather influences light levels, the Authorizing Officer **should** consider applying a greater safety margin and stipulate the latest hour at which the Air System is to arrive at its destination.
8. **Meteorological Considerations.** The Authorizing Officer **should** assure ► **themselves** ◀ that due consideration has been given to meteorological conditions, and be prepared to adjust the sortie profile accordingly.
9. **Authorization of Passenger Flights.** The names of passengers **should** be entered in the Authorization record, whenever practicable, or recorded on passenger manifests.
10. **Flying during Exercises.** Authorizing Officers **should**, where possible, follow standard Authorizing procedures; moreover, the proper degree of flying supervision is to be maintained. However, when an exercise scenario makes normal Authorization impracticable a general 'exercise' Authorization **should** be given.
11. **Flying during Operations.** ADH **should** stipulate occasions when operational requirements preclude explicit Authorization and how those situations **should** be managed. However, the Authorizing Officer **should**, where possible, follow standard Authorizing procedures.

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#### Authorization of Flights

12. **Delegation of Authorization.** The power to delegate Authorization for Defence Contractor organizations must not be granted below post holder level.
13. **Processes for Authorization.** Authorizing Officers need to follow standard procedures and processes for Authorization to ensure that the ADH or AM(MF) intent is met. Accordingly, ADH and AM(MF) orders must specify the actions required of an Authorizer and the overall management of Authorization within their Area of Responsibility.
14. **Risk.** The key role of the Authorizing Officer is to be aware of the probability and impact of potential problems and to eliminate, reduce or control the hazards involved through risk management and implementation of suitable controls.
15. **Self-Authorization.** Suitably qualified Aircrew may be granted powers of Self Authorization by an Approving Officer<sup>2</sup> with any limitations detailed on an appropriate certificate. Independent Authorization, rather than self-Authorization, is encouraged.
16. **Cross-Boundary Authorization.** Powers of Authorization do not transfer across ADH or AM(MF) boundaries. Suitably qualified Aircrew, such as appointed Central Flying School or Standards Agents, may be empowered to Authorize all flights in Air Systems on which they are qualified. However, migrating Aircrew powers of Authorization must be endorsed by the gaining ADH or AM(MF) and promulgated as such in accordance with para 2. The sortie Authorization record must remain with the ADH or AM(MF) organization operating the Air System.

<sup>2</sup> The Defence Contractor Flying Organization equivalent is the Flight Operations post-holder.

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17. **Authorization Terminology.** In stating the nature of the planned duty, the Authorizer must avoid ill-defined terms such as 'local flying'. Where aerobic manoeuvres are implicit in an Authorized duty (eg air combat, weapon delivery, etc) the term 'aerobatics' need not be added. Codes specifying sortie content may be used to abbreviate written Authorization. Orders and instructions will specify the codes that may be used and the relevant decode will be displayed alongside the Authorization record. Trials sorties may be entered into the Authorization record by the number of the Trials Instruction. Details indicating which part of the Trial is being conducted must be entered separately on the Authorization record. A copy of the Trials Instruction must be available at the point of Authorization. As an overarching guide for the completion of Authorization of flights, it must be possible to reconstruct the nature, scope and boundaries of the authorized flight and task, including the constitution and specific duties of the crew, from the authorization record.
18. **Deviation from Authorization.** Exceptionally an Aircraft Commander or Formation Leader may undertake a mission or duty not included in the pre-flight Authorization. However, the deviation must be within the constraints of these regulations, and the Aircraft Commander/Formation Leader must be satisfied that the deviation from the Authorized mission is on the grounds of Air System safety, or in the UK national or Service interest. The Aircraft Commander, or Formation Leader, will inform ►their◄ Authorizing Officer or Supervisor of ►their◄ actions as soon as possible and in any event must do so after landing. ►They◄ must annotate the Authorization record to indicate the additional duties carried out. The amendment to the authorization record must be clearly initialled by the Aircraft Commander/Formation Leader so as to clarify under whose authority the additional duties were undertaken.
19. **Aircrew Capability.** If any Aircrew member considers that the flight for which they have been Authorized is in any way beyond ►their◄ capabilities or qualifications, it is ►their◄ duty to inform the Authorizing Officer or Aircraft Commander accordingly.
20. **Flying during Exercises.** Where a general 'exercise' Authorization is given, this will state the period for which Authorization has been granted, the maximum number of hours or sorties to be flown and any additional limitations imposed on individuals or crews. In this situation, the Authorizing Officer will consider the requirement for relaxing the Authorization process, and if necessary conduct an assessment of risk.
21. **Flying during Operations.** A tasking message may be taken as Authorization to execute an operational sortie. However, if a hard copy of the tasking message is received it must be kept for reference. Where practicable, Authorization record will be completed after the sortie. This does not apply to operational training which requires full Authorization.
22. ►Consideration of Synthetic Training Activity. Aviation accident investigations have suggested a potential for Aircrew to incorrectly make 'live' inputs to emergency systems during the conduct of simulated or practice emergency handling on an Air System in flight immediately after conducting the same exercise 'live' in a Synthetic Training Device. This cognitive phenomenon might be mitigated by appropriate authorization, pre-flight briefing, crew composition and other supervisory factors and must be considered during the authorization process.◄

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