

## RA 1704 - Non-Combat Parachuting

### Rationale

The MOD has a requirement for Non-Combat Parachuting (NCP)<sup>1</sup> for a variety of activities to deliver training and Defence activity. Failure to manage NCP activity appropriately could result in increased Risk to Life (RtL) to personnel, 3rd parties, or damage to Aircraft. In order to support capability and effectively manage RtL, Duty Holders<sup>2</sup> (DH) must act in line with the MOD's Duty of Care (DoC) obligations. Furthermore, to ensure RtL is As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP) and Tolerable, DH must understand the Risk picture, be clear as to where division of Safety Responsibility lies and be able to effectively govern parachuting activities through robust orders and procedures.

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### Definitions

#### Definitions Relevant to this RA

1. **Non-Combat Parachuting (NCP)**. NCP is defined as on-duty parachuting activities (an amalgamation of: Joint Services Adventurous Training, Sports, and Display) that are not using: MOD-approved Airborne Forces Equipment (AFE) (covered by RA 1701<sup>3</sup>), MOD-approved Aerial Delivery Equipment (covered by RA 1702<sup>4</sup>), or foreign military AFE (covered by RA 1703<sup>5</sup>).

### Regulation

#### 1704(1)

#### Governance of Non-Combat Parachuting

1704(1) The DH **shall** ensure the RtL associated with NCP is managed within their Area of Responsibility (AoR).

### Acceptable Means of Compliance 1704(1)

#### Governance of Non-Combat Parachuting

2. The DH **should** ensure all NCP is taking place at locations that hold an affiliated Parachute Training Organization licence with the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), or national equivalent for overseas NCP, recognized national skydiving governing body for activities conducted on-duty<sup>6</sup>.
3. The DH **should** ensure UK CAA, or national equivalent for overseas NCP, recognized national skydiving governing body Regulations are followed.
4. The DH **should** issue orders and instructions which aim to deliver outcomes that are at least as safe as the outcomes which would be achieved through equivalent civil Regulation.
5. The DH **should** ensure that Aircraft are correctly configured for the parachuting activity and confirm that they are routinely used and authorized by the Aircraft's national or military aviation authority for such activity.
6. Safety Responsibilities for NCP can be divided between those relating to aviation aspects and those relating to the specific conduct of the activity:

<sup>1</sup> The use of "non-combat parachuting" includes the associated ancillary equipment.

<sup>2</sup> For NCP activities, it is acceptable to have a non-Aviation DH (minimum rank of OF5) in accordance with (iaw) the definition in JSP 815 – Defence Safety Management System.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to RA 1701 – MOD-Approved Airborne Forces Equipment.

<sup>4</sup> Refer to RA 1702 – MOD-Approved Aerial Delivery Equipment.

<sup>5</sup> Refer to RA 1703 – Foreign Military Airborne Forces Equipment.

<sup>6</sup> When conducting Display Parachuting, refer to RA 2335 – Flying Displays, Display Flying, Display Parachuting, Role Demonstrations and Flypasts.

**Acceptable  
Means of  
Compliance  
1704(1)**

- a. The chartered Aircraft's civilian Accountable Manager<sup>7</sup> **should** be responsible for on-Aircraft Safety and the airborne delivery of personnel to an area within safe navigation parameters.
- b. The DH who holds DoC Responsibility for the personnel undertaking the specific activity **should** be responsible for personnel and equipment (eg such as fitness and training).
7. **Supervision of Parachuting.** The DH **should** ensure NCP operations, including Maintenance and packing, are supervised by a Suitably Qualified and Experienced Person (SQEP).
8. **Authorization of Parachuting.** The DH **should** ensure NCP operations, including Maintenance and packing, are authorized by SQEP.

**Guidance  
Material  
1704(1)**

**Governance of Non-Combat Parachuting**

9. **Supervision of Parachuting.** Some of the supervisory processes detailed in RA 2305<sup>8</sup> may be considered suitable for the supervision of NCP activities.
10. **Authorization of Parachuting.** Some of the Authorization processes detailed in RA 2306<sup>9</sup> may be considered suitable for the Authorization of NCP activities.
11. The MRP are specifically written with respect to Air Systems. Their application is equally suitable for aspects of NCP activities and to the Risk Management framework<sup>10</sup> necessary to allow the DH and other members of the NCP Community to ensure RtL is managed appropriately.

**Regulation  
1704(2)**

**Assurance of Non-Combat Parachuting**

- 1704(2) The DH **shall** be responsible for Assurance that the RtL associated with NCP within their AoR is ALARP and Tolerable.

**Acceptable  
Means of  
Compliance  
1704(2)**

**Assurance of Non-Combat Parachuting**

12. The DH **should** establish and maintain a robust system for control of NCP, this **should** include as a minimum:
- Provision of Risk Assessments to identify and mitigate potential Hazards.
  - Procedures for equipment inspections and Maintenance.
  - Training and Certification, at least as good as, aligned to civil standards.
  - Detailing operating protocols.
13. The DH **should** define in orders the criteria and periodicity for assessing the system for control of NCP activities.
14. In addition to the assessment at paragraph 13, the DH **should** ensure that the system for control of NCP activities is assessed by an independent expert body. The DH **should** stipulate in orders the periodicity of these independent assessments.

**Guidance  
Material  
1704(2)**

**Assurance of Non-Combat Parachuting**

15. The DH and personnel involved in NCP activities will follow the Guidance in:
- UK CAA Civil Aviation Publication (CAP) 660<sup>11</sup> or national equivalent for overseas NCP.
  - British Skydiving Operations Manual or national equivalent for overseas NCP.

<sup>7</sup> Refer to RA 1167 – Contracting Civil-Registered Air Systems for Military Purposes.

<sup>8</sup> Refer to RA 2305 – Supervision of Flying.

<sup>9</sup> Refer to RA 2306 – Authorization of Flights.

<sup>10</sup> Refer to the Regulatory intent of RA 1200 – Air Safety Management, and RA 1210 – Ownership and Management of Operating Risk (Risk to Life).

<sup>11</sup> Refer to CAP 660: Parachuting.

**Guidance  
Material  
1704(2)**

- c. The NCP Operations Manual.
  - d. Comply with local orders, as required.
16. An independent expert body needs to be sufficiently independent such that it is not unduly influenced by commercial, operational, peer or rank / status pressures.

**Regulation  
1704(3)**

**Operating Non-Combat Parachuting**

- 1704(3) The DH **shall** ensure the RtL associated with operating NCP is managed within their AoR and that Safety Responsibilities associated with the activity are properly defined.

**Acceptable  
Means of  
Compliance  
1704(3)**

**Operating Non-Combat Parachuting**

17. Where NCP activities are conducted within their AoR, the DH **should** publish orders and instructions that includes the following detail, where relevant to the activity, as a minimum:
- a. How and when Parachutists are fitted with location equipment<sup>12</sup> dependent on the operating environment to locate Parachutists in the event of an Accident or Incident.
  - b. Minimum Heights<sup>13, 6</sup> (Above Ground Level / Above Mean Sea Level) for main parachutes:
    - (1) For each discipline being conducted, minimum planned deployment Heights articulated.
    - (2) The minimum altitude for a parachutist to be under a fully developed main canopy.
    - (3) Procedures for automatic activation devices regarding minimum Height settings account for uneven topography.
  - c. Guidance on the use of Ancillary and associated equipment.
  - d. The periodicity of currency training for emergency procedures.

**NCP Accident and Incident Reporting**

18. All NCP Occurrences **should** be reported iaw RA 1410<sup>14</sup>. Consideration **should** also be given to reporting under the respective single-Service reporting mechanisms and the requirements of the civil governing body.

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1704(3)**

**Operating Non-Combat Parachuting**

19. Nil.

<sup>12</sup> All location equipment **should** be classed as Portable Electronic Devices. Refer to RA 2360 – Portable Electronic Devices.

<sup>13</sup> The Height at which the parachute is to be fully inflated and be in a condition to be controlled by the user.

<sup>14</sup> Refer to RA 1410 – Occurrence Reporting and Management.

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