

**COMMON VHF FREQUENCY FOR USE AT AERODROMES HAVING NO NOTIFIED GROUND RADIO FREQUENCY - 'SAFETYCOM'****1 Introduction**

1.1 At aerodromes having no notified VHF frequency, a common frequency is available to assist pilots to avoid potential collisions between arriving and departing aircraft. Pilots may use the frequency to broadcast their intentions for safety purposes, and there should be no response, except when the pilot of another aircraft transmits his intentions.

1.2 The frequency assigned is 135.475 MHz and is known as 'SAFETYCOM'. Pilots should be aware that SAFETYCOM is not a UK equivalent of the UNICOM system used in the United States, and does not work in the same way. Procedures for its use are outlined below and references given for the source documents.

2 RTF Phraseology

2.1 SAFETYCOM is only to be used to transmit information regarding the pilot's intentions for safety purposes. Procedures for its use are published in the UK Aeronautical Information Publication, Section GEN 3.4, Paragraph 3.2.4. Phraseology is to comply with the requirements of CAP 413 (Radiotelephony Manual) Chapter 4, Section 6.

2.2 Pilots operating at aerodromes without a notified frequency are recommended to use SAFETYCOM, but its use is not mandatory. However, if pilots do elect to use it, they should make all the calls listed in CAP 413 as 'essential'. Calls not listed as 'essential' may be made at the pilot's discretion.

2.3 Exceptionally, where the pilot of an aircraft in the air or on the ground has information critical to the safety of an aircraft in a condition of distress or urgency, SAFETYCOM may be used to transmit that information.

3 Restrictions on Use of SAFETYCOM

3.1 As a shared frequency used in many different locations, SAFETYCOM is expected to be a busy frequency with a significant probability of breakthrough to users at other locations. It is important that RTF is concise and unambiguous, and should include the name of the aerodrome. SAFETYCOM is not to be used as a 'chat frequency' or for the conduct of formation flights, unless landing at or taking off from an aerodrome where no other frequency is notified.

3.2 To reduce the probability of breakthrough, it is also important that transmissions are only made within the height and range limits for the frequency. Transmissions should only be made up to a maximum range of 10 nm from the aerodrome or location of intended landing, and below 2000 ft above the elevation of that aerodrome or landing site.

3.3 SAFETYCOM will be monitored by the CAA. Evidence of abuse may result in its withdrawal.

3.4 Pilots should not assume that all other pilots in the vicinity are monitoring the same frequency. Use of SAFETYCOM is optional and there may be non-RTF aircraft in the area. In the vicinity of a microlight or gliding site, pilots may be monitoring one of the sporting use frequencies. It is therefore important that, as at all other times, pilots maintain a good look out when using SAFETYCOM.

3.5 There is no Air Traffic Service associated with SAFETYCOM and pilots must not assume that they are receiving a service. Where an aerodrome lies within controlled airspace, pilots using SAFETYCOM must ensure that they contact the responsible Air Traffic Service Unit on the appropriate frequency and obtain clearance prior to entering controlled airspace.

3.6 Transmitting on SAFETYCOM does not confer any right of way and pilots must comply with the Rules of the Air, in particular the rules for avoiding aerial collisions.

3.7 SAFETYCOM is not to be used for Special Events; frequencies for such events should continue to be requested through existing channels.

Note: Special Events are defined in CAP 403 (Flying Displays and Special Events: A Guide to Safety and Administrative Arrangements) Chapter 1, Page 2 and constitute any flying activity during which aircraft may not necessarily comply with the Rules of the Air and normal Air Traffic Control rules and which require consideration of one or more of the following:

- i. the issue of special procedures;
- ii. the level of an Air Traffic Service to be provided;
- iii. the establishment of Restriction of Flying Regulations.