

NATS ADDITIONAL SEPARATION POLICY IN RELATION TO AIR DISPLAYS AND OTHER UNUSUAL AIR ACTIVITY WITHIN CONTROLLED AIRSPACE.

1 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this Circular is to advise all operators of NATS Additional Separation Policy in relation to Air Displays or other Unusual Air Activity within controlled airspace.

1.2 In order to effectively share portions of controlled airspace with other airspace users for the conduct of Air Displays and other Unusual Air Activity, it is necessary for NATS to apply additional separation criteria to ensure safe separation between the activity and other aircraft operating within the airspace.

2 Policy

2.1 The following Additional Separation Criteria are applied to ensure that NATS discharges its responsibilities in providing appropriate standard separation standards between all aircraft according to the classification of the airspace encompassing the event. Additionally, even when separation standards are not prescribed, ie. between VFR flights or between VFR and IFR flights in Class D Airspace, the application of the appropriate Additional Separation Criteria assists ATC to prevent collisions between known flights and to maintain a safe, orderly and expeditious flow of traffic.

2.2 Restricted Airspace (Temporary)

2.2.1 Restricted Airspace (Temporary) - RA(T) will be promulgated by Airspace Utilisation Section, if in their opinion, the nature of an aerial activity is such that it will have a significant impact on the activities of other airspace users or adjacent ATSUs. A RA(T) may encompass both controlled and uncontrolled airspace and is established for a specific time period as notified by AUS.

2.2.2 It should be noted that if activity is authorised within a RA(T) coincident with controlled airspace then it will normally be necessary to apply Additional Separation Criteria in addition to the dimensions of the RA(T) to ensure standard separation from other traffic.

2.3 Air Display or other Unusual Air Activity within Class A-C Airspace

2.3.1 If an Air Display or other Unusual Air Activity is authorised to enter Class A-C Airspace (CAS), NATS will apply the following vertical and/or horizontal separation criteria between the Air Display or other Unusual Air Activity area and all aircraft within CAS, this will result in an area of 'sterile' airspace (known as the protected airspace) around the Air Display or other Unusual Air Activity area.

a. Vertical

1000 ft minimum vertical separation unless the air display or unusual air activity will involve high energy aerobatic or vertical manoeuvres in which case 2000 ft is to be provided.

Note. A flypast even when conducted at 250 kt or greater, requires 1000 ft vertical separation providing the horizontal profile is pre-planned and co-ordinated.

b. Horizontal

Standard horizontal separation from the lateral limits notified for the air display or unusual air activity. This separation may be 3 nm, 5 nm or greater according to the ATS surveillance system capabilities in the area concerned.

2.4 Air Display or other Unusual Air Activity within Class D-E Airspace

2.4.1 If an Air Display or other Unusual Air Activity is authorised to enter Class D-E Airspace and it is confirmed that no high energy aerobatic or vertical manoeuvres are to be included, then the Air Display or other Unusual Air Activity shall be dealt with in accordance with the normal procedures for VFR/SVFR flights within Class D-E Airspace. If appropriate, NATS shall advise any aircraft under their control of the display area or RA(T) where established and shall not issue any clearance to enter the display area or RA(T) to non participating aircraft.

2.4.2 If it is determined that high energy aerobatics or vertical manoeuvres are to be included in the air display or other unusual air activity, NATS will apply the following vertical and/or horizontal additional separation criteria from the lateral limits notified for the air display or unusual air activity. This will result in an area of 'sterile' airspace (known as the protected airspace) around the air display or other unusual air activity area.

a. **Vertical**

2000 ft minimum vertical separation.

b. **Horizontal**

Standard horizontal separation from the lateral limits notified for the air display or unusual air activity. This separation may be 3 nm, 5 nm or greater according to the ATS surveillance system capabilities in the area concerned.

2.5 **Air Display or other Unusual Air Activity outside CAS**

2.5.1 If an Air Display or other Unusual Air Activity takes place outside CAS, NATS do not need to apply any additional separation between the Air Display or other Unusual Air Activity aircraft and any aircraft within CAS.

3 Definition of high energy aerobatic or vertical manoeuvres

3.1 A high energy manoeuvre is any aerobatic or vertical manoeuvre with a mean speed of 250 kt or greater.

4 Flexibility

4.1 If confirmation is received that the Air Display or other Unusual Air Activity has completed earlier than notified, NATS will endeavour to release the airspace when deemed safe to do so.