

ENR 1.9 AIR TRAFFIC FLOW MANAGEMENT**1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Air Traffic Flow Management is a service established with the objective of contributing to a safe, orderly and expeditious flow of air traffic by ensuring ACC capacity is utilised to the maximum extent possible and the traffic volume is compatible with the capacities declared by the appropriate ATC authority.
- 1.2 A Centralised Air Traffic Flow Management (ATFM) service is established within the ICAO (EUR) Region to optimise the use of air traffic system capacity. The Eurocontrol Network Management Directorate (NMD) in Brussels provides this service in conjunction with Flow Management Positions (FMPs) established at each ACC. →
- 1.3 The NMD includes the Flow Management Division (FMD), responsible for the planning, co-ordination and implementation of ATFM measures within the FMD ATFM area and the Flight Data Operations Division (FDOD), responsible for collecting, maintaining and providing data on all flight operations and the air navigation infrastructure. FDOD includes the Integrated Flight Planning System (IFPS). A description of the ATFM area and information on the Network Operations Systems can be found in the Network Operations HANDBOOK. →

2 ATFM Documentation**2.1 ICAO European Region ATFM Procedures**

- 2.1.1 The general ATFM procedures which apply throughout the ICAO European Region are published in the ICAO Doc 7030, Regional Supplementary Procedures (Europe).

2.2 Network Operations Technical Procedures and Information

- 2.2.1 Specific Network Operations Technical procedures and information can be found in the Network Operations HANDBOOK published by the NMD and available from: →

Post: Eurocontrol Library, Rue de la Fusée, 96, B-1130 Brussels, Belgium.

Phone: 00-32-2-729-3639/3023

Fax: 00-32-2-729-9109

or from the NMD website at: →

URL: <https://www.public.nm.eurocontrol.int/PUBPORTAL/gateway/spec/index.html> →

- 2.2.2 Basic Network Operations HANDBOOK sections include: →

- (a) **General and Network Operations Systems:** this contains details of the NMD organisation, area of responsibility and a description of Network Operations systems; →
- (b) **The ATFM Users Manual:** this is a self-contained users manual for aircraft operators and ATC units describing Network Operations procedures in the context of the NMD TACTICAL (TACT) and Computer Allocated Slot Allocation (CASA) systems; →
- (c) **IFPS Users Manual:** this is a self-contained users manual describing operating procedures for flight plan filing in the IFPS area.

- 2.2.3 Only a limited selection of Network Operations Technical procedures are reproduced in the UK AIP. Reference should be made to the Network Operations HANDBOOK for comprehensive information and procedures.

3 ATFM Processes

- 3.1 The emphasis for ATFM measures is changing from regulation (delaying aircraft on the ground) towards capacity management. Only when no other option is available will a regulation be applied and delays issued (Slot Allocation).
- 3.2 Alternative ATFM measures include the re-routing of aircraft both strategically and tactically. Permanent Strategic routing requirements are published in the Route Availability Document (RAD). The RAD enables ATC to maximise capacity by defining restrictions that prevent disruption to the organised system of major traffic flows through congested areas.
- 3.3 In addition, routing 'scenarios' may be applied by the NMD to help resolve particular problems on particular days. These involve recommended or mandatory routes for particular groups of flights or selected individual flights. Re-routes for groups of flights will be published by the NMD in an AIM (Air Traffic Flow and Capacity Management Information Message) or ANM (ATFM Notification Message). →
- 3.4 Re-routing may include restricting the level of an aircraft to keep it out of a particular ATC sector. This is known as level capping. Level capping scenarios are published for groups of aircraft. →
- 3.5 A list of available re-routing and level capping scenarios is promulgated on the NMD website: →
- URL: <https://www.public.nm.eurocontrol.int/PUBPORTAL/gateway/spec/index.html> →
- 3.6 Aircraft Operators (AOs) complying with a re-route or level capping requirement shall cancel any existing flight plan and re-file on the new route in accordance with the Replacement Flight Plan procedure published in the IFPS Users Manual section of the Network Operations HANDBOOK.

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4 Slot Allocation Process

- 4.1 When no other option is available, a regulation will be applied by NMD and departure times will be issued in the form of a Calculated Take Off Time (CTOT). This is facilitated by Computer Assisted Slot Allocation (CASA) algorithm within the Enhanced Tactical Flow Management Systems (ETFMS).
- 4.2 The ETFMS is largely automated and functions from an Aircraft Operators point of view in a passive mode. There is, therefore, no requirement to request a slot as the act of filing a flight plan effectively constitutes a request.
- 4.3 Pre-planned or strategic ATFM regulations are promulgated by the NMD one day in advance by ATFM Notification Messages (ANM). All changes and tactical additions are promulgated by ANM revision messages.
- 4.4 For flights subject to a regulation, ETFMS will send a Slot Allocation Message (SAM) containing a CTOT at Estimated Off-Block Time (EOBT) -2 hours. This will be sent to the aerodrome of departure as well as the Aircraft Operator via AFTN or SITA.
- 4.5 Revisions to, or cancellations of, the last issued CTOT may be initiated by FMD, the Aircraft Operator, or the FMP/ATC unit on behalf of the AO. AOs requiring assistance should contact either the FMD Central Flow HELPDESK (Tel: 00-32-2-745-1901) or the UK FMP (see paragraph 6.3).
- 4.6 All CTOT revisions or cancellations are to be made using the ATFM message exchange procedures described in the Network Operations HANDBOOK.
- 4.7 Full details of the Slot Allocation Process are published in the ATFM Users Manual section of the Network Operations HANDBOOK.

5 Flight Planning

- 5.1 The ATFM rules for flight planning, as defined in ICAO Doc 7030, are:
- (a) For flights likely to be subject to ATFM measures Aircraft Operators shall submit Flight Plans to IFPS at least 3 hours before the EOBT;
 - (b) AOs filing flight plans for flights within the NMD ATFM area or from within the ATFM adjacent area and entering the ATFM area shall assume their flight is subject to ATFM measures and subject to the requirement to submit a flight plan at least 3 hours before EOBT;
 - (c) AOs should be aware that late filing of a flight plan may lead to a disproportionate delay;
 - (d) Full details of flight planning requirements within the NMD ATFM area are included in the NMD ATFM Users Manual;
 - (e) It is also important that the EOBT of a flight is as accurate as possible. It is a European requirement that all controlled flights departing, arriving or overflying Europe subject to a change in an EOBT of more than + or - 15 minutes shall notify the change to the NMD through IFPS. Modification procedures to enable Aircraft Operators to meet this requirement are described below.
- 5.2 In all cases, it is in the best interest of Aircraft Operators to initiate prompt revisions or cancellations, thus permitting the system to maximise use of available capacity and minimise delay. The later the revision is made the greater the probability of a delay.
- 5.3 The correct application of the STS/ATFMX procedure will ensure that approved flights are not unnecessarily delayed. (See paragraph 12 for details of the ATFM exemption procedures).
- 5.4 **Jet aircraft with a total sector length exceeding 220 nm**
- 5.4.1 In order to reduce complexity in the London Area Control (Swanwick) airspace, and thus provide greater capacity for all airspace users, the following flight planning restriction applies to all aircraft operators filing flight plans, repetitive flight plans and subsequent change messages for jet aircraft planning to operate in UK airspace.
- 5.4.2 Where the total sector length (including any portion outside the London/Scottish UIR/ FIR) exceeds 220 nm operators are to file a requested flight level for the entire route at FL 250 or above unless prior approval has been given by the UK FMP.
- 5.4.3 Requests for such approval are to be made to the UK FMP on 00-44-(0)1489-588150.

6 UK FMP Tactical Operations

- 6.1 The Network Manager (NM) at the UK FMP is responsible for the day to day monitoring, planning and co-ordination of all ATFM measures affecting traffic entering, leaving, overflying or remaining within the UK. The FMP is responsible for all co-ordination between ATC and the FMD and for providing ATFM support to Aircraft Operators.
- 6.2 The Network Management Specialist (NMS) is responsible to the Network Manager for monitoring delays and FMD regulations to optimise traffic flow through UK sectors. The NMS will also undertake message exchanges with the FMD on behalf of ATC or Aircraft Operators when required.
- 6.3 **Responsibilities of the FMP**
- 6.3.1 The UK has established a single H24 FMP to provide liaison between UK ATC and the FMD as shown in the table below:

FMP	Location	Area of Responsibility	ACC Served
UK FMP	London Area Control (Swanwick)	London and Scottish FIRs/UIRs Shanwick OCA	London Control (Swanwick) Scottish and Oceanic AC (Prestwick)

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6.3.2 Operational ATFM enquires should normally be addressed to the UK FMP as shown in the table below:

FMP	Telephone	Fax	AFTN	SITA
UK FMP	Flowline: 01489-588150 ATC use only: Primary point of contact: Network Management Specialist: ATOTN 7-500-5030 PSTN: 01489-612427 Secondary point of contact: Network Manager: ATOTN 7-500-5027	01489-612437	EGTTZDZX	SOUSCXH
CEU Brussels	Hot Position: 00-32-2-745-1910	00-32-2-729-9028	EBBDCEUW	BRUEC7X

6.4 General ATFM Enquiries

Post: Head of Airspace Capacity Management Services, Box 23, London Area Control (Swanwick), Sopwith Way,
Swanwick, Hampshire SO31 7AY
 Phone: 01489-612426
 Fax: 01489-612131
 AFS: EGTTZDZX
 SITA: SOUSCXH
 Email: fiona.hume@nats.co.uk

7 Responsibilities of Aircraft Operators

7.1 Aircraft Operators shall inform themselves of and adhere to:

- General ATFM procedures including flight plan filing and message exchange requirements;
- strategic ATFM measures (including Route Availability Document (RAD));
- current ATFM measures (including specific measures applicable on the day of operation, as promulgated by ANM or Flight Suspension (FLS) messages);
- departure slots (CTOTs) issued by the FMD and procedures related to changes to CTOTs;
- The NMD requirement for the modification or delay of EOBT. This is particularly important with the progressive implementation of NMD Flight Activation Monitoring (FAM) whereby flights not notified as being airborne within 30 minutes of the notified ETOT or CTOT will receive a flight suspension message;
- the sole responsibility to obtain a new CTOT if there is no RTF contact with the TWR at CTOT;
- the correct procedure to be followed to obtain approval for the use of STS/ATFMX.

7.2 In order to comply with a CTOT, Aircraft Operators need to plan the departure of a flight so that the aircraft will be ready for start up in sufficient time to comply with a CTOT taking into account the taxi time shown in the Slot Allocation Message (SAM). A slot window is available to ATC to optimise the departure sequence. This is not for use by AOs who should plan an EOBT consistent with the CTOT.

7.3 Where a flight departs from an aerodrome with an ATSU, the Aircraft Operator or pilot should obtain information, prior to start up from ATS as to whether a CTOT or FLS affects their flight.

7.4 Where a flight departs from an aerodrome without an ATSU, or when the FPL has been filed with a Parent Unit, it is the Aircraft Operator or pilot's responsibility to determine whether a CTOT or FLS affects their flight. In this case, the Aircraft Operator or pilot should contact the NMD or FMP before the aircraft departs.

8 Responsibilities of UK Air Traffic Services

8.1 NATS Ltd provides a UK Flow Management Position at London Area Control (Swanwick) to liaise between ATC, Aircraft Operators and the FMD.

8.2 ATC have the following responsibilities:

- ATC is responsible for departure slot monitoring at departure aerodromes. The exact procedures to be followed will depend on the way that ATS is organised at each aerodrome;
- ATC units responsible for departure slot monitoring shall be provided with the necessary information concerning the restrictions in force and slots allocated;
- ATC shall ensure that an ATFM slot, if applicable, is included as part of the ATC clearance;
- ATC shall take account of an applicable slot or flight suspension when a clearance is issued;
- ATC shall provide all possible assistance to Aircraft Operators to meet a CTOT or to co-ordinate a revised CTOT;
- ATC may deny start up clearance to flights unable to meet their slots until co-ordination with the FMP/FMD has been effected and a revised CTOT issued.

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- 8.3 ATC is also responsible for monitoring flights compliance with departure slots (CTOTs) issued by the FMD as detailed in the ATFM Handbook. A slot window of -5 to +10 minutes is available to ATC to optimise the departure sequence.
- 8.4 In accordance with the provision of the Regional Supplementary Procedures, Europe (ICAO Doc 7030), flights which do not adhere to their slot shall be denied start-up clearance. However, ATC shall make all efforts to enable departing flights to comply with the slot. ATC shall liaise with the UK FMP to co-ordinate extensions to CTOTs.
- 8.5 With the progressive introduction of the Enhanced Tactical Flight Management System (ETFMS) and Flight Activation Monitoring (FAM), flights that are not notified as being airborne within 30 minutes of the notified ETOT or CTOT will receive a Flight Suspension (FLS) message. If a flight is suspended during the taxiing phase, then ATC is responsible for sending a DLA message. (Further details on ETFMS and FAM can be found at paragraph 11).

8.6 ATC assistance to Aircraft Operators

- 8.6.1 UK aerodromes may be able to assist Aircraft Operators in message exchange with the NMD, provided that the pilot is in RTF contact with the TWR and if:

- (a) it is a maximum of 30 mins prior to current CTOT; and
- (b) the revision to the CTOT is for no more than 30 minutes.

Note 1: The TWR may co-ordinate message action on behalf of the Aircraft Operator or contact the UK FMP.

Note 2: Departures from the Jersey Zone should contact either the UK or Brest FMP according to the route of the flight after departure.

- 8.6.2 If there is no RTF contact with the TWR at CTOT, the Aircraft Operator/Handling Agent will be solely responsible for obtaining a new CTOT.

9 Inbound Flow Management

- 9.1 In congested terminal areas serving busy airports, holding can often occur at short notice through the need for the tactical integration of arrival traffic flows to achieve optimum airspace and runway utilisation.
- 9.2 In the United Kingdom, Area Control Centres (ACC) will not issue Expected Approach Times (EAT) to aircraft when the terminal area delay is likely to be less than 20 minutes.
- 9.3 Where radar sequencing of traffic from the appropriate terminal holding facility is in operation, Approach Control will not normally calculate or issue EATs to aircraft when the delay is expected to be less than 20 minutes.
- 9.4 If a pilot requests information on the expected delay they will be given a general indication of the delay, eg 'Delay less than 20 minutes', based on the best information available to the controller at that time.
- 9.5 Additionally, for London Gatwick, London Heathrow and London Stansted arrivals, when London TMA inbound delays are likely to exceed 20 minutes, inbound aircraft will be given a general statement concerning the anticipated delay based on the best information available to the controller at the time. Subsequently, when the aircraft is within 20 minutes of its original ETA for the appropriate terminal holding facility, an EAT will be issued. London Area Control (Swanwick) will endeavour to frequently update this data to ensure that the information provided to pilots is as accurate as possible. These procedures will remain applicable when ground equipment unserviceability or traffic demand requires the use of an alternative to the main holding facility.
- 9.6 Operators should consider the carriage of an extra fuel allowance when the flight includes operation in a congested traffic area or where ATC delays are likely.

10 Modification of Estimated Off Block Time (EOBT)

- 10.1 It is a requirement for both ATC and ATFM that the EOBT of a flight shall be an accurate EOBT. This applies to all flights, whether subject to ATFM or not. Any change to the EOBT of more than 15 minutes (+ or -) for any IFR flight within the NMD Initial Flight Planning Zone (IFPZ) (see the IFPS users manual for details) shall be communicated to IFPS.
- 10.2 An Aircraft Operator (AO) should not modify the EOBT to a later time simply as a result of an ATFM delay. When an AO submits an amendment message (eg DLA or CHG) to IFPS, they must always give as an EOBT the earliest EOBT they may comply with. This time is not directly related to the CTOT provided in the Slot Allocation Message (SAM) or Slot Revision Message (SRM). The EOBT should always reflect the time the AO wants to be off-blocks. The EOBT should always be changed if the original EOBT established by the AO cannot be met by the AO for reasons other than ATFM delay.
- 10.3 There are two categories of controlled flights covered by this procedure. Those that have an ATFM Calculated Take-Off Time (CTOT), issued by the NMD, and those that do not. AOs should not modify the EOBT simply as a result of an ATFM delay.
- 10.4 The procedure to be followed to modify the EOBT of a flight that has not received an ATFM CTOT is as follows:
- (a) To amend the EOBT to a **later** time, a DLA or CHG message shall be sent to IFPS;
 - (b) To amend the EOBT to an earlier time, a CNL message must be sent to IFPS followed five minutes later by a new flight plan with new EOBT indicated.

Note: The replacement flight plan procedure shall not be used.

- 10.5 The procedure to be followed to modify the EOBT of a flight that has received an ATFM CTOT is as follows:

- (a) If the EOBT established by the AO has changed or is no longer realistic for reasons other than ATFM then the following procedure shall be used:

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- (i) If a flight has a CTOT that cannot be met, then the AO shall send a DLA message to IFPS with the new EOBT of the flight. This may trigger a revised CTOT;
- (ii) If a flight has a CTOT with some delay and the AO is aware that the original EOBT cannot be met but the existing CTOT is acceptable, then a message shall be sent to IFPS with the new EOBT of the flight. However, in order not to trigger a new CTOT, the following formula must be used:

Take the current CTOT minus the taxi-time, minus 10 minutes. The new EOBT must not be after this time.

Example:

Original EOBT 1000, CTOT 1100, but the flight cannot go off blocks until 1025. The taxi-time is say 15 minutes. 1100 minus 15, minus 10 = 1035. The new EOBT must be earlier than 1035. If it is, then this action will not trigger a revised CTOT.

However, as Network Operations systems are continuously seeking to give zero delay, the CTOT of the flight will never be earlier than the new EOBT plus the taxi-time.

- (b) If a flight has had a CTOT and now receives a Slot Cancellation Message (SLC), but the original EOBT can no longer be met, then the AO shall communicate the new EOBT by use of a DLA message. ATC/ATFM will now have the 'true' EOBT of the flight.

10.6 Some states outside the NMD area of responsibility still require AOs to update the EOBT, regardless of why the flight's original EOBT may have changed. AOs should bear in mind the formula explained above when doing this. Where it is known that ATC send Departure messages (DEP) for all flights, then this DEP message will suffice. →

10.7 It is not possible to amend (via CHG or DLA) the EOBT to an earlier time than the EOBT given in the flight plan. However, if a flight is ready to go off blocks earlier than the current EOBT, then there are two options available:

- (a) The AOs may ask the local ATC Unit (TWR), or the FMP, to send a Ready (REA) message. In this case, the flight is considered as 'ready to depart' from the filing time of the REA message; or
- (b) The AOs may contact the Central Flow Help Desk who has the ability to input an earlier EOBT into the TACT system (max - 30 minutes). Each case is treated on its merits and may be refused if it is considered that the request is not justified.

10.8 Whilst the ultimate responsibility for the sending of flight plan related messages, particularly those applicable to the management of EOBT, lies with the operator, it is acceptable for this to be carried out by an ATS unit suitably equipped to do so if such a request is made by the operator. For the purposes of this statement the 'operator' can include the pilot-in-command of the affected flight.

11 Enhanced Tactical Flow Management System (ETFMS) and Flight Activation Monitoring (FAM)

11.1 The development of the Enhanced Tactical Flow Management System (ETFMS), enables the NMD to receive live time data on departing flights using Flight Activation Monitoring (FAM). This data is provided by the ATC systems and is derived from ATC radar information and flight plan messaging. There are advantages with improved knowledge of the traffic situation and this further assists ATFM tactical planning. FAM is being progressively introduced across the FMD ATFM area. →

11.2 Flight Activation Monitoring:

- (a) monitors flights which should have departed;
- (b) Takes action on these flights (through internal messaging to NMD) to update the take-off time in order to improve the forecast of traffic demand; →
- (c) suspends flights after the designated time parameter (30 minutes after CTOT or ETOT), unless a message is received to confirm that the flight is airborne or delayed and;
- (d) informs AOs and ATC at the departure aerodrome of any flight suspensions enabling these agencies to react accordingly.

11.3 The expected benefits of FAM are:

- (a) to provide a better forecast of the actual and expected traffic situation;
- (b) to release slots 'occupied' by flights that have not yet departed;
- (c) to create an incentive for the AOs to update their flights promptly;
- (d) to improve traffic load assessment; and
- (e) to enable a more efficient use of the available and projected airspace capacity.

11.4 ETFMS expects flights to be airborne, based on the filed EOBT or the ATFM slot departure time issued by the NMD (CTOT). Those flights that are not notified as being airborne through ATC update messages within 30 minutes of the notified ETOT or CTOT time will receive a Flight Suspension (FLS) message from ETFMS and will remain suspended until signal action is taken. The comment **'NOT REPORTED AS AIRBORNE'** will be identified in the text. →

11.5 Unless an aircraft is taxiing it is the responsibility of the AO to send a DLA message. If a flight is suspended during the taxiing phase then ATC will be responsible for sending a DLA message.

11.6 A flight is considered to be active in ETFMS (TACT) following reception of any of the following messages: →

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DEP	-	Departure Message
FSA	-	Flight System Activation Message
CPR	-	Correlated Position Report
APL	-	ATC Flight Plan
ACH	-	ATC Flight Plan Change
APR	-	Aircraft Operator Position Report
ARR	-	Arrival Message

11.7 Flights that have been suspended by FAM, will receive a FLS message with the comment 'Not reported as airborne'. An example of FLS message sent due to FAM:

- TITLE **FLS**
 - ARCID ABC1234
 - ADEP LPPR
 - ADES LFPG
 - EOBD 020514
 - EOBT 0500
 - COMMENT **NOT REPORTED AS AIRBORNE**
 - TAXITIME 0012

11.8 Any changes of EOBT for both regulated and non-regulated flights must be notified only by means of a DLA/CHG message to IFPS.

11.9 Flight Plan originators are reminded that all changes to EOBT of more than 15 minutes must be notified to IFPS. This will become increasingly more important to prevent Flight Suspension (FLS) messages being activated. UK AIP ENR 1.10 refers.

11.10 Flight Suspension - Procedures

11.10.1 When the AO and ATC at the aerodrome of departure receive an FLS due to the process, as described earlier, the following cases may occur:

(a) The flight is still effectively on the ground either on stand or already taxiing:

(i) The AO (aircraft on stand) or ATC (aircraft already taxiing) should ensure that the flight plan is re-initiated by sending a DLA message with a correct EOBT.

ETFMS (TACT) will then respond with a De-Suspension Message (DES) or Slot Revision Message (SRM) depending whether the flight is non-regulated or regulated, respectively.

(ii) ATC should not let the aircraft start-up/depart before such a message (DES or SRM) is received.

Note: All effort shall be made by ATC to ensure that all flights, regulated or not, comply with their ETOT/CTOTs, taking into account the respective taxiing/holding/sequencing requirements. Any exception to permit aircraft to continue for departure, following taxi delays caused by airfield congestion, is not applicable unless the aircraft can depart and be airborne within the time frame ETOT/CTOT+30 minutes.

(b) The flight is already flying:

(i) No action is needed from the AO or from the Tower of departure. The flight will automatically be de-suspended at the reception of one of the above messages (DEP, CPR, FSA etc).

Note: The continuous re-occurrence of the above may mean a lack of proper information sent to NMD. One possible solution would be a requirement to initiate DEP messages sent by the departure aerodrome but this will be determined by the NMD through the national flow management office. In the UK this will be the NATS Area Control Service Traffic Management Organisation situated at London Area Control (Swanwick).

11.11 Area of Application

11.11.1 All users will be notified by NMD/FMD by means of Air Traffic Flow and Capacity Management Information Message (AIM) whenever an area becomes FAM enabled.

11.11.2 The effect of these areas being FAM-enabled means that all flights that are departing from or arriving at these areas will be affected by Flight Activation Monitoring.

11.11.3 For flights departing from these areas and going to any other area, FAM will start at ETOT/CTOT.

11.11.4 For flights departing from non FAM-enabled and landing at aerodromes in FAM-enabled areas, the process will rely on the entry point of the first safely covered CPR-covered area. FLS may be sent to these flights landing inside, although departing outside.

12 ATFM Exemption Procedures

12.1 Since the introduction of the NMD it has been possible for Flight Plan (FPL) originators to obtain exemptions from ATFM restrictions for certain flights through the use of STS/indicators in FPLs.

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12.2 The following principles apply:

- (a) The insertion of a STS/... indicator in Field 18 of a Flight Plan will identify that a flight may require special handling. This indicator is for use by all parties that may have to handle the flight;
- (b) The current list of STS indicators recognised for ATFM purposes comprises STS/HEAD, STS/SAR, STS/MEDEVAC, STS/FFR, STS/STATE, STS/HUM, STS/HOSP;
- (c) Additionally, STS/ATFMX may be used if that particular flight has received specific approval from the Office established by the National Administration for processing such requests.

It should be noted that:

- (i) Only STS/HEAD, STS/SAR, STS/MEDEVAC, STS/FFR and STS/ATFMX qualify for automatic exemption from ATFM measures;
- (ii) The indicator STS/ATFMX is only used for ATFM purposes. It is subject to strict application of the rules of usage and is additional to any other special handling notification that may be required to be shown for ATC purposes as STS/... in Field 18 of the flight plan.

12.3 Further information on the use of STS/indicators for ATFM purposes may be found in the ATFM Users Manual published by the NMD. →

12.4 **Rules of Application for the use of STS/ATFMX**

12.4.1 The following Rules of Application shall be applicable to all flights seeking to gain exemption from ATFM measures within the area of responsibility of the NMD. It is intended to ensure that flights, which by the nature of their mission, cannot under any circumstances be delayed due to ATFM. It is based on the ICAO SARPS (ICAO EUR DOC 003, ATFM-HB/2) and existing material in the Network Operations HANDBOOK. →

12.4.2 It should be noted by all users that any flight which obtains exemption, and which may have otherwise been delayed, will have that delay passed on to other flights. It is essential, therefore, that use of the exemption facility shall be properly controlled and monitored so that genuine flight priorities may continue to operate without ATFM delay.

12.4.3 Any flight meeting the criteria established to warrant exemption status may, provided the necessary approval procedure has been followed and the flight duly authorised by the Office established by the National Administration for processing such requests, use STS/ATFMX for that flight and that flight only.

12.4.4 Each flight shall require specific approval to use STS/ATFMX.

12.5 **Criteria for Determining the Application of STS/ATFMX for an Individual Flight**

12.5.1 **STS/HOSP or STS/HUM:**

- (a) The NMD criteria affords ATFM exemption for flights where the safety of human life is involved. That is, if the flight does not operate without delay a human life or lives may be lost. Such flights shall require specific medical/UNHCR authorisation to support their request. →
- (b) Following consultation with Air Ambulance operators in the UK, the CAA has determined that the term 'safety of human life' is not always easy to define and, indeed, there are other urgent medical flights that also require to operate without delay. Such flights may include patients with threat of loss of limbs, transfer of human organs and the transportation of medical teams.
- (c) Additionally, the CAA has agreed that positioning flights may also warrant exemption when they are required to undertake an urgent medical flight from another aerodrome.
- (d) If the flight fulfils the requirements, as stated above, then the flight may apply for approval to use STS/ATFMX through the procedure specified in paragraph 12.7.

12.5.2 **STS/STATE:**

- (a) The NMD guidelines recommend that ATFM exemption may only be approved for flights if the person or persons on board a flight on State business are of such importance that the flight cannot accept any delay. Additionally, approval may be given if the mission of the flight is being carried out by, or on behalf of, the State and is of such importance that any delay will jeopardise the success of the mission. →
- (b) If the flight fulfils the requirements, as stated above, then the flight may apply for approval to use STS/ATFMX through the procedure specified in paragraph 12.7.

12.6 **Flight Priority**

12.6.1 It should be noted that the use of STS/ATFMX does not itself afford the flight any additional flight priority status for special handling by ATS. It is the other STS/indicators that indicate the need for special handling by ATS.

12.6.2 A STS/STATE flight may be afforded appropriate UK ATS handling priority because of the importance of the mission, or the person on board the flight.

12.6.3 The combined use of STS/HOSP with STS/ATFMX will indicate to ATS that the flight is required to operate without delay and so justify exemption from ATFM. Such flights may be afforded additional priority that the traffic situation allows.

12.6.4 Non-urgent flights will continue to use STS/HOSP indicating that special handling is required. Additional information may be included in item 18 of the FPL using RMK/ or the pilot may advise ATS exactly what special handling is required.

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- 12.6.5 However, if any STS/HOSP flight experiences a medical emergency in flight, then the appropriate radiotelephony message(s) should be used to express the urgency of the condition to ATS.
- 12.6.6 It should be noted that the procedures detailed here are for ATC Flow Management purposes. The table of flight priorities for UK ATC purposes, as detailed in CAP 493 Manual of Air Traffic Services (MATS) Part 1, is not affected.
- 12.7 **UK Procedure for the Approval of use of STS/ATFMX**
- 12.7.1 The UK has established two processes for the approval of certain qualifying flights to use STS/ATFMX:
- (a) a **Manual Approval** process applies to AOs who make irregular flights and are able to provide prior notice for approval;
 - (b) a **Self Regulation Approval** process applies to AOs who are regularly engaged in Air Ambulance flights and, by the urgent nature of the flight, may not have sufficient time to undertake the Manual Approval process.
- 12.8 **Manual Approval Process**
- 12.8.1 The operator of a flight seeking an individual approval to insert the indicator STS/ATFMX in Item 18 of a flight plan, for a flight departing from an aerodrome within the UK, shall obtain prior permission from the relevant authority, when practicable, at least 24 hours and not more than 48 hours in advance of the flight.
- 12.8.2 The attached pro-forma to CAP 694 The UK Flight Planning Guide at Annex D must be completed and faxed with appropriate supporting documentation.
- Note:** Copies of CAP 694 can be downloaded from the UK CAA website:
- URL: <http://www.caa.co.uk/CAP694>
- 12.8.3 Application for approval of STS/HOSP, STS/HUM or STS/STATE flights to use STS/ATFMX should normally be made to the Airspace Section of the Safety and Airspace Regulation Group (SARG) between the hours 0830-1630 (local time), Monday to Friday, excluding Public Holidays, as follows:
- Phone: 020-7453 6599
Fax: 020-7453 6593
Email: ausops@caa.co.uk
- 12.8.4 Outside the hours notified in paragraph 12.8.3, application for approval for STS/HOSP or STS/HUM only should be made to the UK FMP FLOLINE, as follows:
- Phone: 01489-588150
Fax: 01489-612437
- 12.9 **Self Regulation Approval Process**
- 12.9.1 In recognition of the specific requirements of Air Ambulance flights, the CAA has established a process by which an AO can determine whether their own flights meet the requirements for ATFM exemption. Subject to compliance with a set of formal conditions, the CAA may grant AOs an Approval to apply STS/ATFMX to specific flights meeting the conditions of the Approval.
- 12.9.2 AOs wishing to apply for CAA Approval for Self Regulation should contact:
- Post: Airspace Section, SARG, CAA House, 45-59 Kingsway, London WC2B 6TE.
Fax: 020-7453 6565
Email: airspace@caa.co.uk
- 12.10 **Compliance Monitoring**
- 12.10.1 The NMD provides the CAA with a list of all flights departing the UK using STS/ATFMX, on a monthly basis. The CAA undertakes to verify that all such flights operated with an appropriate approval for ATFM exemption.
- 12.10.2 With regard to those AOs that have been granted an Approval for Self Regulation, the CAA will, from time to time, conduct an audit of randomly selected flights and will require proof that the flights met the requirements of the NMD and the conditions of the CAA Approval.
- 12.10.3 Additionally, the AO will be required to retain, and supply on demand, all appropriate documentation to support the use of STS/ATFMX.
- 13 **Provision of Information on Events Affecting Air Traffic Movements**
- 13.1 Airport Operators at all UK airports (including military airfields) are to provide, at the earliest opportunity, but at least 14 days in advance, details of any event that may lead to an hourly increase in demand, eg football match, trade fair, European Minister meeting, etc.
- Note:** The above activity is in addition to any ATC to ATC co-ordination processes.
- 13.2 The following information is required:
- (a) Name of airport;
 - (b) airport contact;
 - (c) ATC contact;
 - (d) nature of the event;

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(e) the expected nature of increase in demand.

13.3 Event information is to be sent to:

Email: ATFMEventsPlanner@nats.co.uk
Fax: 01489-612497

13.4 Following the provision of the notice of an event, NATS Traffic Management Operations will assess the impact and co-ordinate any necessary ATFCM response.

14 NATS Traffic Regeneration Plan

14.1 In the event of prolonged and significant loss of capacity affecting all or part of the UK airspace, a UK Traffic Regeneration Plan will be implemented. This plan is intended to provide a framework for the management of demand and capacity during such an event.

14.2 The UK Traffic Regeneration Plan includes the following measures which will be implemented in order to make maximum use of the available airspace capacity:

- (a) UK FMP will declare the capacity available and a proportional reduction in the number of flights permitted by individual operators may be applied;
- (b) All operators intending to fly within the affected airspace must file a flight plan for flights that they intend to operate in accordance with a flight list approved by UK FMP and NMD. Any flights not on the approved list will be rejected through IFPS. This flight list will be requested by UK FMP once the available capacity has been determined. Procedure will be published by NOTAM and communication with airspace users will be managed via the NATS Air Traffic Incident Coordination Communication Cell (ATICCC);
- (c) Additionally, UK FMP may implement mandatory re-route scenarios to increase the demand accommodated.



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