

October 2023

POLICY STATEMENT ON LICENSING PILOTS OF VTOL AIRCRAFT PERFORMING COMMERCIAL AIR TRANSPORT OPERATIONS

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document presents UK Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA) current position on competency and licensing requirements for Vertical Take Off and Landing (VTOL) capable aircraft pilots wishing to perform commercial air transport (CAT) operations.
- 1.2 The CAA is using existing legislation for the regulation of VTOL operations to the greatest extent possible, as we appreciate that our collective understanding of the new technology will grow as designs mature and operations commence. This understanding will inform the CAA's ongoing work of amending existing legislation to better enable deployment of new aviation technologies such as VTOL operations.
- 1.3 In the meantime, the CAA has developed this policy statement as interim guidance to allow stakeholders to proceed with planning operations in line with CAA's thinking while the formal rulemaking process is taking place. Formal rulemaking will involve industry input and formal consultation as per CAA procedures and best practice.

2 Scope

- 2.1 This Policy Statement is for the benefit of the VTOL industry, including OEMs, training organisations, prospective operators, and prospective VTOL aircraft pilots intending to conduct commercial air transport (CAT) operations.
- 2.2 This policy statement only concerns pilots who possess either Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL/A or CPL/H) or Air Transport Pilot License (ATPL/A or ATPL/H) licence. It does not currently provide for a licensing path for those with other types of licences or no previous flying experience, which will be developed in due course.

3 Interpretation

- 3.1 In this document, references to EU regulations are to those regulations as retained and amended in UK domestic law under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 and are referenced as "UK Regulation (EU) year/number" or "UK Regulation (EU) No. number/year".

4 Definitions

- 4.1 'aeroplane' means an engine-driven fixed-wing aircraft heavier than air that is supported in flight by the dynamic reaction of the air against its wings;
- 4.2 'helicopter' means a heavier-than-air aircraft supported in flight chiefly by the reactions of the air on one or more power-driven rotors on substantially vertical axes;

4.3 'VTOL aircraft' means a heavier-than-air aircraft, other than aeroplane or helicopter, capable of performing vertical procedures by means of more than two lift/thrust units and is certified for one or more occupants.

4.4 'commercial air transport' means an aircraft operation to transport passengers, cargo or mail for remuneration or other valuable consideration;

5 Requirements and applicable regulations

5.1 All CAT operations must comply with UK Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 (the UK Basic Regulation) and the associated Essential Requirements and Implementing Rules (IRs). Annex 5 of the Basic Regulation lays down the Essential Requirements for Air Operations.

5.2 VTOL aircraft pilots seeking to perform CAT operations will need to hold a valid Class 1 medical certificate.

5.3 VTOL aircraft may have a combination of airplane and helicopter characteristics. Accordingly, fixed winged pilots may benefit with some rotary familiarisation and vice versa for rotary pilots. Such familiarisation should not be overly extensive, and should be supplemented by type-specific training to impart piloting skills relevant to specific VTOL being flown.

5.4 Training syllabus containing all the training requirements for the VTOL will be developed by the OEM and approved by the CAA as part of the process of developing the Operational Suitability Document. The training programme should be able to account for the differences in initial piloting experience and background among the candidate pilots.

5.5 Those developing the training syllabus should refer to [Operational Suitability Data: Flight Crew Data \(CS-FCD\)](#) to see the required minimum syllabus for pilot type rating training as well as other related training aspects. The privilege will be endorsed on the licence as a type rating, in a format as agreed by the Airworthiness, Design and Certification Team and Flight Operations, Licensing Policy, as part of the type certification process under UK Regulation (EU) 748/2012.

5.6 There will be a requirement for type rating for each type of VTOL a pilot operates.

5.7 Pilots and operators engaged in CAT operations shall operate the aircraft in accordance with the provisions specified in Implementing Regulation (UK) 1178/2011 on Aircrew Regulation

5.8 Pilots and operators engaged in CAT operations shall operate the aircraft in accordance with the provisions specified in UK Regulation (EU) 965/2012

6 Related Documents

- [UK Regulation \(EU\) 2018/1139 \(the UK Basic Regulation\)](#)

- [UK Regulation \(EU\) No. 1178/2011 \(the UK Aircrew Regulation\)](#)
- [UK Regulation \(EU\) No. 965/2012 \(the UK Air Operations Regulation\)](#)
- [Easy Access Rules for Operational Suitability Data \(OSD\) Flight Crew Data \(CS-FCD\)](#)

7 Review of Policy

8 The CAA retains the right to review this statement on a discretionary basis to consider technological developments, own research and new evidence it receives from stakeholders that may affect its views and policy.

9 Point of Contact

9.1 Any queries or further guidance required on the content or implementation of this Pilot Licensing Policy Statement should be addressed to:

AAMEnquiries@caa.co.uk