



INVERNESS ATC

INTRODUCTION OF REVISED AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES OUTSIDE CONTROLLED AIRSPACE (ATSOCAS)

LOCAL AVIATION BRIEFING DOCUMENT

For information only.

Introduction of Revised ATSOCAS

Local Aviation Briefing Document

1.1 Introduction

Revised Air Traffic Services Outside Controlled Airspace (ATSOCAS) come into effect within the UK on 12th March 2009. From that date, the only Air Traffic Services provided in Class F/G Airspace within the UK Flight Information Region (FIR) will be the suite of services described in Civil Aviation Publication CAP774, UK Flight Information Services. This Suite of Services is summarised and explained in the CD provided by the CAA and available to all interested parties. Further information can be obtained as described at the end of this document.

1.2 Background

A review of ATSOCAS was initiated as a direct result response to Air Accident Investigation Branch and AIRPROX Reports, which raised concerns about the lack of standardisation of service delivery and the confusion this caused. The introduction of the new service definitions is the key starting point for future standardisation across the various service providers and users, both civilian and military.

The Air Traffic Services provided in Class F/G Airspace have been subjected to significant review as part of the Air Safety Initiative. This has resulted in complete revision of the services, including the responsibilities and actions to be taken by both pilots and Air Traffic Service providers. The new suite of services are collectively known as the 'UK Flight Information Services' and are detailed in CAP774.

2 Impact on Inverness Local Operations

2.1 Service Provision

With the introduction of Revised ATSOCAS on 12th March 2009, pilots will cease to receive the old services with which they have become familiar over the years i.e. Flight Information Service (FIS), Radar Information Service (RIS) and Radar Advisory Service (RAS). Instead, the new suite of services detailed in CAP774 will come into effect, i.e.

- Basic service
- Traffic Service
- Deconfliction service
- Procedural Service

These services are described fully in CAP774 and in the CAA Revised ATSOCAS Briefing CD, but a brief summary of the main aspects is given below. One of the main differences between the application of the

new services with respect to the previous ones is the fact that their provision is not determined by flight rules, i.e. VFR or IFR. Certain services are available only when radar is operational as summarised in the following table.

Service	Available to	Radar
Basic	VFR/IFR	Not Required
Traffic	VFR/IFR	Required
Deconfliction	VFR/IFR	Required
Procedural	VFR/IFR	Not Required

Outside Controlled Airspace, regardless of the Service being provided, pilots are ultimately responsible for collision avoidance and terrain clearance. Pilots should consider service provision to be constrained by the unpredictable nature of this airspace environment. i.e. receipt of service by pilot is not mandatory, Controller/FISO workload cannot be predicted, and pilots may make sudden manoeuvres, even when in receipt of an Air Traffic Service.

Basic service is the most comparable to the Flight Information Service which pilots have become accustomed to receiving when flying locally. It is an Air Traffic Service provided for the purpose of giving advice and information useful for the safe and efficient conduct of flights. This may include weather information, changes of serviceability of facilities, conditions at aerodromes, airspace activity information, and any other information likely to affect safety. The avoidance of other traffic is solely the pilot's responsibility. **Inverness ATC will assume that light aircraft wishing to operate out of the airfield under VFR wish a Basic service unless the pilot states otherwise.**

Traffic and **Deconfliction** Services are radar-based services which will be provided by Inverness ATC during the operational hours of radar in addition to Basic Service. Under a Traffic service the controller will provide traffic information to an identified aircraft operating within the areas of local radar cover. Under a Traffic service, the Controller may wish to issue a heading and/or level which might require flight in IMC so a pilot who is not suitably qualified should inform ATC and request alternative instructions. Pilots should therefore be aware that a Traffic service might not be appropriate for flight in IMC when other services are available. Since the controller is not required to achieve deconfliction minima the avoidance of other traffic is ultimately the pilot's responsibility.

Under a Deconfliction service, the controller will provide traffic information and deconfliction advice to participating identified aircraft and seek to achieve specified spacing minima between both participating and unknown aircraft. Under a Deconfliction service the controller will expect a pilot to accept headings and/or levels that may require flight in IMC so a pilot who is not suitably qualified shall not request such a service. Pilots that do not require ATC deconfliction

advice or deconfliction minima to be applied should not request a Deconfliction service. The avoidance of other traffic is ultimately the pilot's responsibility.

Procedural service does not require radar to be available for its provision. The controller provides vertical, lateral, longitudinal and time instructions in order to achieve specified deconfliction minima against other aircraft participating in the service. Under a Procedural service, high reliance is placed on the pilot's ability to accurately follow radial, track and time allocations to achieve planned deconfliction minima. Therefore, pilots who are not able to accept such allocations should not request a Procedural service. Since this service is not based on radar-derived information, controllers can only pass traffic information on those aircraft with which he is in contact. Aircraft flying on an IFR flight plan along Advisory Routes will be provided with a Procedural Service by default. This is broadly similar to the situation at the moment for most IFR aircraft operating out of Inverness when radar is not available.

2.2 Separation of IFR Traffic in Class G airspace

Contrary to current practice, after 12th March standard separation will no longer be required to be provided between IFR aircraft operating in Class G airspace. This is because the revised ATSOCAS are predicated upon pilots requesting the most appropriate level of service for their flight. The type of service requested by the pilot is not determined by flight rules and may be influenced by many factors such as qualifications and flight conditions. **Thus, light aircraft operating at night and therefore IFR will not be required to be 'separated' from other aircraft any more when in receipt of a Basic service in which case traffic information will be passed when deemed prudent.** Aircraft in receipt of services other than Basic will receive traffic information or be applied deconfliction minima against other aircraft as appropriate.

2.3 Inverness Operations

As mentioned previously, Inverness ATC will assume light aircraft operating under VFR out of Inverness airport and in its vicinity wish a Basic service unless the pilot states otherwise. This will provide the pilot with information pertinent to the flight along with any information likely to affect safety. The controller may ask the pilot of an aircraft in receipt of a Basic (or Traffic) service to assist with the safe use of the local airspace by entering into an agreement on a short term basis to e.g. route via Culloden viaduct not above 2000' or remain in the vicinity of Nairn until advised etc.

If the pilot of a light aircraft wishes to receive a service other than a Basic one, he/she should advise ATC at the earliest opportunity whilst bearing in mind the provisos mentioned earlier regarding possible flight in IMC etc. Pilots of aircraft filing IFR flight plans or booking out IFR

shall notify ATC prior to departure if any service other than Deconfliction or Procedural service is required.

Inverness ATC will allocate the conspicuity squawk 6177 to all aircraft which have not been given a specific transponder code by the radar controller.

A NOTAM has been issued and a subsequent AIP Amendment will be promulgated highlighting the above key operational changes.

3 Conclusion

Whilst the changes due under the Revised ATSOCAS may seem considerable initially, the impact on light aircraft operations locally should be minimal and will just require pilots to become conversant with some new terminology and aware of their responsibilities as licence holders. By assimilating the available briefing material (CAP774, CAA CD, CAA website etc as noted below) pilots should become familiar with the revised services quite readily. Should any specific questions arise, these can be addressed through the local Air Traffic Control Unit or the CAA itself.

4 Further Information

Further information can be obtained from the following;

Civil Aviation Publication, CAP774 UK Flight Information Services

CAA CD New Air Traffic Services Outside Controlled Airspace which can be obtained from ats.documents@caa.co.uk

This interactive guide can also be viewed/downloaded from;

<http://www.airspacesafety.com/content/ATSOCAS.asp>

CAA website; www.caa.co.uk

Airspace and Safety Initiative website; www.airspacesafety.com

A particularly useful Frequently Asked Questions section can be viewed at; www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?catid=1838&pagetype=70