

RAAF AERODROME USE BY NON-DEFENCE AIRCRAFT

INTRODUCTION

1. On occasion or through agreements, Non-Defence aircraft may request access to RAAF aerodromes. Any such request requires approval IAW this SI. Non-Defence aircraft include civil registered or foreign registered aircraft not operated by or on behalf of Defence.
2. RAAF Base Darwin / Darwin International Airport and RAAF Base Townsville / Townsville Airport are joint user (civil / military) airports (JUA)¹ that afford non-Defence aircraft use of RAAF aerodrome movement areas as managed by the civilian aerodrome operator. The Darwin and Townsville aerodrome relationships are managed separately via individual Joint User Deed Agreements.² Additionally, other agreements with local authorities support limited civil access to Defence aerodromes, for example RAAF Base Williamtown (Newcastle Airport) and RAAF Base Learmonth (Exmouth Airport). In all cases appropriate approvals are necessary to ensure safe and effective sharing of available resources, and to ensure that Defence is not disadvantaged or allowing inappropriate competition amongst civil aircraft service providers.

AIM

3. The aim of this instruction is to define the Air Command process, roles and responsibilities to approve the use of RAAF airbases by civilian aircraft operators.

AUTHORITY

4. The authority for this instruction is Air Commander Australia (ACAUST.). The Sponsor is Director A3 Operations. The Desk Officer is Chief of Combat Operations AOC.

SCOPE

5. The Civil Use of the Defence Estate Manual (CUDEM) provides the procedures for proposing, authorising, implementing and concluding civil use of Defence estate assets within Australia and its territories. This instruction provides the authority and guidance regarding the use of RAAF aerodromes by operators of civil aviation not operated by or on behalf of Defence.
6. The instruction does not restrict decision making regarding emergency access by a non-Defence aircraft to a RAAF aerodrome when other options are not practicable.

DEFINITIONS

7. The terms used in this instruction are defined in DASR – Glossary of Terms and the Australian Defence Glossary (aviation context)³.

¹ Airports Act 1996 Section 7B

² Joint User Deeds may be obtained from the DASA.

³ Where a conflict may occur between the DASR Glossary and ADG, the DASR takes precedence.

STATUS OF RAAF AIRBASES

8. To provide clarity on the status of RAAF aerodromes in relation to their availability for non-Defence operations, each RAAF aerodrome is classified as:
- a. **Civil Aerodrome.** A civil administered aerodrome that is not governed by authority of this instruction. RAAF Base Wagga is an example of a civil aerodrome.
 - b. **Joint-User.** A Defence administered aerodrome promulgated in the *Airports Act 1996* where civil and military operations normally have equal priority for access. At times Defence may need to place operational requirements on civil operations at joint-user aerodromes to allow for vital military operations. RAAF Bases Darwin and Townsville are the only locations promulgated as joint-user aerodromes.
 - c. **Military Priority.** A Defence administered aerodrome where military operations have priority over non-Defence operations. RAAF Base Williamtown is an example of a Military Priority aerodrome.
 - d. **Military Exclusive.** A Defence administered aerodrome where non-Defence operations are not generally permitted because the normal military activity is fundamentally incompatible with non-Defence aviation. RAAF Base Pearce is an example of a Military Exclusive aerodrome.
9. Aerodrome classifications are listed in Annex A. The status of RAAF aerodromes must be promulgated in the relevant Aerodrome Manual and subsequently published in En Route Supplement Australia (ERSA). Military Priority aerodromes may be temporarily re-classified as Military Exclusive through a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) promulgation during periods of national contingency. Joint-user aerodromes cannot be re-classified; however, operational requirements may be placed on non-Defence operators during periods of national contingency or major military training exercises typically via NOTAM and/or Aeronautical Information Package Supplement (AIP SUP).
10. To ensure that non-Defence operators are fully aware of the conditions under which access is granted to Defence aerodromes, any agreement created or approval provided must include reference to the specific conditions listed in Annex A.

THE USE OF DEFENCE AERODROMES AS ALTERNATES

11. The diversion of non-Defence aircraft into RAAF aerodromes can have a significant impact on the ability of an aerodrome to operate at capacity. The unrestrained use of RAAF aerodromes as alternates by non-Defence aircraft leads to unacceptable congestion and additional load on military support services.
12. The status of RAAF aerodromes in relation to their ability to be held as planning or technical alternates must be promulgated in the relevant Aerodrome Manual and subsequently published in ERSA.
13. Authorisation for a RAAF aerodrome to be used as a planning or technical alternate must be undertaken in accordance with the following guidelines:

- a. **Planning Alternates.** Non-Defence operators should not be approved to hold Defence aerodromes as planning alternates unless the RAAF aerodrome is the only suitable alternate within a geographical region. Defence must be satisfied that no other option is available. A Non-Defence operator requesting to hold a Defence aerodrome as a planning alternate must be approved in accordance with the procedure detailed at Annex B.
- b. **Technical Alternates.** This permits Non-Defence operators to nominate RAAF aerodromes as alternates under a series of conditions that would make diversion of a non-Defence aircraft to a RAAF aerodrome highly unlikely. This allows Defence to authorise technical alternates because it does not restrict the ability of the RAAF aerodrome to generate capability.

14. A diversion contingency plan for Non-Defence operators diverting to RAAF aerodromes must be completed and used to draft the Planning or Technical Alternate Agreement between the non-Defence operators and the Commonwealth. Guidance for a diversion contingency plan is in Annex C.

15. **Cost recovery.** Access to RAAF aerodromes must not be provided to commercial entities without a cost recovery agreement. The CUDEM and electronic Supply Chain Manual (eSCM) provide relevant advice as to conditions that may be imposed. With the exception of fuel and lubricants, which are handled directly by Defence Fuel Services Branch (FSB) and IAW the eSCM, all costs to be recovered must be provided to the relevant Base Services Manager (BSM) for the raising of an accounts receivable invoice and forwarding to the aircraft operator.

APPROVAL AUTHORITIES

16. **Approval authority.** The following are the events required for approval:
- a. DGACOPS is the approver for requests for permanent or periods longer than 30 days. These requests are to have comments for Pavement Suitability from BAEO, Assessment/Recommendation from the Aerodrome CO⁴, Comments from OC/XO 96WG, and Comments/Recommendation from HQAC A3
 - b. SADFO (or delegate) is the approver for requests of less than 30 days. These requests are to have comments for Pavement Suitability from BAEO and Assessment/Recommendation from Aerodrome CO

17. Non-permanent approvals should only be granted when there is no suitable alternative available, there is benefit to the RAAF and Air Command flying operations will not be adversely impacted.

18. Further guidance to assist the determinations of affording non-Defence aircraft access to Defence Aerodromes is provided by Defence Aviation Regulations ([DASR](#)) – Aerodromes – Guidance Material (GM) to Requirements for Aerodromes (RFA) and the Civil Use of the Defence Estate Manual ([CUDEM](#)).

⁴ AC SI(OPS) 01-41 AC OAMP Definitions

19. **Existing agreements.** Advice pertaining to access of those RAAF aerodromes that have an existing access agreement should be directed to the non-Defence entity as provided for in the extant agreement. For example, a non-Defence operator desiring access to RAAF Base Williamtown's aerodrome should be directed to Newcastle Airport, who will manage aerodrome access IAW the extant agreement.

Annexes:

- A. Specified Conditions For Non-Defence Aircraft Operating At RAAF Aerodromes
- B. Approval Procedure – Planning Alternate
- C. Proposed Diversion Contingency Plan

Related orders, instructions and publications

AAP 8000.011—*Defence Aviation Safety Regulations* ([DASR](#))
Civil use of the Defence estate manual ([CUDEM](#))

Keywords

Civil registered	Defence aircraft	DASR
Foreign registered	Joint User Deed	Cost recovery

SPECIFIED CONDITIONS FOR NON-DEFENCE AIRCRAFT OPERATING AT RAAF AERODROMES

1. To ensure that non-Defence operators are fully aware of the conditions under which access is granted to RAAF non-Defence, any agreement created or approval provided must include reference to the specific conditions listed below. (These conditions do not need to be specified to non-Defence aircraft operating at joint-user aerodromes).
2. The following are the specific conditions under which non-Defence operators undertake access to RAAF aerodromes:
 - a. RAAF aerodromes may not be fully compliant with CASA Manual of Standards (MOS) Part 139—Aerodromes.
 - b. Any CASA operational approvals or exemptions required by the non-Defence aircraft or airport operator to operate at RAAF aerodromes are the responsibility of the non-Defence operator to source.
 - c. Aerodrome Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) services provided at RAAF aerodromes may not be compliant with CASA MOS Part 139, and that outside of designated operating hours there should be no expectation of an aerodrome emergency response.
 - d. Navigation aids provided at RAAF aerodromes may not be compliant with CASA MOS Part 171, and that outside of designated operating hours the serviceability of these navigations aids is not continuously monitored by Defence.
 - e. Operating hours at RAAF aerodromes may change at short notice to meet Defence operational requirements.
 - f. CHTR and GA aircraft approved to access RAAF aerodromes do so on the understanding that there should be no expectation of continued access in the future.
 - g. In accordance with FINMAN 4 any additional cost created by providing access to a RAAF aerodrome for a non-Defence operator will be recovered at full cost.
 - h. Access granted to RAAF aerodromes (other than joint-user aerodromes) is done so on the understanding that military operations have priority at all times, other than civil emergency situations.
 - i. If a regulator or other agency or operator determines that extant Defence facilities and/or services must be extended or upgraded in order for the non-Defence operation to occur at an aerodrome, then in order to avoid adverse impact on Defence's support services capability at that aerodrome or elsewhere, Defence may withdraw the non-Defence operator's approval rather than extend and cost-recover the services, or the non-Defence operator must fund the upgrades.

3. **Aerodrome Classifications.** The Aerodrome Classifications are for planning purposes and may be adjusted for contingency or other operational reasons by DGACOPS. The following are the current status:

- a. **Civil Aerodrome.** RAAF Base Wagga. RAAF Base Fairbairn.
- b. **Joint User.** RAAF Base Darwin. RAAF Base Townsville.
- c. **Military Priority.** RAAF Base Williamtown. RAAF Base Learmonth. RAAF Base Scherger. RAAF Base Williams (Point Cook Aerodrome). RAAF Base Curtin.
- d. **Military Exclusive.** RAAF Base Amberley. RAAF Base Richmond. RAAF Base East Sale. RAAF Base Edinburgh. RAAF Base Pearce. RAAF Base Tindal. RAAF Base Woomera.

APPROVAL PROCEDURE – PLANNING ALTERNATE

1. A non-Defence operator will only be authorised to nominate a RAAF aerodrome as a planning alternate when approved by Defence. Defence will not upgrade its facilities or increase aerodrome services in enabling a request to achieve approval. Non-Defence operators must apply in writing and meet the following requirements:
 - a. Identify the RAAF aerodromes which are requested to be nominated as alternates.
 - b. Agree to operate in accordance with the specified conditions contained within Annex B.
 - c. Agree that any services provided at the RAAF aerodrome that expend additional resources will be recovered by Defence at full cost or paid by the applicant directly.
 - d. Provide a diversion contingency plan that is agreed by Defence.
 - e. CASA operational approvals or exemptions required to hold RAAF aerodromes as planning alternates are the responsibility of the non-Defence operator to source.
2. On receipt of an application, the approving authority will draft an Alternates Agreement, which is the legal agreement with the relevant non-Defence operator. The Alternates Agreement schedules will include a DCP for each RAAF aerodrome the non-Defence operator applies to hold as a planning alternate. Additional schedules may be added to the agreement at a later date with the consent of both parties.
3. Non-Defence operators are to make contact with RAAF aerodromes via the Airbase Executive Officer (ABXO). Once non-Defence operators have an agreed Diversion Contingency Plan (DCP), they may apply through the SADFO to DGACOPS for authorisation to hold the RAAF aerodrome as a planning alternate.
4. **Suspension of Agreement.** During periods of intense military operations at a RAAF aerodrome SADFOs, or their delegates, are authorised to suspend the alternate agreement with a non-Defence operator, when in the opinion of the SADFO or delegate, a non-Defence diversion into the RAAF aerodrome could no longer be accommodated because its presence could potentially reduce the ability of the aerodrome to generate military capability. SADFOs are to provide maximum practicable notice to non-Defence operators of the suspension of the agreement.
5. **Cancellation of Agreement.** If the frequency of a non-Defence operator's diversions into a specific RAAF aerodrome begins to restrict Defence's ability to generate capability SADFO is to seek authority from DGACOPS to cancel the agreement. The non-Defence operator is to be informed in writing by the SADFO.

Diversion Contingency Plans

6. **Purpose.** Prior to applying for approval to hold a RAAF aerodrome as a planning alternate non-Defence operators are to create, in consultation with RAAF airbase executives, a proposed DCP. The purpose of the DCP is to ensure that in the event of an aircraft diversion there are agreed procedures to enable an appropriate reaction to the event. A non-Defence operator is to ensure that the DCP accommodates each aircraft type that plans to hold the RAAF aerodrome as an alternate.
7. The DCP is to cover the following areas:
- a. **Diversion Notification.** There is to be an agreed plan by which the non-Defence operator notifies RAAF airbase executives of the intention to divert an aircraft to a RAAF aerodrome. The plan is to consider in-hours and out-of-hours procedures, including whether Defence has chosen to refuse (non-emergency) out-of-hours diversions in circumstances when a diversion is likely to require additional Defence resources.
 - b. **Parking Facilities.** Designated parking positions are to be identified for each type of aircraft holding the aerodrome as an alternate. The agreed parking positions are not to restrict the operation of the RAAF aerodrome by military users.
 - c. **Aviation Fuel Provision.** The method by which aviation fuel will be provided to the aircraft is to be agreed. Any required call-out procedures are to be in accordance with paragraph 8 below.
 - d. **Ground Handling.** The method by which ground handling requirements will be met is to be agreed and should be presented in detail to ensure that all aspects of passenger movement and aircraft ground services are considered. The plan should also address how a non-Defence operator intends to move passengers from the aircraft and off the RAAF aerodrome should the requirement eventuate. Any required call-out procedures are to be in accordance with paragraph 8 below.
 - e. **Security.** The plan is to address how airline or contractor support staff can gain access to the aerodrome if required for the provision of fuel or ground handling services. The plan must also address how security risks will be treated in the event of passengers having to be removed from the aircraft. Any required call-out procedures are to be in accordance with paragraph 8 below.
 - f. **Cost Recovery.** The plan is to articulate an agreed method in accordance with FINMAN 4 by which the non-Defence operator will be charged for any additional services provided by Defence in the event of a diversion.
8. **On Call Requirements.** SADFOs, or their delegates, must not agree to any increase in on-call requirements for Defence personnel as part of the DCP process. If the current Defence call-out procedures do not provide the timely response that non-Defence operators require, the airline may not nominate the RAAF aerodrome as an alternate.

PROPOSED DIVERSION CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR (INSERT AIRLINE) (INSERT AIRCRAFT TYPE/S) DIVERTING TO (INSERT AERODROME NAME)

Note: This document is a proposal and is **not** an authorisation to use a Defence aerodrome as an alternate. The completed and endorsed proposal will be used to draft a Technical or Planning Alternates Agreement between the operator and the Commonwealth.

1. **Purpose.** The purpose of this Diversion Contingency Plan (DCP) is to detail the operational and administrative requirements associated with an aircraft diversion to a Defence aerodrome in accordance with AC SI(OPS) 05-06 – *RAAF Aerodrome Use by Non-Defence Aircraft*.
2. **Diversion notification.** *Describe the agreed notification procedures between the airline and Defence airbase executives including:*
 - a. **Initial notification.** *Describe where the initial notification for diversion should be made, and any additional notifications required. Consideration needs to be given to whether there should be a different procedure for in and out of Defence aerodrome operational hours, if the latter is approved such as in circumstances when out-of-hours diversion would require additional Defence resources.*
 - b. **Coordination procedures.** *Describe the communication protocols to be followed if the coordination of aerodrome services and facilities is required.*
3. **Parking areas.** *Detail the approved parking positions for the type of aircraft being covered by the DCP. It should detail the approved parking areas in order of preference, and should also consider the possibility of multiple non-Defence diversions. It should also detail any operational considerations that might affect the choice of parking areas.*
4. **Aviation fuel availability.** *Detail the method by which aviation fuel is expected to be provided to the diverted aircraft, and what procedures are to be followed to arrange the provision of that fuel. Preference is always for fuel to be provided by a non-Defence supplier on the aerodrome, however if the Defence aerodrome is the only practical fuel supply, then a detailed method of payment for fuel is to be determined.*
5. **Ground handling requirements.** *Detail the agreed ground handling procedures and facilities to ensure that the operator is fully aware of potential limitations. It should also detail the ground handling equipment that the airline has agreed to pre-position at the aerodrome and the method of storage for that equipment. Areas to be covered in this paragraph should include, but are not limited, to the following:*
 - a. *external power requirements*
 - b. *aircraft stairs*
 - c. *towing capabilities and tow bar availability*
 - d. *passenger holding areas (if required).*
6. **Security procedures.** *Detail security requirements that are to be met to enable the DCP. This may include:*

- a. *how airline personnel gain access to the Defence airbase*
 - b. *how contract personnel, working on behalf of the airline, gain access to the airbase*
 - c. *how passengers would be moved off and on the Defence airbase if a long term diversion was required*
 - d. *how the physical security for the aircraft would be addressed.*
7. **Passenger Medical Emergencies.** *Detail the procedures to be followed if a passenger on the diverting aircraft suffers a medical emergency that requires an immediate response.*
8. **Cost Recovery Procedures.** *Detail the procedures by which the SADFO will recover costs associated with the diversion. Defence's cost recovery policies and the different types of costing methodologies that may be used to calculate a charge are contained in FINMAN 4 and should be referred to when determining the costs to be recovered.*
9. **Specified Operational Limitations.** *Detail other operational requirements or restrictions that the SADFO requires the airline to comply with during a diversion to the Defence aerodrome.*
10. **DCP Review.** The operator is responsible for ensuring that this DCP is reviewed biannually.

Endorsed by:

(Signature required)

IR Name
GPCAPT
SADFO RAAF BASE xxxxxxxx

Xxx 201X