



NATIONAL IFF/SSR POLICY BOARD

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APPROVAL OF GROUND-BASED IFF/SSR INTERROGATORS

As you may be aware, the Air Navigation Order was amended in 2005 to introduce the regulations for mandatory carriage of Mode S Enhanced Surveillance (EHS) in Notified Mode S airspace within the UK. The proposed second phase of UK Mode S implementation is to mandate Mode S Elementary (ELS) transponder carriage throughout UK airspace for all aircraft by 31 March 2008, with a probable transition period until 31 March 2010.

Assuming that the Mode S ELS mandate is completed on schedule, it is envisaged that the majority of aircraft within UK airspace will be equipped with either an EHS or ELS Mode S transponder by 31 March 2010. This wider transponder carriage policy is predicated on a sustainable RF environment that is only available through a managed UK transition to Mode S technology by all aviation stakeholders. Additionally, it should be noted that as the airborne SSR transition to Mode S takes place, the efficiency of non-Mode S interrogators will decrease.

With airborne equipage plans now in place, it is now apposite to consider long-term ground equipage plans for all operators of ground-based IFF/SSR interrogators. Both of the UK ANSPs have already started the transition to Mode S, with the NATS Radar Site Services (RSS) programme currently scheduled for completion by 2012, and similar plans for the replacement of MOD equipment are well advanced.

Although the CAA has had early sight of ANSP Mode S transition planning, there are still a number of operators who have yet to declare their transition plan. In order to allow all operators to make the correct commercial decisions, and to maintain the momentum of Mode S ground equipage, a coherent policy for all UK operators of ground-based IFF/SSR interrogators has now been formulated.

Consequently, I am writing to inform you that from 31 December 2011, it is considered extremely unlikely that the National IFF/SSR Committee (NISC) will approve non-Mode S ground-based IFF/SSR interrogators for use within the UK. Future approvals for non-Mode S IFF/SSR interrogators will not be valid after 31 December 2011. This NISC policy is consistent with CAA DOC 714¹, and with CAP 761² that replaced it in January 2006. DOC 714 states in the introduction:

¹ CAA DOC 714, Operation of IFF/SSR Interrogators in the UK Planning Principles and Procedures, 8th Edition, August 2002.

² CAP 761, Operation of IFF/SSR Interrogators in the UK Planning Principles and Procedures, 1st Edition, January 2006.

'The environmental benefits of using Mode S interrogators for both civil and military ATS applications are fully recognized by the NISC. These environmental benefits will only be realised fully with widespread Mode S equipage of ground interrogators and airborne transponders. Consequently, the continued renewal of non-Mode S capable interrogator approvals cannot be guaranteed.'

The transition to a coherent air and ground Mode S environment is essential to allow continued growth within all sectors of the aviation industry. The NISC will continue to safeguard the 1030 and 1090 MHz frequencies in order to allow the safe operation of IFF/SSR and ACAS/TCAS. In order to assist the NISC in this task, I would ask that you provide the NISC Secretariat with written proposals for Mode S equipage. Should you require any assistance or further information whilst completing your proposal, please do not hesitate to contact the NISC Secretariat.

[Original signed]

S G WRAGG
Gp Capt
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NISC