

**Introduction of Class C Airspace at and above FL195  
Frequently Asked Questions**

1) Why do we need to do DFL195?

The introduction of DFL195 was originally an initiative within the Eurocontrol Airspace Strategy, which sought to harmonise ICAO airspace classifications above a common agreed level. This requirement was considered to improve safety by introducing a harmonised ECAC-wide airspace classification, which would underpin future airspace/strategic changes such as multiple ATS routes and associated FUA developments. The EC has since introduced the Single European Sky Airspace Classification Regulation, which requires EU member states to implement Class C above FL195 by 1 July 2007. The UK will introduce Class C at and above DFL195 on the 15<sup>th</sup> March 2007.

2) Why is the FIR/UIR boundary remaining at FL245?

The FIR/UIR boundary will remain at FL245 for a number of reasons. International co-ordination would be required to change the FIR boundary. Given the SES proposals for a European Upper Information Region (EUIR) above FL285, it has been concluded that the FIR/UIR boundary should remain at FL245. Furthermore, pending introduction of dynamic airspace management tools, retention of the current FIR/UIR boundary will enable airways to be clearly delineated from active TRAs between FL195-245. UARs above FL245 are unaffected by such TRA activity.

3) Will Upper ATS Routes (UAR)s drop down to FL195?

No. The FIR/UIR boundary will remain at FL245, ATS routes will continue to be notified in the AIP as UARs within Class C airspace above FL245. The retention of the current FIR/UIR boundary will enable airways to be clearly delineated from active TRAs between FL195-245.

4) Why Class C airspace?

The range of airspace classifications deployed by ECAC states was considered by Eurocontrol as part of the ECAC airspace strategy to harmonise ICAO airspace classifications. It was considered that Class C would enable some flexibility for VFR traffic, which has historically been accorded specific arrangements by the ATS authorities across Europe. The introduction of the EC Airspace Classification regulation requires Class C to be implemented within EC states above FL195 by 1 July 2007. The UK will introduce Class C at and above FL195 on 15 March 2007 to de-conflict the change from the busy summer traffic period.

5) Why do we need to do this if in reality the rules are not changing from what we had prior to March 2006?

The rules for operation above FL195 have changed from those applicable in Class G today. The arrangements to accommodate VFR traffic, which will be mainly to meet military requirements, will be predicated on a Class C controlled airspace background. Consequently, rules for VFR operations within TRA have been designed to enhance safety when compared with Class G airspace above FL195 today.

6) Why do the ADRs stop at FL195?

ADRs stop at FL195 because the airspace above this will be Class C, unlike ADRs, which are Class F. Where the previous ADR is required between FL195-245, the ADR has been replaced with a Class C ATS route.

7) How will aircraft access UARs from ADRs?

Class C airways have been established for those ADRs that have an upper limit of FL195 which require connectivity with UARs. This will not preclude ATC taking aircraft through a TRA should traffic conditions permit.

8) Will all aircraft be able to fly into TRAs when active?

Any aircraft that fulfils the access requirements will be able to operate within a TRA. Gliders that do not carry transponders will not be permitted to operate above FL195 unless in a designated TRA (G). Aircraft in transit, whether civil or military, will be permitted to transit an active TRA under ATSOCA. Such aircraft operating under the IFR will not be permitted to transit an activated TRA (G).

9) Will aircraft be able to flight plan along current UARS between FL200-240?

No. UARs do not currently exist between FL200-FL240 and they will not be lowered as part of this Class C introduction. Current Class A and D airways between FL195 and FL245 will be reclassified as Class C airways.

10) Will NATS provide a service within a TRA?

Yes. ATS within an active TRA will be on the basis of ATSOCA.

11) What ATC service is provided in TRAs?

ATSOCA

12) Who will provide a service to aircraft above FL195 when TRAs are active?

Either NATS or MOD are permitted to provide ATS to aircraft operating in or transiting a TRA; it is, however, anticipated that ATS will be predominantly provided by military ATS as "off-route" services are today. NATS will provide ATS to all aircraft operating on an ATS route.

12) Who will provide a service to aircraft above FL195 when TRAs are inactive?

NATS or MoD as today. Aircraft will be under a control service with no change to current co-ordination responsibilities/protocols.

13) Where currently allowed, will 3nm separation still be able to be applied up to FL245?

Yes

14) Will the Quadrantal Rule only apply up to below 19,500ft post DFL195?

The ANO will be amended to reflect that the quadrantal rule will be applicable below 19,500ft in uncontrolled airspace. TRA access rules will stipulate that during periods of activation, the quadrantal rule will apply within the TRA – this is to replicate the current rules for an aircraft becoming IFR in uncontrolled airspace, which is considered the safest option. When TRAs are inactive, the semi-circular rule will apply above 19,500ft.

15) Will Class C require controllers to ascertain the VFR/IFR status of every flight?

For separation purposes, all flights will be considered as IFR. Where a pilot wishes to conduct a flight under VFR (civil aircraft must have pre-arranged this in accordance with TRA access conditions/non-standard flights process in AIP), they must inform the controller on first contact of their flight conditions. A pilot is required to comply with ATC instructions under IFR and VFR. If the pilot, who is operating VFR, is unable to comply with the instructions due to metrological conditions, he should request an alternative clearance to enable the flight to continue in VMC (or leave the airspace).

16) Will airways traffic be allowed to cancel an IFR flight plan and then continue VFR along an airway?

No. The Airspace Classification Regulation only permits VFR flight above FL195 in a TRA or, below FL285 when authorised by the appropriate ATS Unit in accordance with the procedures published in the AIP. The ANO is being amended to prohibit an aircraft to cancel an IFR flight plan and elect to continue VFR along an ATS route. Whilst any flight in Class C requires an ATC clearance, this measure is being introduced to enable Class C to be introduced at any level whilst protecting en-route capacity, which is predicated on IFR operations.

17) Will gliders be permitted to operate within or along the ATS routes?

Gliders will be permitted to operate in Class C airspace provided that they have SSR and have filed a flight plan (abbreviated), and have received an ATC clearance. No aircraft will be permitted to file a VFR flight plan to follow an ATS route. SSR equipped gliders under an ATC service will be permitted to cross an airway when traffic conditions permit. Both NATS or MoD could provide ATS, however, it is anticipated ATS will predominantly be provided by military ATS.

18) Why can't IFR flights mix with gliders who are VFR in a TRA?

IFR flights are required to be separated from VFR traffic. Gliders will operate in TRA (G) where they are not SSR equipped. It is not possible therefore to ensure standard radar separation between such gliders and IFR traffic.

19) Will civil sectors be expected to work all civil traffic in the Class C CAS when the TRAs are inactive?

Both NATS and MOD will provide ATS to civil traffic operating "off-route" under extant arrangements. NATS will provide "on-route" services.

20) Why are the TRAs required when the majority of military flights operate under a radar service above FL195?

The MoD requires that military aircraft have the option to operate autonomously within an activated TRA.

21) Who is responsible for providing an ATC service in more remote areas of Class C CAS where radar, radio and navigation cover is limited or non-existent?

There are very few areas where such constraints would apply. MoD and NATS as appropriate will provide a non-radar based ATS.

22) Can aircraft operate in a TRA without an 8.33 radio?

- i. Civil registered aircraft operating IFR above FL195, including any transit through a TRA, will be required to comply with the relevant controlled airspace radio equipment requirements i.e. –if an 8.33kHz area this will be required. This applies to all UK airspace above FL195.
- ii. Radio equipment requirements for VFR operations by civil registered aircraft within a TRA, or for a specified VFR permission outside a TRA, will be detailed in the TRA access rules or specific permission (non-standard flight procedures). It is anticipated that, whilst ATC may have the capability to provide ATS on a 25kHz frequency, aircraft conducting localised VFR activity within a TRA will only be permitted to operate with a 25 kHz channel spaced radio when ATC capacity is unaffected. Aircraft seeking VFR access to TRA airspace where the controlling agencies require 8.33 kHz will need to be suitably equipped.
- iii. Military aircraft operations will be largely unaffected and specific arrangements for their operations in 8.33 kHz airspace will be detailed separately.

23) Will the FIS continue to operate up to FL245 and if not who will provide a service?

The FIS provided by London Information in the London FIR, will be provided below FL195, with the MOD providing a FIS and airways crossing service to aircraft operating between FL195 and FL245. FIS arrangements within the Scottish ACC area of responsibility detailed in the AIP will continue as today.

24) When and how will TRAs be activated?

TRAs will be permanently activated from 0830-1700L (0830-1800L summer) Mon-Fri. Outside these times where for example there is a requirement for night flying, areas can be activated via the Military Airspace Booking and Co-ordination Cell (MABCC) at D-1 or through the Airspace Utilisation Section for specific exercises or unusual air activities. TRA activation times and access rules will be notified in the AIP.

25) When and how will TRA (G)s be activated?

TRA (G) has been created to cater for non-SSR glider operations. With the exception of Aboyne, TRA (G) will only be activated at weekends or public holidays. Aboyne will be able to request activation of their TRA (G) on a daily basis. In all cases TRA (G) will only be activated when weather conditions would enable gliders to fly VFR above FL195. Booking arrangements will be dynamic requiring activation approval from the ACCs responsible for the airspace. Generic access requirements will be detailed in the AIP. Detailed procedures will be contained in ACC LOAs/MATS Part 2.

It is not envisaged that TRA(G) will be activated on a regular basis as they are weather dependent. Activation of TRA (G) above FL245 is considered to be very remote.

26) Can aircraft operate up to the lateral boundary of CAS adjacent to a TRA?

Controllers should, in accordance with MATS Part 1, aim to keep their aircraft 2nm from the edge of the CAS boundary. Controllers tactically vectoring aircraft within 2nm of a TRA boundary should be alert to the possibility of unknown aircraft operating within the TRA coming into conflict with their own traffic. In such circumstances, consideration should be given to co-ordinating with the appropriate controlling agency. When this cannot be achieved, aircraft should be vectored to be at least 2nm from the boundary.

27) Can aircraft operate right up to FL245 in a TRA?

Autonomous operations should not operate above FL240. Aircraft receiving an ATS or under control of ASACS can operate up to FL245 but should follow instructions from controllers as appropriate.

Glider operations within a TRA (G) will be restricted to FL240 unless a contiguous upper TRA (G) has also been activated. The lateral boundaries of the TRA (G) have been designed to provide a 5nm buffer with adjacent CAS; in the case of the eastern boundary of the Aboyne area, the buffer is contained within airway P600.

28) Can aircraft on a UAR descend to FL246 and still be separated from traffic within a TRA below?

No. IFR separation will be provided at FL250 and above. Aircraft in this environment will be under control and will not be vectored within 1000 feet of an aircraft operating within a TRA.

29) Do aircraft need to be cleared to enter a TRA when leaving an ATS route or prior to entering an ATS route?

Aircraft in IFR transit through a TRA leaving/joining an ATS route will already be in receipt of a radar service and will not require an additional clearance. Controllers must however, change the type of service being provided accordingly. All other civil aircraft will require a clearance to enter a TRA. Military aircraft will operate in accordance with military access rules, which will permit VFR access to TRA from a class G environment without a positive ATC clearance. Such military aircraft will, however, be required to operate SSR code 7006 and monitor 243.00 mhz.

30) Are there any ATC phraseology changes as a result of DFL195?

No

31) Do aircraft need to transpond when operating within a TRA?

Yes, unless they are a glider operating in a TRA (G). Military aircraft operating autonomously will be required to transpond 7006; aircraft receiving an ATS or ASACS will be required to transpond the code allocated.

32) Do aircraft always have to be in two way radio contact when operating within a TRA?

Civil aircraft operating within a TRA will be required to be in contact with ATC. Military autonomous operations will be required to monitor 243.0 Mhz. Gliders operating in an active TRA (G) with an upper limit of FL240 will not be required to be in contact with ATC but will operate in accordance with the conditions specified in the LoA underpinning the TRA (G). Glider pilots operating in an active TRA (G) above FL240 are required to establish 2-way RTF contact passing FL200 in the climb, obtain an ATC clearance to enter the 'upper' TRA (G), maintain a listening watch on the appropriate frequency, and report again when passing FL240 in descent.

33) How will controllers know when a TRA is active?

Military TRA will be activated to pre-notified times detailed in the AIP. TRA can be activated at other times by NOTAM issued by the AMC.

34) Can Danger Areas above FL195 be active when TRAs are inactive?

Yes. Danger areas can also be active when a TRA is active or inactive; here the rules associated with the danger area would apply.

35) Should VFR tracks within a TRA operate on 1013.2mbs or the regional QNH?

1013.2

36) How do we know that gliders are clear of a TRA(G)?

TRA (G) activation and operating procedures will be detailed in LOA. The ACCs responsible for the airspace will know the status of TRA (G). With the exception of Aboyne, TRA (G) will only be open at weekends and public holidays when TRA are inactive. Consequently, aircraft transiting in Class C will be kept clear of active TRA (G). Mid-week activation of Aboyne will be notified by NOTAM.

37) Will sector volumes or DOCs change as a result of DFL195?

There are no sector volume/DOC changes related to the introduction of DFL195. Some sectors, where their parameters include class G airspace between FL195-245 will have additional controlled airspace/TRA following the introduction of Class C. Changes to sector volumes/DOC will follow the extant airspace development planning process.

38) Can an ATC Approach Unit/military Terminal ATC unit provide ATS above FL195?

Unless specifically authorised by the CAA, ATC approach units/military terminal ATC units will not be permitted to provide an ATS at FL195 and above.

39) If the military cancel an operation, which has required a TRA to be booked outside the published hours, will the TRA revert to Class C rules?

In compliance with Flexible Use of Airspace, the military will endeavour to cancel booked TRAs when they are no longer required. TRAs can only be booked by the military outside AIP published times. When the military Supervisor is satisfied that all users have been notified that the TRA has been cancelled, Class C rules will be applied. Such cancellations will only occur in TRAs, which have been booked outside published hours. TRAs will not be cancelled during notified published hours. Unless otherwise notified by the military Supervisor, where TRAs have been cancelled 'off-route' status does not apply.