

Chapter A3-5 Check Flights for Re-issue of a National Airworthiness Review Certificate for a National Certificate of Airworthiness, or a Certificate of Validity for a National Permit to Fly

1 General

1.1 Continuing Airworthiness Flight Testing, hereinafter referred to as check flights, shall be completed periodically to ensure that the aircraft flight characteristics and the functioning in flight of the aircraft do not differ significantly from those acceptable to the CAA for the aircraft type. See Chapter A3-3.

1.2 In order that the CAA may accept reports on check flight matters, the qualifications and experience of personnel involved in check flights under the provisions of this Chapter shall be acceptable to the CAA. Check flight personnel shall be provided with adequate facilities and equipment for the effective performance of their duties.

NOTE: Organisations approved in accordance with Chapter A8-9 to fly aircraft under 'B' Conditions of the Air Navigation Order comply with this requirement.

1.3 Airworthiness check flights may normally be conducted under the supervision of the Operator or Maintenance Organisation or other organisation acceptable to the CAA, provided that the pilot/flight crew are acceptable to the CAA for that purpose. All pilots conducting check flights on behalf of the CAA must have been specifically briefed and accepted to do so and must maintain recency/currency as required by the CAA. Further information on the eligibility of pilots to carry out check flights can be found in the CAA Check Flight Handbook available on the CAA website.

1.4 The CAA must be contacted prior to each required check flight. The CAA will carry out a proportion of these check flights and will audit check flight results submitted.

1.5 Further information on the conduct of check flights for continuing airworthiness management can be found in the CAA Check Flight Handbook and in CAP 562 "Civil Aircraft Airworthiness Information and Procedures", Leaflet 1-17 "Check Flights for Continuing Airworthiness Management", which are both available on the CAA website.

1.6 Responsibility for the regulation of the safety of CAA-mandated check flights of non-EASA aircraft rests with the Flight Test Section (Aircraft Certification Department) of the Airworthiness Division of the CAA. The CAA does not

accept any responsibility for the use of CAA Check Flight Schedules on check flights not directly under their control.

2 Check Flight Frequency

2.1 Airworthiness check flights shall be completed in accordance with a) or b) as appropriate:

- a) An aircraft issued with a National Certificate of Airworthiness, unless an alternative check flight programme has been agreed by the CAA for the particular case, will be required to carry out a check flight as part of the requirements to re-issue the National Airworthiness Review Certificate (typically every three years) in accordance with Chapter A3-1 Section 10;
- b) An aircraft issued with a national Permit to Fly, unless an alternative check flight programme has been agreed by the CAA for the particular case, will be required to carry out a check flight annually as part of the requirements to re-issue the Certificate of Validity. Aircraft that are continuously controlled by an approved maintenance organisation may be granted a three yearly check flight frequency.

2.2 When an Airworthiness Check Flight is required in accordance with paragraph 2.1 above, the check flight shall be completed within the period of 90 days immediately preceding the date of re-issue of the current National Airworthiness Review Certificate (National ARC) or Certificate of Validity (as applicable).

2.3 Periodic testing for the purpose of continuing airworthiness monitoring is currently not mandated for aircraft already possessing an EASA Certificate of Airworthiness (frequently referred to as EASA aircraft). EASA aircraft types that are operating for State purposes will normally be issued with a National Certificate of Airworthiness. However, by exception from paragraphs 2.1(a) & (b), these State aircraft will be treated in the same way as EASA aircraft and so will not be required to undertake a check flight unless the aircraft has been in storage, or out of service, for a prolonged period of time. Further information on this subject can be found in CAP 562 "Civil Aircraft Airworthiness Information and Procedures", Leaflet 1-17 "Check Flights For Continuing Airworthiness Management".

3 Check Flight Schedules

3.1 Airworthiness Check Flight Schedules. The check flights shall be made in accordance with a) or b):

- a) To the appropriate Airworthiness Check Flight Schedule published by the CAA on the CAA website; or

- b) To a schedule, approved by the CAA, containing, as a minimum, the tests laid down in the Airworthiness Check Flight Schedule. Such a schedule shall contain details of the aircraft type to which it refers, shall be marked with a reference number, issue number, and date, and shall include the following:
- i) tests to check the aircraft performance;
 - ii) tests to check that the handling characteristics are satisfactory and have not deteriorated with time;

NOTES: (1) The tests will take account of the flying characteristics of the aircraft revealed during flight tests on the Prototype, the results of tests on Series aircraft and the history of the aircraft.

(2) It is convenient for the check flight schedule to contain the following handling tests, as these combine, in a brief form, checks on various flight characteristics:

- i) a qualitative assessment of the take-off;
 - ii) an assessment of the trim of the aircraft and the effectiveness of primary flight controls and trimmers, in steady flight;
 - iii) hover manoeuvres for helicopters;
 - iv) flight at maximum speed;
 - v) stalls in the take-off and landing configurations;
 - vi) a qualitative assessment of the landing.
- iii) tests to check functioning of the aircraft equipment in flight.

NOTE: Controls, systems and equipment which are used regularly may be considered, for the purpose of this schedule, to have been checked on the basis of normal usage.

4 Check Flight Results

4.1 The check flight results, in a form acceptable to the CAA, shall be submitted for acceptance as follows:

- a) in respect of an aircraft to which Chapter A3-1 is applicable, either:
 - i) to the continuing airworthiness management organisation or the Chapter A8-15 M3 organisation, as appropriate, in support of the Airworthiness Review in accordance with Chapter A8-25, Section 10. Once accepted by that organisation, the results shall be forwarded to the CAA for record purposes; or
 - ii) in the case where the CAA itself carries out the Airworthiness Review and the National ARC is issued by the CAA in accordance with Chapter A3-1 paragraph 10.8.1, to the CAA.

- b) in respect of an aircraft to which Chapter A3–7 is applicable, either:
 - i) to the organisation that is supervising the Permit to Fly and is approved to make recommendations to the CAA concerning the issue of a Permit to Fly and Certificate of Validity. Once accepted by that organisation, the results shall be forwarded to the CAA for record purposes; or
 - ii) in the case where the CAA itself carries out the Airworthiness Review and then issues the Permit to Fly and Certificate of Validity, to the CAA.
- 4.2 The check flight result shall include a certificate, which shall be signed by the pilot who conducted the flight. The certificate, which forms page 1 of the CAA check flight schedule, shall record any defects found and identify the process by which they will be investigated and rectified.