

# Aberporth and West Wales Danger Area Airspace Change Decision

CAP 1681

A large, abstract graphic composed of overlapping, semi-transparent blue shapes in various shades, ranging from light cyan to deep navy blue. The shapes are curved and layered, creating a sense of depth and movement. The graphic occupies the lower two-thirds of the page, starting from the left edge and extending towards the right, with some shapes overlapping the bottom edge.

**Published by the Civil Aviation Authority, 2018**

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The latest version of this document is available in electronic format at [www.caa.co.uk](http://www.caa.co.uk)

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## Chapter 1

# Executive summary

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## Objective of the Proposal

### Summary of the proposal's objective

1. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) identified an opportunity to adapt the airspace structure of the EG D201 (Aberporth) and EG D202 (West Wales) Danger Area complexes. The primary objectives of the proposal are to comply with CAA Danger Area policy and improve the Flexible Use of Airspace (FUA). Specifically, the proposal seeks to subdivide EG D201 to enable a proportionate volume of airspace to be segregated to conduct Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) activity. Additionally, the proposal seeks to split EG D201E between EG D201 and EG D202 Danger Area complexes to simplify the Airspace Management (ASM) and notification processes. The proposal also takes the opportunity to standardize the naming convention of both the EG D201 and EG D202 Danger Area complexes. The Airspace Change Proposal (ACP) was submitted on 7 March 2018. A diagram of the existing Danger Area structure is at Appendix A. A diagram of the proposed Danger Area structure is at Appendix B.

### Summary of the decision made

2. The CAA has decided to approve the ACP.

## Chapter 2

# Decision Process and Analysis

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## **Aims and Objectives of the Proposed Change**

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3. The EG D202 Danger Area complex was created to facilitate UAS trials, it was designed to abut the EG D201 complex to enable UAS trials to be conducted both over land and over the sea. In accordance with CAA Danger Area policy<sup>1</sup>, the sponsor reviewed the requirement for EG D202 and EG D201. This review revealed that UAS trials conducted out of West Wales airport in EG D201 only used the southern half of the Danger Area. This results in a significant volume of unused segregated airspace. In particular, it was recognised that this activity restricted the ability for Commercial Air Transport (CAT) to flight plan along the Air Traffic Service (ATS) route L18 inbound to Dublin. In accordance with the Danger Area policy the Danger Area Authority submitted an Airspace Change Proposal (ACP) to the CAA seeking to change the airspace design to exploit the identified opportunity to increase the flight plan availability of ATS route L18. During the development of the ACP the sponsor also recognised that there was an opportunity to simplify the ASM and status notification process by splitting EG D201E and by standardizing the Danger Area naming convention.

## **Chronology of Proposal Process**

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### **Framework Briefing**

4. A Framework Briefing took place on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at which the MoD outlined its proposal and preferred option to subdivide EG D201 to create a new Danger Area segment. The CAA agreed that, by seeking to change the airspace design to enable the minimum volume of airspace to be segregated to facilitate UAS trials from West Wales Airport in EG D201, the proposal adhered to the Safety and Airspace Regulation Group (SARG) Danger Area policy and the principles

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<sup>1</sup> The promulgated vertical and lateral dimensions of a DA are to be the minimum required to meet the task for which the DA has been established. These dimensions are to be reviewed annually.

of the Flexible Use of Airspace (FUA). During the ACP development phase, the CAA agreed that, by splitting EG D201E, the ASM and airspace notification processes would be simplified and therefore enable other airspace users to better interpret the status of the Danger Areas.

## **Consultation**

5. The CAA concluded that it would be difficult to predict who would use the Class G airspace made available as a result of the proposal. In addition, the proposal adheres to SARG policy and would increase the availability of ATS route L18 which are considered positive outcomes. Therefore, the CAA agreed that no formal General Aviation and public consultation was required in this instance and that the proposal could be developed and submitted as an Impact Assessment.

## **Submission of Airspace Change Proposal**

6. On 7<sup>th</sup> March 2018, the CAA received the formal proposal in the form of an Impact Assessment.

## **CAA Analysis of the Material provided**

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7. As a record of our analysis of this material the CAA has produced:

20180523 - EGD201 subdivision Operational Assessment

The CAA's Operational Assessment will be published on the CAA's website.

## **CAA assessment and decision in respect of Consultation**

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8. The CAA considered that it would not be possible to determine the stakeholders that would be potentially impacted by the proposal within Class G airspace. Furthermore, the impact to GAT by increasing the ability to flight plan ATS route L18 is considered positive. The proposal adheres to SARG Danger Area policy and UK and EU Flexible Use of Airspace regulations. Therefore, the CAA concluded that no formal consultation was required.

## **CAA Consideration of Factors material to our decision whether to approve the change**

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### **Explanation of statutory duties**

9. The CAA's statutory duties are laid down in [Section 70 of the Transport Act 2000](#).

### **Conclusions in respect of safety**

10. The CAA's primary duty is to maintain a high standard of safety in the provision of air traffic services and this takes priority over all other duties.<sup>2</sup>

11. In this respect, with due regard to safety in the provision of air traffic services, the CAA is satisfied that the proposal maintains a high standard of safety for the following reasons:

- a. The MoD has designed the new Danger Area segment such that it shall wholly contain the hazardous activity.
- b. The MoD has designed the new Danger Area segment such that it shall wholly contain the hazardous activity.
- c. The Danger Area status notification process will be simplified and will therefore enable other airspace users to more easily determine when the Danger Areas are active.
- d. The proposed change to EG D201E does not impact the application of the safety buffer for airspace design purposes, which is applied procedurally by managing CAT such that aircraft will route along or south of ATS route UN14.
- e. By removing EG D201E, pilots flying VFR in the vicinity of West Wales Airport when EG D201H is active will be able to use the A487 as a navigational feature to mitigate against inadvertent infringement of the Danger Area.

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<sup>2</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(1).

## **Conclusions in respect of securing the most efficient use of airspace**

12. The CAA is required to secure the most efficient use of the airspace consistent with the safe operation of aircraft and the expeditious flow of air traffic.<sup>3</sup>
13. The CAA considers that the most efficient use of airspace is defined as 'secures the greatest number of movements of aircraft through a specific volume of airspace over a period of time so that the best use is made of the limited resource of UK airspace'.
14. The CAA considers the expeditious flow of air traffic to involve each aircraft taking the shortest amount of time for its flight. It is concerned with individual flights.
15. In this respect, the CAA is satisfied that by subdividing the existing Danger Area structure to enable the segregation of the minimum airspace required to conduct specific hazardous activity the proposal enables other airspace users to achieve the most efficient use of airspace.

## **Conclusions in respect of taking into account the Secretary of State's guidance to the CAA on environmental objectives**

16. In performing the statutory duties, the CAA is obliged to take account of the extant guidance provided by the Secretary of State,<sup>4</sup> namely the 2014 Guidance to the CAA on Environmental Objectives.
17. In this respect, the proposed change will increase opportunities to flight plan ATS route L18, which provides a more direct route into Dublin from the South East; resulting in less fuel burn and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. In addition, the change provides an opportunity for aircraft operating within Class G airspace to fly shorter distances which may result in environmental benefit. Therefore, the CAA is satisfied that the environmental impact of the proposal is likely to be positive.

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<sup>3</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(a).

<sup>4</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(d)



## Conclusions in respect of aircraft operators and owners

18. The CAA is required to satisfy the requirements of operators and owners of all classes of aircraft.<sup>5</sup>
19. In this respect, the CAA is content that the revised structure of the EG D201 and EG D202 Danger Area complexes will enable greater access to ATS route L18 for CAT. The proposal will also provide greater access to Class G airspace for OAT and General Aviation operating near the Danger Areas. When EG D202 is not active, the proposal facilitates simpler access to West Wales Airport.

## Conclusions in respect of the interests of any other person

20. The CAA is required to take account of the interests of any person (other than an owner or operator of an aircraft) in relation to the use of any particular airspace or the use of airspace generally.
21. In this respect, the CAA considers that the impact of the proposal will not be discernible to any other person.

## Integrated operation of ATS

22. The CAA is required to facilitate the integrated operation of air traffic services provided by or on behalf of the armed forces of the Crown and other air traffic services.<sup>6</sup>
23. In this respect, the CAA is content that the revised structure of EG D201 and EG D202 Danger Areas is consistent with the operational requirements of the MoD and that the impact to other Air Traffic Service Providers will be positive or undiscernible.

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<sup>5</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(b).

<sup>6</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(e).

## **Interests of national security**

24. The CAA is required to take into account of the impact that any airspace change may have upon matters of national security.<sup>7</sup> The CAA is satisfied that the proposal has no impact on national security.
25. In this respect, the proposal satisfies this requirement.

## **International obligations**

26. The CAA is required to take into account of any international obligations entered into by the UK and notified by the Secretary of State. The CAA is satisfied that the proposal will not affect any international obligations.
27. In this respect, the proposal satisfies this requirement.

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<sup>7</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(f).

## Chapter 3

## CAA's Regulatory Decision

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28. Noting the anticipated impacts on the material factors we are bound to take into account, we have decided to approve the proposal to subdivide EG D201 to create a new Danger Area segment and split EG D201E; incorporating the airspace into EG D201H and EG D202D. The proposal adheres to CAA Danger Area policy and improves access to ATS route L18 and Class G airspace in the vicinity of the Danger Area complexes.

### Conditions

29. As specified in the Impact Assessment, the Air Navigation Service Providers affected by the proposal shall complete a safety assessment of the change prior to implementation.

### Period Regulatory Decision Remains Valid for Implementation

30. The change should be implemented within 12 months of this decision.

### Implementation

31. The revised airspace will become effective on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Any queries are to be directed to the SARG Project Leader, [REDACTED] on 0207453 [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

### Post Implementation Review

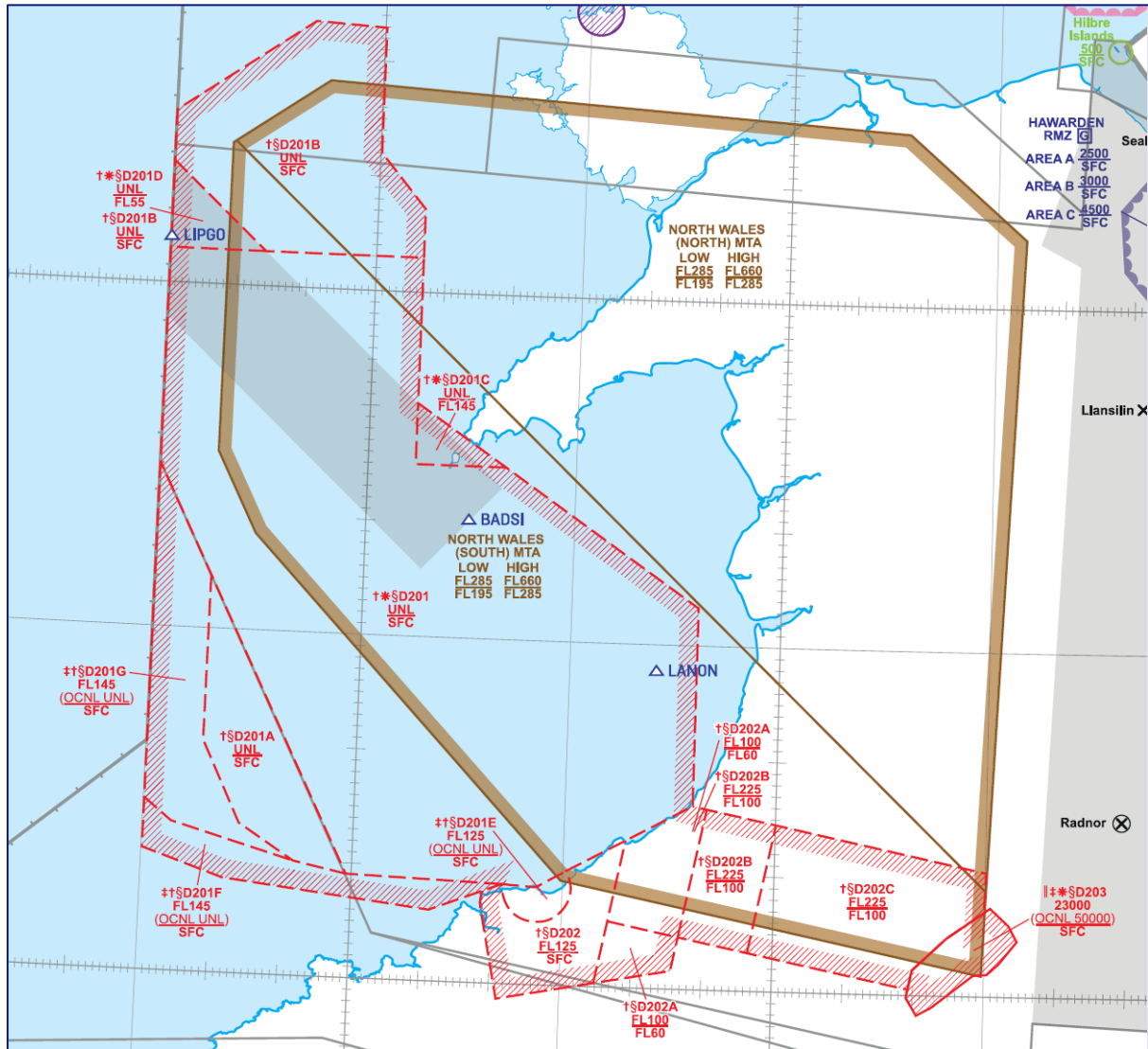
32. In accordance with the CAA standard procedures, the implications of the change will be reviewed after one full year of operation, at which point, CAA staff will engage with interested parties to obtain feedback to contribute to the analysis.

Civil Aviation Authority

11 May 2018

Appendix A

# EG D201 and EG D202 Danger Area Structures



Appendix B

# Post Change EG D201 and EG D202 Danger Area Structures

