

Supplementary Instruction

CAP 493 MATS Part 1

Safety and Airspace Regulation Group
Airspace, ATM and Aerodromes



Number: CAP493/SI/2026/01

Issued: 12 March 2026

Effective: 7 May 2026

Addition of SSR A7400 as a Special Purpose Code

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this Supplementary Instruction (SI) to the Manual of Air Traffic Services (MATS) Part 1 (CAP 493) is to add the SSR code A7400 to the list of Special Purpose Codes.

2. Background

- 2.1 The UK SSR Code Allocation Plan lists A7400 as 'UAS/RPA Lost Link', and notes that "*This conspicuity code shall be used by Unmanned Aerial [sic] Systems/Remotely Piloted Aircraft that have lost communications with their remote pilot and are following a pre-programmed Lost Link flight profile.*"
- 2.2 Unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) operating beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) within controlled airspace are currently subject to prior coordination and pre-flight briefing between the operator and affected air traffic services (ATS) units. This briefing will include information on the procedure that the unmanned aircraft (UA) has been programmed to follow in the event of a loss of its command and control datalink (lost C2 link), which is specific to the individual flight path of the UA.
- 2.3 SSR code A7400 is a special purpose emergency code that indicates that a UA operating BVLOS is in a lost C2 link state.
- 2.4 In the unlikely event that an UA displays A7400 and flies a trajectory other than that which has been briefed, controllers are to consider the UAS as flying with unknown intentions.
- 2.5 If a controller observes an unknown aircraft displaying A7400, they should respond in the same way as to any unknown aircraft (see CAP 493 section 1, chapter 6, paragraph 15).
- 2.6 In due course, the UK CAA will provide further material on lost C2 link procedures which is consistent with the size and complexity of the operation. In addition, work is being undertaken by ICAO to develop a common lost C2 link procedure.
- 2.7 An impact analysis for the amendment is included at [Appendix A](#).

3. Amendment to the MATS Part 1 (CAP 493)

- 3.1 With effect from 7 May 2026, the MATS Part 1 is amended as shown at [Appendix B](#). This change will be incorporated into the MATS Part 1 at the next amendment.
- 3.2 An associated Supplementary Amendment CAP670/SI/2026/01 to Air Traffic Services Safety Requirements (CAP 670) has been published to reflect the changes made in this SI.

4. Queries

- 4.1 Any queries or further guidance required on the content of this SI should be marked for the attention of Airspace & ATM Policy and sent to ats.enquiries@caa.co.uk

- 4.2 Any queries relating to the availability of this SI should be marked for the attention of Safety & Airspace Regulation and sent to ats.documents@caa.co.uk

5. Cancellation

- 5.1 This SI shall remain in force until it is incorporated into CAP 493 or is cancelled, suspended or amended.

Appendix A**Impact Analysis in Relation to CAP493/SI/2026/01****1 Introduction**

- 1.1 CAP 493/SI/2026/01 is intended to add the SSR 3A code 7400 to the list of Special Purpose Codes.

2 Impact Analysis**2.1 Safety Impact. Positive / Negligible / No / Negative**

- 2.1.1 This amendment improves safety by highlighting the loss of the command and control link, enabling ANSPs to take appropriate mitigating action.

2.2 Financial Impact. Positive / Negligible / No / Negative

- 2.2.1 This amendment might result in amendment to local ANSP documentation and equipment configuration.

2.3 Security Impact. Positive / Negligible / No / Negative

- 2.3.1 This amendment does not affect security.

2.4 Environmental Impact. Positive / Negligible / No / Negative

- 2.4.1 This amendment does not affect the environment.

2.5 Efficiency Impact. Positive / Negligible / No / Negative

- 2.5.1 This amendment improves efficiency by highlighting the loss of the command and control link, improving the situational awareness of ATS personnel.

2.6 Equality Impact. Positive / Negligible / No / Negative

- 2.6.1 This amendment does not affect people who are protected under the Equality Act 2010. While stakeholder comments referred to the use of the term 'unmanned', CAP 493 content must reflect regulatory terminology.

Appendix B

Section 1: General

Chapter 6: ATS Surveillance Systems

4E. Special Purpose Codes

4E.1 The Mode A code and associated Mode C data of special purpose codes must be considered unvalidated and unverified. Controllers should be aware of the following special purpose codes:

- (1) Emergency codes [7400](#), 7500, 7600 and 7700 ([see section 5, chapter 1](#));
- (2) Code 1000, to indicate an aircraft conducting IFR flight as GAT, where the downlinked aircraft identification is validated as matching the aircraft identification entered in the flight plan;
- (3) Code 2000 which is selected by pilots of aircraft entering the UK from an adjacent FIR where the operation of transponders has not been required; and

Note: Code 2000 is also used for the purpose of IFR conspicuity.

- (4) Code 7007, which is selected by aircraft engaged on airborne observation flights under the terms of the Treaty on Open Skies. Flight Priority Category B status has been granted for such flights and details will be published by NOTAM.

Section 5: Aircraft Emergencies

Chapter 1: Aircraft Emergencies

6. Indications on the Situation Display

6.1 Pilots may select the following SSR transponder codes to indicate the emergency situation:

- (1) Code 77 (7700) – Aircraft Emergency
- (2) Code 76 (7600) – Radio Failure (see Chapter 4)
- (3) Code 75 (7500) – Hijack or Other Act of Violence (see Chapter 5)
- (4) [Code 74 \(7400\) – Unmanned Aircraft lost C2 link \(see paragraph 17\).](#)

17. Unmanned Aircraft lost datalink (lost C2 link)

17.1 Unmanned aircraft (UA) operating beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) within controlled airspace are subject to prior coordination and preflight briefing between the UAS operator and affected ATSU. This coordination will include information on the procedure that the UA will follow if the command and control datalink to the remote pilot is lost (lost C2 link). The UA's flight path following a lost C2 link will be unique to the individual UAS operation and may be complex.

17.2 SSR code A7400 is a special purpose emergency code that indicates that a UA operating BVLOS is in a lost C2 link state.

17.3 The pilot of the UAS will establish communications with affected ATSU to provide an update on the status of the C2 link, and to coordinate subsequent manoeuvring if the C2 link and remote pilot control of the UA are restored.

17.4 Controllers are to consider a UA as an unknown aircraft when it displays A7400 and:

(1) it is flying a trajectory other than that which has been briefed; or

(2) the details of its operation are unknown to the controller.