

# Supplementary Instruction

## CAP 493 MATS Part 1

Safety and Airspace Regulation Group  
Airspace, ATM and Aerodromes



Number: CAP493/SI/2026/02

Issued: 26 June 2026

Effective: 26 June 2026

### Communications Between the Aerodrome Fire Service and Aircraft during an Emergency

#### 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 implement the change notified in Skywise Alert [SW2025/387](#) within the MATS Pt 1. References to frequency 121.6 MHz have been updated to channel 121.605.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 On 1 January 2026, all exemptions to UK Reg (EU) No. 1079/2012 that extended the use of 25 kHz spacing between some VHF communication frequencies expired. Since then, 8.33 kHz spacing has existed between the majority of VHF communication frequencies, and channels.
- 2.2 The only frequency referenced in the MATS Pt 1 that needs to be updated to a channel is contained within section 5, chapter 7, paragraph 6, which is concerned with communication between an aerodrome's fire and rescue service and a pilot.
- 2.3 An impact analysis for the amendment, which includes the additional measures is included at [Appendix A](#).

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

- 3.1 With immediate effect, 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 in due course.
- 3.2 In addition, to assist industry in assessing the change, [Appendix C](#) includes the text of the amendment which has been arranged to show new, deleted or amended text. At relevant points, the CAA has recorded its rationale for specific changes that it considered important to highlight for industry and to record for audit purposes.

#### 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](mailto:ats.enquiries@caa.co.uk)
- 4.2 Any queries relating to the availability of this SI should be marked for the attention of Safety & Business Delivery and sent to [ats.documents@caa.co.uk](mailto:ats.documents@caa.co.uk)

#### 5. Cancellation

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

**Appendix A****Impact Analysis in Relation to CAP493/SI/2026/02****1 Introduction**

- 1.1 As per Skywise alert [SW2025/387](#), exemptions to delay the implementation of 8.33 kHz channel spacing expired on 1 January 2026.
- 1.2 References to “121.6 MHz” have been updated to “121.605” within the MATS Pt 1.

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

- 2.1.1 Amendment clarifies the channel to be used between the Aerodrome Fire and Rescue Service and aircraft in an emergency.

**2.2 Financial Impact. Positive / Negligible / No / Negative**

- 2.2.1 This amendment has a negligible financial impact e.g. minor administrative costs related to the dissemination of this information.

**2.3 Security Impact. Positive / Negligible / No / Negative**

- 2.3.1 This amendment is not related to security.

**2.4 Environmental Impact. Positive / Negligible / No / Negative**

- 2.4.1 This amendment is not related to the environment.

**2.5 Efficiency Impact. Positive / Negligible / No / Negative**

- 2.5.1 This amendment does not affect the ATM efficiency.

**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.

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**Appendix B****MATS Part 1, Section 5, Chapter 7****6. Communications between the Aerodrome Fire Service and Aircraft during an Emergency**

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- 6.1 At an aerodrome where this service is promulgated, communication between an aircraft in an emergency and the Aerodrome Fire Service may take place on 121.605.
- 6.2 Communication will only take place when the aircraft is on the ground and the pilot will maintain a listening watch on the appropriate ATC frequency. The ATC unit will be informed when 121.605 is to be used.
- 6.3 Controllers should be aware that, if called upon to facilitate communications between a pilot and the Aerodrome Fire Service on 121.605, the company callsign of the aircraft may not be readily apparent to the Aerodrome Fire Service who may attempt to communicate using the aircraft's registration as displayed on the fuselage.

**Appendix C****MATS Part 1, Section 5, Chapter 7****6. Communications between the Aerodrome Fire Service and Aircraft during an Emergency**

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- 6.1 At an aerodrome where this service is promulgated, communication between an aircraft in an emergency and the Aerodrome Fire Service may take place on 121.605 MHz.
- 6.2 Communication will only take place when the aircraft is on the ground and the pilot will maintain a listening watch on the appropriate ATC frequency. The ATC unit will be informed when 121.605 MHz is to be used.
- 6.3 Controllers should be aware that, if called upon to facilitate communications between a pilot and the Aerodrome Fire Service on 121.605 MHz, the company callsign of the aircraft may not be readily apparent to the Aerodrome Fire Service who may attempt to communicate using the aircraft's registration as displayed on the fuselage.

<p><b>Origin.</b></p> <p>Skywise alert: <a href="#">SW2025/387</a></p>	<p><b>Rationale.</b></p> <p>On 1 January 2026, all exemptions for 25 kHz spacing between the majority of VHF frequencies ended. References to 121.6 MHz are no longer appropriate.</p>
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