



Emergency Operations & Contingencies

6th October 2023

ASEO_OSI_068

Version 2.1

Operational Safety Instruction

Operations at Heathrow with a Depleted Rescue and Fire Fighting Service

It is the responsibility of all employers to ensure that relevant OSIs are brought to the attention of their staff. However, individuals remain responsible for their own actions and those who are in any doubt should consult their Supervisor or Manager.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** This Operational Safety Instruction (OSI) details the depleted firefighting service operations at Heathrow Airport. As a certificated aerodrome, it is necessary for Heathrow Airport to maintain a Rescue and Fire Fighting Service (RFFS) appropriate to the size of aircraft using the airfield. Based on the size of aircraft operating at Heathrow Airport, the highest scale of RFFS cover, Category 10, is required.
- 1.2** Red bars have been added at the side of the document to draw the reader's attention to where changes have been made.
- 1.3** ASEO_OSI_068 Operations at Heathrow with a Depleted Rescue and Fire Fighting Service v2.0 is hereby cancelled.

2. Definitions

Abbreviation	Description
AOP	Airport Operations Plan
AfDM	Airfield Duty Manager
AFRS	Airport Fire and Rescue
APOC	Airport Operations and Control
ATC	Air Traffic Control
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
HAL	Heathrow Airport Limited
RFFS	Rescue and Fire Fighting Service
RTF	Radiotelephony



3. Heathrow Aerodrome Fire and Rescue Category

- 3.1 The aerodrome category for RFFS and the scale of services to be provided are laid down in CAA 139/2014 Aerodromes AMC GM (AMC2 & AMC3 ADR.OPS. B.010 (a) (2)). The aerodrome RFFS category for aircraft size is shown in the table below:

Aerodrome category for Rescue and Fire Fighting		
Aerodrome Category (1)	Aeroplane overall length (2)	Maximum fuselage width (3)
1	0 m up to but not including 9 m	2 m
2	9 m up to but not including 12 m	2 m
3	12 m up to but not including 18 m	3 m
4	18 m up to but not including 24 m	4 m
5	24 m up to but not including 28 m	4 m
6	28 m up to but not including 39 m	5 m
7	39 m up to but not including 49 m	5 m
8	49 m up to but not including 61 m	7 m
9	61 m up to but not including 76 m	7 m
10	76 m up to but not including 90 m	8 m

4. Reduced RFFS Cover

- 4.1 RFFS may be required to reduce fire cover for various reasons, including when committed to an incident or accident from which it cannot disengage. This reduction will continue from the time the contents of the appliances have been discharged until they are replenished, and the Station Manager can ensure that a response can be achieved.
- 4.2 When the RFFS cover is reduced, the CAA requires Heathrow Airport to reduce or suspend operations until adequate cover is available.
- 4.3 The reduction of the cover could lead to operations being restricted to a lower category or, in extreme circumstances, runway closure for non-emergency traffic. If RFFS cover is reduced to a point that the runway closes, all aircraft operations are to be suspended including starting, taxiing, take-off and landing, and refuelling of aircraft. For any exemptional circumstances, reference should be made to Section 6 of this OSI.
- 4.4 Confirmation of RFFS category during periods of reduced category can be obtained from the Airport Fire & Rescue Service, Station Manager on 020 8745 7778.



- 4.5** All aircraft movements at Heathrow Airport can be influenced by reduced RFFS cover. However, because of the scale of equipment held at Heathrow Airport when there has been a major aircraft incident requiring the discharge of all extinguishing media from the Airport Fire Service appliances, subsequent return to normal operations is expected when secondary RFFS equipment is replenished, operational and not committed to any ongoing incident.
- 4.6** In any event, it is unlikely that any significant reduction in RFFS cover will last for extended periods.

5. Procedures for Promulgation of Reduction in RFFS Category

- 5.1** The Airport Fire & Rescue Service Station Manager is responsible for notifying the HAL AfDM at the earliest opportunity of any degradation in the available RFFS category.
- 5.2** The ATC is responsible for any restriction or suspension of aircraft movements in line with the said RFFS category. The HAL AfDM is responsible for communicating the available RFFS category to ATC and ensuring that any degradation is promulgated via the Airport Operations Control/Airside Operations Department using the normal channels of communication (AOP, Text Alerting etc.) Examples of the standard messages are as follows:
- 5.2.1** Reduced Fire Cover “Heathrow Airfield Fire and Rescue facilities reduced: The aerodrome can only accept aircraft up to and including category
- 5.2.2** Total Suspension of Movements “With immediate effect and until further notice Heathrow Aerodrome is closed owing to the non-availability of rescue-firefighting facilities”.
- 5.3** ATC will communicate any degradation in the fire category to aircrew via RTF every 5 minutes for a period of 30 minutes, and by placing a message on the Automatic Terminal Information Service (ATIS) broadcast.
- 5.4** HAL AfDM will issue a Notice to Aviation (NOTAM) when the reduction in the fire category is likely to exceed two hours.
- 5.5** Reinstatement of the RFFS category will be done by the Airport Fire and Rescue Service Station Manager in conjunction with the HAL AfDM. The HAL AfDM will then notify the ATC of the reinstatement of the RFFS category while the Airport Fire and Rescue Station Manager will notify the APOC.



6. Emergencies

Notwithstanding any reduction in RFFS cover, Heathrow Airport will remain open for emergency landings, or for landing when, in the pilot's opinion, a diversion or holding may be a greater potential hazard.

7. Enquiries

Any enquiries regarding this OSI should be made to the Airport Fire & Rescue Service Station Manager Tel: 020 8745 7778.

8. References

- CAA 139/2014 Aerodromes AMC GM (AMC2 & AMC3 ADR.OPS. B.010 (a) (2))
- UK Reg (EU) No. 139/2014 (the UK Aerodromes Regulation)



Document Data

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Document History

Revision	Description of Change	Date
v1.0	Initial version	18 th May 2017
v2.0	Updated sections on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referencing to AOP Runway closure to non-emergency traffic 	8 th August 2020
v2.1	Updated regulations from EASA to CAA and ATC procedures in relation to aircraft movement restriction/suspension according to the RFFS category. Added provision of Reinstatement of the RFFS Category	6 th October 2023

