



Airspace Management



GUIDELINE

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1 Purpose

This guideline is to be used by partner agencies involved in aerial fire-fighting operations in the development of jurisdictional procedures for airspace management and safety over incidents.

2 Principles

Participating jurisdictions operate a State Air Desk (SAD) or equivalent co-ordination facility to ensure effective aerial fire-fighting communications, management, and support within their respective jurisdiction.

Individual jurisdictional agencies and/or SAD are responsible for managing and engaging aircraft from operators who are approved within ARENA and maintained by the National Aerial Fire Fighting Centre (NAFC).

Individual jurisdictions agencies and/or States will develop, maintain, and implement documents that address the aerial fire and emergency operational imperatives and aviation airspace management procedures outlined below.

3 Fire And Emergency Operational Imperatives

Agency Authority

Aerial firefighting operations shall only be conducted under the authority of a legislated Agency / Emergency Service Organisation (ESO) operating under the AFAC AIIMS structure.

Training Authority

The Agency/ESO shall conduct training for AIIMS aviation roles and other specialist fire and emergency aviation roles and ensure personnel are endorsed under a Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

Agency personnel conducting flight operations shall hold AIIMS ICS accreditations for their respective roles.

Communication Systems

Agencies will hold Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) authority/licencing for use of allocated aeronautical frequencies as designated Fire CTAFs.

Dual aeronautical and Agency radios shall be fitted where appropriate, in all tactical and support aircraft.



Flight Planning and Briefings

Agencies shall ensure that daily pre-flight operational planning and briefings are conducted at each incident and shall include as a minimum:

- Weather forecasts – fire and aviation;
- Incident airspace arrangements including
 - Type separation, circuit heights and direction etc.
 - QNH determination,
- Communications arrangements both aircraft and fireground;
- Sterile cockpit protocols are used during all operational flights;
- Roles and tasking;
- Daily and mission briefing is conducted using SMEACS format;
- Debriefing shall be conducted at end of each days operations.

4 Fire And Emergency Aviation Airspace Procedures

Agencies shall ensure the following are developed and implemented for their respective State operations via one source document or library.

Airspace / Traffic Management

Agencies/ ESO shall ensure procedures for the following are developed and implemented:

- Tactical fire operations shall only be conducted under VMC and the VFR.
- The allocation of Fire Common Traffic Advisory Frequencies (Fire-CTAFs):
 - shall be coordinated from a single source location for all respective State operations, being the State Airdesk; and
 - respective SAD's shall be a single point of contact for frequency conflict resolution within their State operations structure.
- Pilots at an incident will utilise the allocated Fire CTAF for position reporting and maintenance of separation.
- Specifications for aircraft operating altitude (AMSL) or height above ground level (AGL) and vertical separation procedures.
- Arrangements for flight operations in controlled and uncontrolled airspace;
- Mandatory Broadcast Calls by all operational aircraft on designated Fire Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (CTAF) inbound to the fire/incident:
 - at five NM (all aircraft); and
 - ten NM distance for Large Airtanker operations.
 - Calls outside of these arrangements may be varied as directed by the Incident AAS.
- Aircraft operating at an incident shall have QNH mandated by the first operational aircraft on scene.
- Procedures and systems are implemented for the requesting and implementation of a Temporary Danger Area, Temporary Restricted Area and Incident specific NOTAM ensuring the CASA required “controlling authority” remains a single source, being the respective State Airdesk.



- Agencies shall ensure where applicable, Cross Border Agreement arrangements as per the NAFC/CASA document are implemented.
- Go/No-Go decision-making process for tactical flight operations;
- Communications protocols are established between respective State Airdesk/s.

Specialist Operations

Agencies/ ESO shall ensure specific airspace management procedures are developed and implemented for at least the following:

- RPAS and their integration into tactical operations; and
- Large Airtanker operations.

Flight Following, SAR Initiation and Response

Agencies/ESO shall have mandated Search and Rescue (SAR) reporting procedures which will include:

- Flight Following system – verbal and / or electronic for all operational aircraft, the details which shall be recorded.
- SAR Initiation procedures.
- Accident and Incident Response procedures that include Stand Down response.