

Air Traffic Controllers – Licensing

CAP 1251

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Revision history

1st edition**June 2016**

CAP 1251 – Air Traffic Controllers – Licensing has been produced as a guidance document for air traffic controllers, air traffic control training organisations and ANSPs to assist in guiding them to the relevant requirements laid down in Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 pertaining to air traffic controller licensing and certification of training organisations.

CAP 1251 replaces CAP 744 Air Traffic Controllers – Licensing.

Foreword

International obligations and requirements

1. The United Kingdom, as a member of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and signatory to the Chicago Convention, complies as far as possible with the standards published in the Annexes to the Convention on International Civil Aviation. The Civil Aviation Act empowers the United Kingdom to implement the Chicago Convention. The United Kingdom, as a member of the European Union, also complies with Community legislation in respect of the licensing of air traffic controllers, specifically Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 laying down detailed rules for air traffic controllers' licences and certain certificates pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament of the Council.
2. This CAP, Air Traffic Controllers – Licensing, together with CAP 584, Air Traffic Controllers – Training, the CAP 624 series, Air Traffic Controllers – Performance Objectives and CAP 794 Air Traffic Controllers – Initial Performance Objectives, represents the United Kingdom's compliance with European Regulation (EU) No 2015/340.

State regulatory body

3. In the United Kingdom, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) regulates ATS, including personnel licensing, under powers granted to it by the European Commission; the Civil Aviation Act; and in accordance with relevant articles of the Air Navigation Order (ANO) and is the nominated competent authority in accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 Article 5 Competent Authority. The CAA's Safety and Airspace Regulation Group (SARG) is the authority responsible for regulating licensing and is responsible for the issue of air traffic controller licences.

Differences to ICAO and European requirements

4. The European Union legislative requirements for the licensing of air traffic controllers are broadly similar to those required by ICAO Annex 1 Personnel Licensing, although the structure and names of some ratings may vary.

Format of this document

5. The CAP 1251 is required to be read in conjunction with Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 and its associated EASA Acceptable Means of Compliance (AMC) and Guidance Material as the regulation will be referenced throughout this document.
6. The words 'must', 'shall' and 'will' indicate that compliance is compulsory.
7. Any reference to the male gender should be understood to include both male and female persons, except where inappropriate.

Key links

8. Regulation (EU) 2015/340 (the ATCO licensing regulation) is available online from www.easa.europa.eu.
9. EASA Acceptable Means of Compliance and Guidance Material supporting Regulation (EU) 2015/340 is also available from www.easa.europa.eu.
10. EASA additionally publishes a [consolidation of Reg \(EU\) 2015/340](#), Acceptable Means of Compliance and Guidance Material as 'Easy access rules for ATCO'.

Definitions and abbreviations

Definitions

The terms used in this Document have the same meaning as given in that Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2015/340. The following definitions and abbreviations have been included for ease of reference or where terms are unique to the UK.

Abnormal and Emergency situations	the collective term referring to situations, including degraded situations, which are not routinely or commonly experienced and for which automatic skills have not been developed, and serious and dangerous situations requiring immediate actions. (UK CAA)
Abnormal Situations	circumstances, including degraded situations, which are neither routinely nor commonly experienced and for which an air traffic controller has not developed automatic skills. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Acceptable Means of Compliance (AMC)	a non-binding standard adopted by the Agency to illustrate means by which to establish compliance with Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 and its implementing rules. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Air traffic control (ATC) service	a service provided for the purpose of ▪ preventing collisions between aircraft and in the manoeuvring area, between aircraft and obstructions; ▪ expediting and maintaining an orderly flow of air traffic. (Regulation (EU) 805/2015)
Air traffic control (ATC) unit	a generic term meaning variously area control centre, approach control unit or aerodrome control tower. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Assessment	an evaluation of the practical skills leading to the issue of the licence, rating and/or endorsement(s) and their revalidation

	and/or renewal, including behaviour and the practical application of knowledge and understanding being demonstrated by the person being assessed. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Assessor endorsement	the authorisation entered on and forming part of the licence, indicating the competence of the holder to assess the practical skills of student air traffic controller and air traffic controller. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Emergency situation	a serious and dangerous situation requiring immediate actions. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Examination	a formalised test evaluating the person's knowledge and understanding. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Initial training	the training which leads to the issue of a student air traffic controller licence or to the issue of an additional rating and, if applicable, rating endorsement, providing basic and rating training. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Initial training evaluator	an air traffic controller authorised by the CAA to make judgements about performance against the requirements identified in CAP 794 Air Traffic Controllers - Initial Performance Objectives, but excluding assessments of the final terminal objectives. (UK CAA)
Language proficiency endorsement	the statement entered on and forming part of a licence, indicating the language proficiency of the holder. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
On-the-job training instructor endorsement	the authorisation entered on and forming part of a licence, indicating the competence of the holder to give on-the-job training instruction and instruction on synthetic training devices. (Regulation (EU) 2015/230)
Provisional Inability	a temporary state in which the licence holder is prevented from exercising the privileges of the licence when ratings, endorsements and his medical certificate are valid.

	(Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Psychoactive substances	alcohol, opioids, cannabinoids, sedatives and hypnotics, cocaine, other psychostimulants, hallucinogens, and volatile solvents, whereas caffeine and tobacco are excluded. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Rater	an individual who has successfully completed an approved English Language Proficiency Raters course for ATCOs and, who is approved to assess an individual to determine, in accordance with the ICAO language descriptors, the level of English language proficiency for a student air traffic controller or air traffic controller licence. (UK CAA)
Rating endorsement	the authorisation entered on and forming part of a licence, indicating the specific conditions, privileges or limitations pertaining to the relevant rating. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Renewal	the administrative act taken after a rating, endorsement or certificate has expired that renew the privileges of the rating, endorsement or certificate for a further specified period subject to the fulfilment of specified requirements. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Revalidation	the administrative act taken within the period of validity of a rating, endorsement or certificate that allows the holder to continue to exercise the privileges of a rating, endorsement or certificate for a further specified period subject to the fulfilment of specified requirements. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Synthetic training device (STD)	any type of device by which operational conditions are simulated, including simulators and part-task trainers. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Synthetic training device instructor (STDI) endorsement	the authorisation entered on and forming part of a licence, indicating the competence of the holder to give instruction on synthetic training devices (Regulation (EU) 2015/340).

Trainee air traffic controller	an air traffic controller licence holder who is training to obtain additional ratings, rating endorsements and/or unit endorsements (UK CAA)
Training course	the theoretical and/or practical instruction developed within a structured framework and delivered within a defined duration. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Training organisation	an organisation which has been certified by the competent authority to provide one or more types of training. (Regulation (EU) 2015/340)
Unit Competence Scheme	an approved scheme indicating the method by which the unit maintains the competence of its licence holders. (UK CAA)
Unit Endorsement (UE)	the authorisation entered on and forming part of a licence, indicating the ICAO location indicator and the sectors and/or working positions where the holder of the licence is competent to work.
Unit Endorsement Course	a training course for each UE established at the ATC unit as defined in the unit training plan.
Unit Evaluator	an air traffic controller authorised by the CAA to make judgements about performance against the requirements of a Unit Endorsement Course. (UK CAA)
Unit Training Plan	an approved plan detailing the unit endorsement course(s), processes and timing required to allow the unit procedures to be applied at the unit under the supervision of an on-the-job training instructor. (UK CAA)
Validation	a process by which, through the successful completion of a UE course associated to a rating or a rating endorsement, the holder may start exercising the privileges of that rating or rating endorsement.
Verifier	a unit or initial training evaluator, approved by the CAA, to ensure that a process is carried out according to set

	procedures and to the specified requirements. (UK CAA)
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Abbreviations

2015/340	Regulation (EU) 2015/340 (the ATCO Licensing regulation)
AAA	Airspace, Air Traffic Management and Aerodromes
ABES	Abnormal and Emergency Situations
ACP	Area Control Procedural
ACS	Area Control Surveillance
ADI	Aerodrome Control Instrument
ADV	Aerodrome Control Visual
AIR	Air Control
AMC	Acceptable Means of Compliance
ANO	Air Navigation Order 2009 (as amended)
ANSP	Air Navigation Service Provider
APC	Assessment for Previous Competence
APP	Approach Control Procedural
APS	Approach Control Surveillance
ATC	Air Traffic Control
ATM	Air Traffic Management
ATS	Air Traffic Service
ATCS	Air Traffic Control Service
ATSU	Air Traffic Services Unit
GM	Guidance Material
GMC	Ground Movement Control
GMS	Ground Movement Surveillance
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation

IN	Information Notice
ITO	Initial Training Organisation
MATS	Manual of Air Traffic Services
OCN	Oceanic
OJT	On-the-Job Training
OJTI	On-the-Job Training Instructor
PAR	Precision Approach Radar
Pre-OJT	Pre On-the-Job Training
RAD	Radar
SARG	Safety and Airspace Regulation Group
SSC	Shared Services Centre
SRA	Surveillance Radar Approach
SRATCOH	Scheme for the Regulation of Air Traffic Controllers' Hours
STD	Synthetic Training Device
STDI	Synthetic Training Device Instructor
TCL	Terminal Control
TWR	Tower Control
UE	Unit Endorsement
UEC	Unit Endorsement Course
UCS	Unit Competence Scheme
UTP	Unit Training Plan

Chapter 1

Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 Air Traffic Controller Licensing Scheme

European air traffic controller licensing regulation

- 1.1 Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 details the Air Traffic Controllers' Licensing and Certification Rules.
- 1.2 Acceptable Means of Compliance and Guidance Material have also been published by EASA which includes the ATCO Initial Training Content.
- 1.3 The UK CAA, all ANSPs who provide ATS, Training organisations and air traffic controllers including student air traffic controllers are required to comply with this regulation.

Subject matter and scope

- 1.4 Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 lays down detailed rules for:
 - the conditions for issuing, suspending and revoking air traffic controllers' and student air traffic controllers' licences, associated ratings and endorsements, and the privileges and responsibilities of those holding them;
 - the conditions for, limiting, suspending and revoking air traffic controllers' and student air traffic controllers' medical certificates, and the privileges and responsibilities of those holding them;
 - the certification of aero-medical examiners and aero-medical centres for air traffic controllers and student air traffic controllers;
 - the certification of air traffic controller training organisations;
 - the conditions for validating, revalidating, renewing and using such licences, ratings, endorsements and certificates.
- 1.5 Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340 shall apply to:

- student air traffic controllers and air traffic controllers exercising their functions within the scope of Regulation (EC) No 216/2008;
- persons and organisations involved in the licensing, training, testing, checking and medical examination and assessment of applicants in accordance with this Regulation.

General Requirements – structure of this document

- 1.6 This document will cross refer to Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340. Duplication in this document of material contained within the Regulation will be kept to a minimum. CAP 744 will detail the processes to be followed by an individual or organisation is required to follow to comply with Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340.
- 1.7 The abbreviation 2015/340 shall be interpreted as meaning Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340.
- 1.8 The structure of this document follows that of 2015/340 Annex I Requirements for the licensing of air traffic controllers, which is divided into four subparts:
- SUBPART A - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS
 - SUBPART B - LICENCES, RATINGS AND ENDORSEMENTS
 - SUBPART C - REQUIREMENTS FOR INSTRUCTORS AND ASSESSORS
 - SUBPART D - AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER TRAINING
- 1.9 Annex I, part ATCO is applicable to all air traffic controllers and identifies the requirements for the issue, exchange, privileges, revalidation, renewal and training (both initial and unit) of the air traffic controller.

Authority

- 1.10 The Airspace, ATM and Aerodromes (AAA) division of the Safety and Airspace Regulation Group (SARG) is responsible for the certification and oversight of training organisations including the approval of training

courses, Unit Training Plans (UTPs) and Unit Competence Schemes (UCSs).

1.11 AAA is also responsible for the issue, limiting, suspension and revocation of UK issued air traffic controller licences.

1.12 The CAA Shared Services Centre (SSC) is the nominated licensing authority for the issue of a UK student air traffic controller or air traffic controller licence.

Responsibility

1.13 The individual air traffic controller is responsible for ensuring that their licence is:

- issued in accordance with 2015/340;
- contains their correct details;
- has been signed.

1.14 Prior to exercising the privileges of their licence they must ensure that they have:

- a current language endorsement;
- a current medical certificate;
- hold the relevant rating(s);
- hold the relevant UE(s).

1.15 An air traffic controller shall ensure that their licence is available at the unit at all times when they are exercising the privileges of their licence.

Recognition of European licences

1.16 In accordance with Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/340, the UK CAA shall recognise student air traffic controller and air traffic controller licences issued by other Member States of the European Union, where such licences have been issued in accordance with the provisions of the regulation.

- 1.17 The responsibility for verifying the licence details of a non-UK EU air traffic controller licence holder rests with the ANSP. The CAA holds the contact details for other EU Member State Competent Authorities that can be made available upon request via email to ats.licensing@caa.co.uk.

Exchange of European licences

- 1.18 Once the holder of a licence issued by an EU Member state, other than the UK, has completed a UEC at the ATSU where they intend to exercise the privileges of their licence, they will exchange their licence for a licence issued by the UK CAA. The CAA will then return their original licence to the issuing Competent Authority. Therefore, an air traffic controller shall hold only a UK licence on completion of the exchange process. The simultaneous holding of air traffic controller licences issued from more than one EU member State, including student air traffic controller licences, is prohibited.

Chapter 2

PART ATCO Subpart A GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1 Subpart A of Part ATCO identifies some general requirements and confirms that the licence is the property of the person to whom it is issued and that the licence must be signed.
- 2.2 ATCO.A.010 identifies the requirements for the exchange of licences and the UK process is detailed below. Whereas Commission Regulation (EU) 805/2011 stated that a licence **may** be exchanged, under 2015/340 it is a requirement that the licence **shall** be exchanged and the non-UK licence will be surrendered and returned to the original issuing authority.
- 2.3 ATCO.A.015 introduces a new process known as provisional inability. This process allows for both the ANSP or a licence holder to declare provisional inability in a variety of circumstances, such as temporary withdrawal of a UE or medical certificate, or if competence is in doubt.
- 2.4 The ANSP is required to have a procedure to manage the declaration of a provisional inability which includes a process for advising the CAA in certain circumstances when provisional inability has been declared. This procedure shall be published in the unit competence scheme.
- 2.5 ATCO.A.020 refers to the revocation and suspension of licences, ratings and endorsements. The UK processes for this are captured below.

Recognition of air traffic controller licences issued by other EU member states

- 2.6 In accordance with European Regulation (EU) 2015/340 Part ATCO.A.010 the UK CAA recognises student traffic controller licences and air traffic controller licences issued by other Member States of the European Union, where such licences have been issued in accordance with the provisions of the 2015/340 Regulation.