

Issued: 18 June 2014

London Array and Thanet Transponder Mandatory Zones

This Information Notice contains information that is for guidance and/or awareness.

Recipients are asked to ensure that this Information Notice is copied to all members of their staff who may have an interest in the information (including any 'in-house' or contracted maintenance organisations and relevant outside contractors).

Applicability:	
Aerodromes:	Not primarily affected
Air Traffic:	Not primarily affected
Airspace:	NATMAC
Airworthiness:	Not primarily affected
Flight Operations:	Not primarily affected
Licensed/Unlicensed Personnel:	Not primarily affected

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The London Array and Thanet Transponder Mandatory Zones (TMZs), located off the East and North Kent coasts, were established in November 2011. Encompassing large wind turbine developments, the TMZs were introduced to mitigate the impact of the wind turbine-generated primary surveillance radar clutter on Manston Air Traffic Control's (ATC's) provision of radar services, thus safeguarding the safe and efficient use of available airspace. At short notice, Manston (Kent International) Airport closed for business resulting in the withdrawal of associated air traffic services.
- 1.2 This Information Notice sets out the short to medium term future of the TMZs post closure of the airport.

2 Background

- 2.1 A TMZ is defined as a volume of airspace within which aircraft are required to have and operate secondary surveillance radar equipment. TMZs are notified within the UK Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) for the purpose of Air Navigation Order 2009 Schedule 5 in relation to Articles 28(7) and 39(2).
- 2.2 In line with the Airspace Charter ([CAP 724](#)), the introduction of the London Array and Thanet TMZs was subject to the full application of the Airspace Change Process (ACP), as described within the associated [CAP 725](#) CAA *Guidance on the Application of the Airspace Change Process*. As a consequence of the limited utilisation of associated airspace by non-Manston-related operators and the related access arrangements (see Note), ACP

consultation established that, from an operational perspective, there were no aviation organisational objections to the TMZs' establishment. Subsequently the ACP Post Implementation Review concluded that the TMZs had had no practical adverse operational impact upon aviation stakeholders.

Note: The access arrangements were that, providing aircraft had and operated secondary surveillance radar equipment, access to the TMZs was not subject to ATC approval. Further, the pilot of an aircraft that wished to operate in either or both TMZs without serviceable transponder equipment could be granted access to the TMZ subject to specific ATC approval.

- 2.3 Whilst the TMZs' introduction was purely to address a Manston ATC-related issue, it is evident that the presence of the TMZs (particularly the London Array TMZ) has had benefits to the Southend ATC operation. Located close to both airway routings into Southend and Class G airspace that aircraft utilise having departed controlled airspace, the London Array ATZ has meant that Southend ATC has been able to utilise associated airspace more efficiently than would otherwise have been the case had the TMZ not been established or was withdrawn.
- 2.4 Additionally it is worth highlighting that, as with any airspace structure, the collective or individual cancellation of the TMZs would mean that any future proposal to reintroduce them would necessitate the full application of the Airspace Change Process (CAP 725 refers); a potentially protracted piece of work for all associated stakeholders.

3 Way Forward

- 3.1 Given the benefits to the Southend ATC operation accrued by the presence of the London Array TMZ, the absence of representative organisation objection to the original proposal and the lack of adverse impact on any operator, the CAA has taken the decision to retain the London Array TMZ, with Southend ATC becoming the operating authority. Furthermore, in the same way that the Manston Aerodrome Traffic Zone was suspended rather than cancelled post closure of the Airport, the CAA intends to initially suspend, rather than cancel, the Thanet TMZ.
- 3.2 The formal notification of the TMZs had previously been achieved through related text within the Manston aerodrome entry in the UK AIP and associated Visual Flight Rules (VFR) Chart annotation. As the Manston aerodrome entry has been necessarily deleted there was a requirement to move the notification text; the TMZs are now notified within the London Southend AIP entry. The suspension of the Thanet TMZ will be notified by NOTAM. The future of the Thanet TMZ will be reviewed towards the end of 2014.

4 Queries

- 4.1 Any queries or requests for further guidance required as a result of this communication should be addressed to:

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5 Cancellation

- 5.1 This Information Notice will remain in force until 1 January 2015.