

Issued: 03 October 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:	All ANSPs
Airspace:	All NATMAC Representatives
Airworthiness:	Not primarily affected
Flight Operations:	All AOC and PAOC Holders and General Aviation Pilots
Licensed/Unlicensed Personnel:	Not primarily affected

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The London Array and Thanet Transponder Mandatory Zones (TMZs), located off the North and East 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 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. This brought the future requirement for the TMZs into question. This IN updates IN 2014/104, which is now revoked.

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 relationship 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 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 arrangements¹, ACP consultation established that, from an operational perspective, there were no aviation organisational objections to the TMZs' establishment. The subsequent ACP Post Implementation Review concluded that the TMZs had had no practical adverse operational impact upon aviation stakeholders.

- 2.3 Whilst the TMZs' introduction was purely to address a Manston ATC-related issue, it is evident that the presence of the London Array TMZ provided benefits to the Southend ATC operation. Located close to both airway routings into Southend and Class G airspace, which aircraft utilise having departed controlled airspace, the London Array TMZ 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.

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 objections to the original proposal and the lack of adverse impact on any operator, the CAA decided to retain the London Array TMZ, which is now notified within the UK AIP at ENR 2.2, with Southend ATC acting as the operating authority.
- 3.2 Conversely, the Thanet TMZ, which was suspended upon Manston's closure, has not generated any benefits for any other Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP) or airspace user. The only ANSPs (NATS, MoD and Southend ATC) likely to have provided any air traffic services in airspace over the Thanet wind farm have each confirmed that the associated TMZ brings no benefits to their operations. Accordingly, the Thanet TMZ will be cancelled in total with effect from 1 January 2015. It will remain suspended until that date. The cancellation of this TMZ will be notified by NOTAM; amendment of the UK AIP and relevant Visual Flight Rules charts will follow.

4 Queries

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

Airspace Regulation
Airspace, ATM and Aerodromes
Safety and Airspace Regulation Group
45-59 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6TE

E-mail: airspace@caa.co.uk

5 Cancellation

- 5.1 This Information Notice will remain in force until 30 June 2015.

¹ Providing aircraft have and operated secondary surveillance radar equipment, access to the TMZs was not subject to ATC approval. Furthermore, the pilot of an aircraft who wished to operate in either or both TMZs without serviceable transponder equipment could be granted access to the TMZ subject to specific ATC approval.