

Issued: 11 February 2015

The Future of the Instrument Meteorological Conditions Rating (IMC Rating) as the Instrument Rating (Restricted) (IR(R))

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:	Not primarily affected
Airworthiness:	Not primarily affected
Flight Operations:	All Registered Training Facilities, Flight Training and Approved Training Organisations
Licensed/Unlicensed Personnel:	All Holders of UK-issued National Aeroplane Pilot licences and UK-issued JAR-FCL/Part-FCL Aeroplane Pilot Licences

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this Information Notice is to update pilots and training organisations on the continuation of the IMC Rating or the Instrument Rating (Restricted) (IR(R)) - as it appears on Part-FCL licences. In order for the CAA to continue to issue these ratings (post 8 April 2014) the requirements of Article 4(8) of the latest version of Commission Regulation 1178/2011 must be complied with. This necessitates some minor changes to current administrative practices, including by licence holders and examiners.
- 1.2 This Information Notice supersedes and replaces all previous statements by the CAA concerning the future of the IMC Rating.
- 1.3 Nothing in this Notice affects the conversion of IMC ratings obtained prior to 8 April 2014 or those who held instructor or examiner privileges for the IMC rating before that date. IMC ratings and instructor/examiner qualifications for the ratings can continue to be converted and entered on Part-FCL licences and certificates in accordance with the conversion terms set out in [CAP 804](#).
- 1.4 Pilots holding UK licences including IMC ratings that are not endorsed on to either a JAR-FCL or Part-FCL licence are not affected by this Notice.

- 1.5 With effect from 8 April 2014, pilots with UK national licences (pre-JAR-FCL) have been restricted to the privileges of the Part-FCL LAPL(A), including being limited to flight under Visual Flight Rules (VFR), when flying European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) aeroplanes. UK national licences cease to be valid for flight in any EASA aircraft from 8 April 2018. The privileges of national licences when being used to fly non-EASA (Annex II) aeroplanes are not affected by EU legislation.

2 Background

- 2.1 European Regulation (EU) No. 1178/2011, as amended – ‘the Aircrew Regulation’ – came into force on 8 April 2012. This regulation included various provisions that the CAA was able to use to convert UK IMC ratings into a restricted form of European Instrument Rating (IR), with exactly the same privileges. This restricted IR appears on a UK issued Part-FCL aeroplane licence as the IR(R).
- 2.2 During 2013 the UK obtained agreement in Europe that the Aircrew Regulation could be amended to allow authorities to continue to issue national authorisations to fly under Instrument Flight Rules (IFR), potentially until 8 April 2019 - but subject to certain specified conditions. The amendment to the regulation was approved and came into force on 2 April 2014. The relevant text is a new article 4(8), which reads as follows:

Until 8 April 2019, a Member State may issue an authorisation to a pilot to exercise specified limited privileges to fly aeroplanes under instrument flight rules before the pilot complies with all of the requirements necessary for the issue of an instrument rating in accordance with this Regulation, subject to the following conditions:

- a) the Member State shall only issue these authorisations when justified by a specific local need which cannot be met by the ratings established under this Regulation;*
- b) the scope of the privileges granted by the authorisation shall be based on a safety risk assessment carried out by the Member State, taking into account the extent of training necessary for the intended level of pilot competence to be achieved;*
- c) the privileges of the authorisation shall be limited to the airspace of the Member State's national territory or parts of it;*
- d) the authorisation shall be issued to applicants having completed appropriate training with qualified instructors and demonstrated the required competencies to a qualified examiner, as determined by the Member State;*
- e) the Member State shall inform the Commission, EASA and the other Member States of the specificities of this authorisation, including its justification and safety risk assessment.*
- f) the Member State shall monitor the activities associated with the authorisation to ensure an acceptable level of safety and take appropriate action in case of identifying an increased risk or any safety concerns; and*
- g) the Member State shall carry out a review of the safety aspects of the implementation of the authorisation and submit a report to the Commission by 8 April 2017 at the latest.*

- 2.3 It is important to realise that this amendment to the Regulation does not automatically allow the IMC Rating (in the form of the IR(R)) to continue to be issued to Part-FCL licences until 2019. There are conditions which must be complied with and a report must be submitted to the Commission in 2017, which the Commission must be content with at that time. If they are not content the provision to continue issuing the IR(R) may be withdrawn.