



## Maintaining the aerodromes rules — ICAO new approach classification

RELATED NPA/CRD: N/A — RMT.0591 — 8.3.2016

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Opinion addresses an issue related to the implementation of the new approach classification, as introduced by Amendment 11-B to ICAO Annex 14, and communicated by ICAO in State letter AN 4/1.2.24-13/20. The applicability date of Amendment 11-B was 13 November 2014.

The specific objective of this Opinion is to maintain and, for specific types of runways (non-instrument and non-precision), enhance the high level of safety. It facilitates performance-based navigation approach operations with vertical guidance to be applied at non-precision approach runways, and instrument approach operations to be associated with non-instrument runways without the need in both cases to upgrade runway infrastructure.

This Opinion proposes changes to the definitions of 'instrument runway' and 'non-instrument runway' included in Regulation (EU) No 139/2014.

The proposed changes are expected to ensure compliance with ICAO and increase safety and cost-effectiveness. Additionally, the revised definitions will increase accessibility to those aerodromes where approach procedures are impaired by weather conditions and topological limitations due to difficult terrain surrounding the aerodrome.

Applicability		Process map	
Affected regulations and decisions:	Regulation (EU) No 139/2014	Terms of reference (ToR)	10.4.2014
Affected stakeholders:	Aerodrome operators, national aviation authorities (NAAs)	Concept paper:	N/A
Driver/origin:	Safety; efficiency/proportionality	Rulemaking group:	No
Reference:	ICAO State letter AN 4/1.2.24-13/20	RIA type:	N/A
		Technical consultation during NPA drafting:	N/A
		Publication date of the NPA:	N/A
		Duration of NPA consultation:	N/A
		Review group:	No
		Focused consultation:	Yes
		Publication date of the Decision:	2016/Q2



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## 1. Procedural information

### 1.1. The rule development procedure

The European Aviation Safety Agency (hereinafter referred to as the 'Agency') developed this Opinion in line with Regulation (EC) No 216/2008<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter referred to as the 'Basic Regulation').

This rulemaking activity is included in the Agency's [4-year Rulemaking Programme](#) under RMT.0591 'Maintaining aerodromes rules'. The scope and timescale of the task were defined in the related [Terms of Reference](#).

Initially, the ICAO new approach classification (Amendment 11-B to ICAO Annex 14) was planned to be implemented together with Amendment 11-A to ICAO Annex 14 by 2015/Q4. Nevertheless, following urgent requests made by Member States and industry stakeholders, and considering also the importance of these changes, it was decided to process Amendment 11-B without delay and adopt Amendment 11-A at a later stage.

The draft text of this Opinion has been developed by the Agency. Due to the nature of the issue, the Agency launched a focused consultation with its Advisory Bodies through the Communication and Information Resource Centre for Administrations, Businesses and Citizens (CIRCABC). The deadline for submission of comments was 3 December 2015. No public consultation was deemed necessary due to the technical and non-controversial nature of the proposal, whose content is already well known to stakeholders through the ICAO State letter.

The Opinion contains the proposed changes to Regulation (EU) No 139/2014<sup>2</sup>.

### 1.2. The structure of this Opinion and related documents

Chapter 1 of this Opinion contains the procedural information related to this task. Chapter 2 presents the background information pertaining to this Opinion. Chapter 3 reflects the relevant reference material. The resulting amendments are included in the Annex to this Opinion.

### 1.3. The next steps in the procedure

This Opinion contains proposed changes to Regulation (EU) No 139/2014. It is addressed to the European Commission, which shall use it as a technical basis in order to prepare a legislative proposal.

The Decision containing the revised definitions in the certification specifications (CS) will be published by the Agency when the related implementing rule (IR) is adopted by the European Commission.

<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 February 2008 on common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing a European Aviation Safety Agency, and repealing Council Directive 91/670/EEC, Regulation (EC) No 1592/2002 and Directive 2004/36/EC (OJ L 79, 19.3.2008, p. 1).

<sup>2</sup> Commission Regulation (EU) No 139/2014 of 12 February 2014 laying down requirements and administrative procedures related to aerodromes pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 44, 14.2.2014, p. 1).



## 2. Explanatory Note

### 2.1. Issues to be addressed

The former categorisation of runways in 'non-instrument', 'non-precision' and 'precision' approach runways was based on the type of the approach procedure. For this reason:

- non-instrument runways were associated with visual approach procedures;
- non-precision runways were associated with approach procedures with directional guidance adequate for a straight-in approach; and
- precision approach runways were associated with specific ground navigational aids (an instrument landing system (ILS) and/or a microwave landing system (MLS)) that provided both vertical and lateral guidance.

During the recent years, the technological advancements in the field of on-board aircraft systems as well as the use of satellite navigation rendered the execution of approach procedures with vertical guidance possible without solely depending on ground navigation aids. The former definitions, due to the fact that they are associated with specific navigational aids, do not allow new concepts to be implemented.

For this reason, ICAO prepared and proposed revised definitions for the different types of runways. The new definitions disassociate the type of the runway from the navigational aids used and consider only the method used to fly the approach procedure as well as the decision altitude/decision height (DA/DH) associated with that procedure. The proposed change allows approach procedures with vertical guidance to be executed at non-precision runways above a specific DA/DH without the need to upgrade the runway infrastructure or to impose additional restrictions on the obstacle limitation surfaces. Similarly, non-instrument runways can utilise instrument approach procedures up to a point where the approach procedure will continue under visual meteorological conditions (VMC).

The new definitions are expected to provide significant benefits mainly to aerodromes having non-instrument or non-precision approach runways both in terms of safety and accessibility, especially where operations are impaired by weather conditions or difficult surroundings. For non-instrument runways, the utilisation of instrument approach procedures up to a point where an approach procedure continues under VMC ensures that a significant portion of the approach is flown safer under instrument flight rules (IFR), even at deteriorating weather conditions. For non-precision approach runways, approach procedures utilising vertical guidance are considered safer than approach procedures utilising lateral guidance only, allowing also lower DA/DH.

The ICAO new approach classification is applicable as of November 2014. There is an urgent need to include these revised definitions in Regulation (EU) No 139/2014 to allow the aerodrome operators to take full benefit of the new concept and to facilitate Member States in the certification of the aerodromes, which is currently underway.



## 2.2. Objectives

The overall objectives of the EASA system are defined in Article 2 of the Basic Regulation. This proposal will contribute to the achievement of the overall objectives by addressing the issues outlined in Chapter 2.

The specific objective of this proposal is therefore to increase the level of safety especially for approach operations on non-instrument and non-precision approach runways.

## 2.3. Outcome of the consultation

The draft Opinion received in total 9 comments, where 8 comments out of the 9 received were supportive to the proposed definitions. Some of the commentators requested clarifications on how to relate VMC with DA/DH and ground visibility minima; the explanation of Type A and Type B approach operations; the simultaneous introduction of the definitions in SERA, Aerodromes and Air Operations regulations; as well as some safety concerns during the transition from instrument flight rules to visual flight rules. On the above-mentioned requests for clarification, the Agency considers the following:

- The new definitions aim to support Member States and aerodrome operators to establish runway infrastructure requirements and obstacle limitation surfaces. The intention of the Agency is neither to regulate air operations nor procedures' design through Regulation (EU) No 139/2014. Air Operations are regulated by Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 and ICAO Annex 6, while procedures' design criteria are based on ICAO PANS-OPS.
- The Agency transposed the definitions of 'non-instrument' and 'instrument runway' included in ICAO Annex 14. Type A and Type B approach operations, although included in the definitions, are not defined in ICAO Annex 14 because they are related to flight operations and defined in ICAO Annex 6.
- European aerodromes are currently converting their certificates according to Regulation (EU) No 139/2014, and there are aerodromes utilising approach procedures with vertical guidance; hence, the new definitions will facilitate the conversion/certification process. Furthermore, Opinion 04/2014<sup>3</sup> proposes the amended definitions in ICAO Annex 2 to be included in the Standardised European Rules of the Air (SERA).
- Concerning the transition from instrument flight rules to visual flight rules for non-instrument runways, the amendment allows aircraft to fly an instrument approach procedure as long as the minima established are at or above VMC. The intention is to apply general principles similar to the 'point in space' approach procedures where helicopters fly instrument procedures to a point from which they may proceed in VMC to a heliport (ref.: ICAO State letter 2012-40).
- The procedure design criteria are not part of Regulation (EU) No 139/2014; however, the Regulation assigns responsibilities to Member States and aerodrome operators to safeguard the aerodrome surroundings from the development of obstacles, which is very important for the procedures' design.

## 2.4. Overview of the proposed amendments

The Opinion contains the following proposed amendments to:

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<sup>3</sup> <http://easa.europa.eu/document-library/opinions/opinion-042014>



- (a) Definition (22) 'instrument runway' in Annex I to Regulation (EU) No 139/2014;
- (b) Definition (34) 'non-instrument runway' in Annex I to Regulation (EU) No 139/2014.

Done at Cologne, on 8 March 2016.

Patrick KY  
Executive Director



### 3. References

#### 3.1. Affected regulations

- Commission Regulation (EU) No 139/2014 of 12 February 2014 laying down requirements and administrative procedures related to aerodromes pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 44, 14.2.2014, p. 1)

#### 3.2. Related decisions

- ED Decision 2015/001/R of 29 January 2015 amending Certification Specifications and Guidance Material for Aerodromes Design (CS-ADR-DSN) — ‘CS-ADR-DSN — Issue 2’

#### 3.3. Reference documents

- ICAO State letter AN 4/1.2.24-13/20

