



Explanatory Note to Decision 2022/020/R

Amendments to the SERA radiotelephony phraseologies for pilot–air traffic controller voice communications

‘AMC and GM to SERA — Issue 1, Amendment 5’

RELATED NPA: 2022-106 — RMT.0476

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Decision issues amendments to the SERA radiotelephony (RT) phraseologies in order to ensure the necessary harmonisation in the voice communications between pilots and air traffic controllers, and to prevent any misunderstanding that would potentially result in safety issues, especially in a critical phase of the flight such as the approach.

The completion of this rulemaking task ensures the full and timely alignment of the SERA RT phraseologies with those applicable at global level, as recently amended by ICAO through Amendment 11 to Doc 4444 ‘PANS-ATM’.

Domain:	Standardised European rules of the air (SERA)		
Related rules:	Regulation (EU) No 923/2012 and ED Decision 2013/013/R		
Affected stakeholders:	Member States, national competent authorities (NCAs) / national supervisory authorities (NSAs), air traffic management / air navigation service (ATM/ANS) providers, airspace users (e.g. aircraft operators), aerodrome operators, EASA		
Driver:	Efficiency/proportionality	Rulemaking group:	No
Impact assessment:	Yes		

EASA rulemaking procedure milestones

Start Terms of Reference	Advisory Body Consultation NPA 2022-106 (draft Decision)	Proposal to the Commission Opinion	Adoption by the Commission Implementing / Delegating act	Decision Certification Specifications, Acceptable Means of Compliance, Guidance Material
18.8.2017	7.10.2022	n/a	n/a	3.11.2022



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1. About this Decision

The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) developed Decision 2022/020/R in line with Regulation (EU) 2018/1139¹ (the ‘Basic Regulation’) and the Rulemaking Procedure², and specifically in accordance with Articles 6(2) and (3) of MB Decision No 01-2022. Rulemaking Task (RMT).0476 is included in Volume II of the European Plan for Aviation Safety (EPAS) for 2022–2026. This specific regulatory initiative, which was not planned in the last EPAS edition (2022–2026), falls within the scope of this regular-update RMT and aims to address minor, non-controversial, non-complex, and mature issues in the AMC related to Regulation (EU) No 923/2012 (‘the SERA Regulation’³). It concerns amendments to the RT phraseologies used in voice communications between pilots and air traffic controllers included in the SERA regulatory framework, and specifically in Appendix 1 to AMC1 SERA.14001, in order to align them with the corresponding, evolving ICAO RT phraseologies. In September 2022, and in accordance with Article 3.2 of the Rulemaking Procedure, EASA consulted its Advisory Bodies on its intention to add this regulatory initiative to its rulemaking programme for 2022 and received positive feedback on this.

EASA developed the *draft* text of this Decision and consulted it, in accordance with Articles 6(2) and (3) of MB Decision No 01-2022, between 7 and 21 October 2022 with the relevant Advisory Bodies (ATM/ANS and AirOps TeB and TEC) through Notice of Proposed Amendment (NPA) 2022-106, to which EASA received 6 comments from 5 NAAs.

EASA developed the *final* text of this Decision with the amendments to the acceptable means of compliance (AMC) taking into account the feedback received, and published it on the Official Publication of EASA.

The major milestones of this RMT are presented on the cover page.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2018 on common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing a European Union Aviation Safety Agency, and amending Regulations (EC) No 2111/2005, (EC) No 1008/2008, (EU) No 996/2010, (EU) No 376/2014 and Directives 2014/30/EU and 2014/53/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Regulations (EC) No 552/2004 and (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (EEC) No 3922/91 (OJ L 212, 22.8.2018, p. 1) (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1535612134845&uri=CELEX:32018R1139>).

² EASA is bound to follow a structured rulemaking process as required by Article 115(1) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1139. Such a process has been adopted by the EASA Management Board (MB) and is referred to as the ‘Rulemaking Procedure’. See MB Decision No 01-2022 of 2 May 2022 on the procedure to be applied by EASA for the issuing of opinions, certification specifications and other detailed specifications, acceptable means of compliance and guidance material (‘Rulemaking Procedure’), and repealing Management Board Decision No 18-2015 (<https://www.easa.europa.eu/the-agency/management-board/decisions/easa-mb-decision-01-2022-rulemaking-procedure-repealing-mb>).

³ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 923/2012 of 26 September 2012 laying down the common rules of the air and operational provisions regarding services and procedures in air navigation and amending Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1035/2011 and Regulations (EC) No 1265/2007, (EC) No 1794/2006, (EC) No 730/2006, (EC) No 1033/2006 and (EU) No 255/2010 (OJ L 281, 13.10.2012, p. 1), as amended (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32012R0923&qid=1613649548600>).



2. In summary — why and what

2.1. Why we need to amend the AMC — issue/rationale

With Amendment 11 to Doc 4444 ‘PANS-ATM’⁴, ICAO amended the RT phraseologies for air traffic control services to ensure consistency with the provisions related to approach procedure charting and identification requirements contained in Doc 8168 ‘PANS-OPS’. Such technical amendments concern operational scenarios related to the issue of approach instructions and the use of ATS surveillance systems in approach control service, specifically for vectoring and manoeuvring during independent and dependent parallel approaches.

Within the EASA framework, RT phraseologies are established in the standardised European rules of the air (SERA), specifically in Appendix 1 to AMC1 SERA.14001, and due to global interoperability are largely aligned with those of ICAO PANS-ATM. The amendments to the ICAO RT phraseologies introduced with Amendment 11 to Doc 4444 ‘PANS-ATM’ necessitate the timely alignment of the SERA RT phraseologies in order to ensure the necessary harmonisation in the voice communications between pilots and air traffic controllers, and to prevent any misunderstanding that would potentially result in safety issues, especially in a critical phase of the flight such as the approach. The completion of this rulemaking task ensures the full alignment of the SERA RT phraseologies with those applicable at global level, as amended by ICAO.

2.2. What we want to achieve — objectives

The overall objectives of the EASA system are defined in Article 1 of the Basic Regulation. This Decision will contribute to achieving the overall objectives by addressing the issue described in Section 2.1.

The specific objectives of this Decision are to:

- maintain a high level of safety by fostering the harmonisation of the related set of RT phraseologies for voice communications between pilots and ATC units;
- ensure completeness and coherence of the EU regulatory framework with regard to SERA and its timely alignment with the related ICAO framework.

The amendments will apply as from 1 December 2022, concurrently with the related rules issued with Decision 2021/014/R⁵.

2.3. How we want to achieve it — overview of the amendments

The amendments to Appendix 1 to AMC1 SERA.14001 issued with this Decision concern the following:

- the addition of a note to point e) of Section 1.3.2 ‘Approach instructions’ which clarifies the use of certain information related to the identification of the instrument approach procedure provided in aeronautical charts in the context of the issue of ATC clearances;
- the removal of RT phraseologies in points w) and x) of Section 1.3.2 related to request and clearance for MLS/RNAV approach;

⁴ Issued with ICAO State letter AN 13/2.1-22/30.

⁵ <https://www.easa.europa.eu/en/document-library/agency-decisions/ed-decision-2021014r>



- amendments to point a) of Section 2.2.1 ‘Vectoring for approach’ to replace the reference to ‘pilot interpreted aid’ by ‘type of approach’, for consistency with the amendments made to Section 2.2.2;
- amendments to Section 2.2.2, specifically to the title (‘Vectoring for ILS and other approaches’) and to points b), e), h), i), j) and m) to better specify the operational scenario of applicability. This includes the removal of the term ‘pilot interpreted aids’ and of the terms ‘GBAS’ and ‘SBAS’ approaches, and the introduction of explicit references to GLS and RNP, and where applicable, MLS approaches in the related RT phraseologies.
- amendments to point b) of Section 2.2.3 ‘Manoeuvres during independent and dependent parallel approaches’ for consistency with the amendments made to Section 2.2.2.

2.4. What are the stakeholders’ views — outcome of the AB consultation

The outcome of the EASA Advisory Body consultation did not evidence any specific issue. Given the very limited amount and controversy of the comments received, a comment-response document has not been issued; instead, the comments received and EASA’s views are summarised below.

Three commentators simply expressed their appreciation for the EASA’s initiative to swiftly align the SERA framework with the corresponding, evolving ICAO provisions.

One commentator requested editorial changes to the proposed amendments to the RT phraseologies, some of which were duly accepted.

One commentator, while expressing general support for the initiative, requested to postpone the applicability date of the amendments issued with this Decision until the applicability date of the amendments to the SERA framework being developed under RMT.0476 Subtasks 1, 3 and 4 (recently consulted with NPA 2022-04 ‘Regular update of the SERA regulatory framework (IRs and AMC & GM)⁶). EASA did not accept such a proposal as this would not allow to define a firm applicability date because of the uncertainty as regards the timeline of the completion of that rulemaking process (in any case, not expected to be completed before the end of 2023). Moreover, it would prevent any timely alignment with the ICAO applicability dates, which would potentially result in a lack of harmonised RT phraseologies at global level.

2.5. What are the benefits and drawbacks of the amendments

ICAO State letter AN 13/2.1 - 22/30 includes an impact assessment of the subject amendments to the RT phraseologies introduced in PANS-ATM, which this Decision transposes also into the SERA framework, as follows:

- Safety impact: positive

The proposed new RT phraseologies will provide air traffic controllers and flight crews with more harmonised phraseologies for referencing specific approach procedures.

- Financial impact: negligible

The implementation of this proposal will require training and educational activities for air traffic controllers and flight crews (industry), and minor amendments to the applicable regulations.

⁶ <https://www.easa.europa.eu/en/document-library/notices-of-proposed-amendment/npa-2022-04>

- Security impact: no security impact with the implementation of Amendment 11.
- Environmental impact: no environmental impact with the implementation of Amendment 11.
- Efficiency impact: positive

Air traffic controllers and flight crews will use specific identification elements when referencing approach procedures. This minimises ambiguity, misunderstandings, and RT overloading, resulting in more efficient operations.

EASA fully concurs with this impact assessment.

No drawbacks are envisaged from the introduction of the subject amendments.



3. How we monitor and evaluate the amended AMC

EASA will continuously monitor and evaluate the correct application of the amended RT phraseologies of Appendix 1 to AMC1 SERA.14001 by conducting the following:

- standardisation inspections/activities;
- analyses of the AltMoCs approved by Member States; and
- analyses of the available safety occurrence reports which indicate the use of the RT phraseologies as a primary cause or contributing factor to accidents or incidents.

Accordingly, EASA will determine the need for further action, including safety promotion activities and/or rulemaking.



4. References

4.1. Related EU regulations

- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 923/2012 of 26 September 2012 laying down the common rules of the air and operational provisions regarding services and procedures in air navigation and amending Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1035/2011 and Regulations (EC) No 1265/2007, (EC) No 1794/2006, (EC) No 730/2006, (EC) No 1033/2006 and (EU) No 255/2010 (OJ L 281, 13.10.2012, p. 1)

4.2. Related EASA decisions

- DECISION 2013/013/R OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE EUROPEAN AVIATION SAFETY AGENCY of 17 July 2013 adopting the Acceptable Means of Compliance and Guidance Material to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 923/2012 of 26 September 2012 laying down the common rules of the air and operational provisions regarding services and procedures in air navigation and amending Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1035/2011 and Regulations (EC) No 1265/2007, (EC) No 1794/2006, (EC) No 730/2006, (EC) No 1033/2006 and (EU) No 255/2010

4.3. Other reference documents

n/a

