Airspace Infringements in the UK

An airspace infringement is the unauthorised entry of an aircraft into notified airspace without a clearance or permission.

It is also when the entry does not comply with the conditions of the clearance, permission or relevant airspace rules. An airspace infringement has the potential to cause a serious safety incident that could lead to a mid-air collision.

In 2023 there were 1,384 reported airspace infringement incidents in UK airspace. Around 10% involved pilots visiting the UK.

> **i Notified airspace** includes:
> > controlled airspace
> > prohibited and restricted airspace
> > active danger areas
> > aerodrome traffic zones (ATZ)
> > radio mandatory zones (RMZ)
> > transponder mandatory zones (TMZ)

Tips to avoid airspace infringements
AND REDUCE THE RISK OF A MID-AIR COLLISION

BEFORE THE FLIGHT

> **Prepare and plan** your flight – include intended and alternative routes and identify notified airspace.

> Remember a **clearance** is required to enter controlled airspace. This is separate to having your **Flight Plan** filed and activated to enter the UK Flight Information Regions.

> Prepare an **alternative plan** in case you are not granted access to the airspace you wish to fly in.

> Get the information you need from **regulated sources**: NATS Aeronautical Information Services for Aeronautical Information and the UK Met Office site for pilot weather information.

> Use **modern technologies** and navigation software (VFR moving maps) to help your planning and navigation.

> Note the **radio frequencies** for Air Traffic Control (ATC) and Flight Information Service (FIS) and any Frequency Monitoring Codes that you will need during your flight.

> Remember that service provision might be different in UK - check UK Flight Information Services (CAP774) to understand the differences.

DURING THE FLIGHT

> Always know where you are by maintaining **situational awareness**. Your flight plan is your guide to your route, but be ready to change for weather, other aircraft or delayed/denied clearances.

> Use a **VFR moving map** to increase your situational awareness.

> **Stay in contact** with ATC whenever possible and actively monitor their radio frequencies to be aware of any problems whilst in the air.

> Establish **two-way communication with ATC** for the airspace you wish to enter - on the right frequency and in good time.

> If you do not require an ATC service, use the appropriate **Frequency Monitoring Code** (squawk)

> Remember that **London and Scottish Information are non-radar units** and will not be able to see where you are nor issue a clearance to enter controlled airspace.

> Stay visible to others by having your **transponder switched on** to your assigned squawk - or the default conspicuity codes of 7000 (VFR) or 2000 (IFR). Standard SSR operating procedures are set out in the UK AIP at ENR 1.6 on the NATS Aeronautical Information Publication website.

> **Obtain a clearance** before entering controlled airspace.

> **Communicate**, it will help deal with any exceptional situation. If you have infringed notified airspace, keep your transponder switched on and contact the ATC or FIS unit to inform them.

PLAN YOUR FLIGHT, **SQUAWK** THE RELEVANT CODE, **COMMUNICATE** WITH THE RIGHT AGENCY

AFTER THE FLIGHT

> Carry out post-flight analysis - replay and review your flight to learn from your experience, this should include the use of VFR moving maps.

> Think about any confusions or mis-understanding that you may have experienced during flight.

> Share your good and bad experiences with others.

> Report any incident that happened during your flight.

Reporting

If you have been involved in an infringement in UK airspace please report it to the UK CAA:

> through the European Portal

> online at airspacesafety.com: airspacesafety.com/infringement/infringement-form/

More information

IF YOU ARE PLANNING TO FLY IN UK AIRSPACE WE RECOMMEND

> AIRSPACE & SAFETY INITIATIVE WEBSITE

Includes a wealth of content and guidance to help pilots understand the risks of airspace infringements and how to avoid them

>> airpacesafety.com

> NATS AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION SERVICE for Aeronautical Information
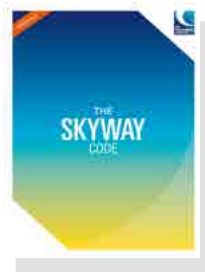
>> nats.aero/do-it-online/ais/

> UK MET OFFICE for weather information and free Aviation Briefing Service

>> www.metoffice.gov.uk/services/transport/aviation/regulated/aviation-briefing-service-guidance

> THE SKYWAY CODE

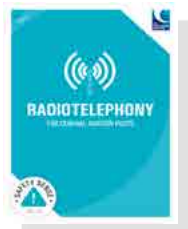Easy, quick access to key information

>> www.caa.co.uk/skywaycode

> SAFETY SENSE

leaflets include   >> FLIGHT UNDER VFR   >> RADIOTELEPHONY   >> MOVING MAPS

The Airspace and Safety Initiative is a joint UK Civil Aviation Authority, NATS and Ministry of Defence resource to tackle major safety issues in UK airspace.

Its safety promotion and content is based on analysis and occurrences, often created by local partners working to share their experiences and knowledge.

>> airspacesafety.com

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