



## Request for Support Message

- **Safety Subject:** Aircraft Operations Below RVR Minima
- **Origin:** EUROPEAN Air Navigation Service Provider
- **Date:** 15/03/2010
- **Distribution:** Air Navigation Service Providers, Pilots, Aviation Safety Professionals

### YOUR SUPPORT IS REQUIRED

Aviation safety professionals, particularly Air Navigation Service Providers, are kindly invited to share experience and good practices regarding the issue described below.

### SYNOPSIS

It has been reported that in one European state, aircraft sometimes approach and land despite the reported RVR at the destination aerodrome being lower than the applicable minima for approaches/landing given in EU OPS 1, Appendix 1(Old) to OPS 1.430.

### EU OPS 1 PROVISIONS

#### **OPS 1.340 - *Meteorological Conditions***

(b) **On an IFR flight, a commander shall only continue towards the planned destination aerodrome when the latest information available indicates that, at the expected time of arrival, the weather conditions at the destination, or at least one destination alternate aerodrome, are at or above the planning applicable aerodrome operating minima.**

#### **OPS 1.405 - *Commencement and Continuation of Approach***

(a) **The commander or the pilot to whom conduct of the flight has been delegated may commence an instrument approach regardless of the reported RVR/Visibility but the approach shall not be continued beyond the outer marker, or equivalent position, if the reported RVR/visibility is less than the applicable minima (see OPS 1.192.g).**

(c) If, after passing the outer marker or equivalent position in accordance with (a) above, the reported RVR/visibility falls below the applicable minimum, the approach may be continued to DA/H or MDA/H.

#### **OPS 1.430 - *Aerodrome Operating Minima — General***

(a) 1. **An operator shall establish, for each aerodrome planned to be used, aerodrome operating minima that are not lower than the values given in Appendix 1(Old) or Appendix 1 (New) as applicable.** The method of determination of such minima must be acceptable to the Authority. Such minima shall not be lower than any that may be established for such aerodromes by the State in which the aerodrome is located, except when specifically approved by that State. The use of HUD, HUDLS or EVS may allow operations with lower visibilities than normally associated with the aerodrome operating minima. States which promulgate aerodrome operating minima may also promulgate regulations for reduced visibility minima associated with the use of HUD or EVS.

In addition, other EU OPS 1 provisions also apply to low visibility operations (LVO):

**OPS 1.400 – *Approach and Landing Conditions* and OPS 1.455 - *Low Visibility Operations – Operating Procedures.***

## ANALYSIS

The State in question has not established and published the lowest aerodrome operating minima for its aerodromes - EU OPS 1, OPS 1.430 only says that, "...Such minima shall not be lower than any that **may** be established for such aerodromes by the State.."

Consequently, air traffic controllers are not aware of such limitations i.e. that for each instrument approach at a particular aerodrome there is a minima which no operator should go below. Furthermore, the controllers do not have in place a procedure(s) to act as a 'safety check' when a commander decides to commence an approach to land when the reported RVR is less than the specified Minima.

An example of how another state deals with this issue can be found in UK CAA/NATS AIC 100/2006 which details how the UK applies the concept of 'Absolute Minima RVR' (see Further Reading).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is acknowledged that:

- Controllers are not permitted to prohibit a pilot from making an instrument approach other than for traffic reasons.
- The final decision to commence an approach in specific weather conditions rests solely with the commander of the aircraft.
- Controllers are not responsible for determining, passing or enforcing commanders' mandatory aerodrome operating minima.

## SUPPORT REQUESTED

ANSPs and aircraft operators are invited to respond to the following questions:

1. What should controllers do when a commander indicates that he/she intends to commence an approach when the reported RVR is below the lowest minima for that aerodrome/approach?
2. What are your practices in dealing with this issue? (**Note:** Could also apply to take-off).

The following considerations could inform responses:

- States' requirement to establish and publish RVR Minima for all instrument approach procedures at aerodromes.
- Controller awareness and training regarding RVR Minima.
- Controller responsibility/authorisation regarding the issuing of landing clearance when the reported RVR is below the RVR Minima.
- Controller procedures and associated phraseology.
- Controller reporting of LVO/RVR Minima related occurrences.

## FURTHER READING

- SKYbrary - [www.skybrary.aero](http://www.skybrary.aero)
  - Commission Regulation EC 589/2008 (EU OPS 1) dated 20 August 2008. <http://www.skybrary.aero/bookshelf/books/818.pdf>
  - Low Visibility Procedures
  - RVR
- UK CAA/NATS AIC 100/2006 - Absolute Minima - dated 17 August 2006. <http://www.nats-uk.ead-it.com/public/index.php.html>

For more information contact, EUROCONTROL Safety Alerts Coordinator, Richard Lawrence, at: [richard.lawrence@eurocontrol.int](mailto:richard.lawrence@eurocontrol.int)

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