

RA 3270 - Aerodrome Wildlife Control

Rationale

Wildlife poses a Hazard to ►Aircraft◄ operations, especially close to Aerodromes when ►Aircraft◄ are in the critical stages of flight. ►The presence of wildlife on or around an Aerodrome has the potential to cause Accidents and wildlife strikes result in Aircraft damage.◄ Effective methods of wildlife control are ►therefore◄ required ►to reduce Risk to Life.◄

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3270(1) Heads of Establishments and Aviation Duty Holder-Facing organizations **shall** ensure that units have an Aerodrome Wildlife Control Management Plan (AWCMP).

Acceptable Means of Compliance 3270(1)

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1. An AWCMP **should** assess the potential wildlife strike¹ Hazard and define and implement appropriate wildlife control measures to reduce or mitigate the Hazard. This assessment **should** be conducted through safety management procedures² and be published in the Defence Aerodrome Manual³.
2. The aim of an AWCMP **should** be to reduce wildlife infestation on the Aerodrome and to monitor and assess wildlife strike events.
3. Where an Aerodrome Wildlife Control Unit (AWCU) is established, the AWCU **should**, by means of observation, recording, reporting and survey, assess the local wildlife population⁴, its habits and the effect on ►Aircraft◄ flying at or near that Aerodrome and take appropriate action to reduce the Hazard.
4. At Aerodromes where there is no AWCU, Commanders **should** appoint an Aerodrome Wildlife Control Officer to coordinate wildlife control activities as identified in the AWCMP.

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5. **Statutory Safeguarding.** A safeguarding consultation process exists as part of the planning process to address proposed developments with the potential to affect the safety of ►Aircraft◄ operations at certain military Aerodromes. The consultation process includes a means to address potential wildlife attractant developments within an 8 statute mile radius of the centre point of the runway ends (not including stopways and clearways) of declared Aerodromes. Safeguarding maps (Plan B)⁵ are used to define the 8 statute mile radius circle and are lodged with local planning authorities. The 8 statute mile circle is based on a statistic that the majority of bird strikes occur below a height of 2000 ft, and that an ►Aircraft◄ on a normal approach would descend into this circle at approximately this distance from the runway.
 - a. Not all MOD Aerodromes have, or require, a standard 8 statute mile radius Plan B. Units are responsible for ensuring that the necessary level of safeguarding is in place for their task / facility and can contact Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) Safeguarding⁶ to confirm appropriate safeguarding levels and consultation procedures are in place.
 - b. Ideally, informal consultations on a potential bird attractant development will take place between applicants and DIO Safeguarding before the submission of a planning application. This may make it easier to achieve a mutually

¹ In accordance with UK National Regulation, the subject matter is referred to as 'wildlife' however the term 'birdstrike' is still acceptable.

² As detailed in RA 1200 – Air Safety Management and the Manual of Air Safety.

³ Refer to RA 1026 – Aerodrome Operator and Aerodrome Supervisor (Recreational Flying) Roles and Responsibilities ►◄.

⁴ For birds out to the extent of the bird safeguarding zone – usually 13 km.

⁵ Refer to RA 3590 – Maintenance and Safeguarding.

⁶ DIO-Safeguarding-Statutory@mod.gov.uk.

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acceptable outcome with regard to wildlife control. The following factors will be taken into consideration when assessing the potential increase in risk:

- (1) Location - the proximity of the development relative to the ► **Aircraft** ◀ arrival and departure flightpaths and within the visual circuit.
- (2) The numbers, including seasonal variations, size and types of birds that may be attracted to the development.
- (3) The site attractiveness - whether it is used as a source of food, a roost or nesting site, any proposed landscaping or habitat designs.
- (4) Bird flightlines to / from the site in relation to the Aerodrome - whether flightlines are direct to the Aerodrome, across the ► **Aircraft** ◀ flightpaths outside the Aerodrome boundary, above the Aerodrome or not across the Aerodrome / flightpaths; for example, waterfowl move primarily between wetlands and along watercourses. Creating new bodies of water may cause more waterfowl movements and the increase of bird strike risk.
- (5) Any control action undertaken by the site operator - actions may range from no action to housekeeping actions only, passive and active bird scaring measures to culling.
- (6) Daily / seasonal factors - whether the site is a continuous Risk (each day and throughout the day), a regular daily risk (once / twice a day), a Risk related to specific daily or seasonal activities, or an annual Risk.

c. Where an assessment shows that the bird strike risk may increase or could increase under certain conditions in the future, and the Authority and developer are unable to agree a solution, the MOD could object to the planning application on safety grounds. The MOD may use local knowledge of bird populations and activities or an appropriate precedent of a similar safeguarding case to support the objection and may request that the objection cannot be withdrawn until measures to ensure there will be no increase in Risk are implemented. It may be possible to modify a development (eg exclusion of food wastes from a new landfill) or impose planning conditions that require specific action to exclude birds or reduce their numbers; eg an effective Bird Control Management Plan (BCMP)⁷. Where a safeguarding case is resolved through the imposition of planning conditions, it may be appropriate for the conditions (and a BCMP) to be subject to a legal agreement between the planning authority and the developer or property owner, or its successors.

d. A development BCMP will identify the Aerodrome personnel holding responsibility for the assessment of a proposed development with the potential to attract birds (this would normally be coordinated through DIO Safeguarding).

e. After planning permission has been granted, the Aerodrome will monitor the development for compliance with any planning conditions that are imposed and report any alleged breach or non-compliance to DIO Safeguarding via the appropriate authority.

6. **Aerodrome Grass Management.** Aerodromes naturally offer birds food and / or security for foraging, resting and, sometimes, breeding. While the employment of a AWCU may remove birds from the Aerodrome, the birds will return for as long as the attraction remains. One significant measure that may be employed is to manage the grassed areas to maintain an erect and dense 'long grass' sward. Units may take advice from their contracted AWCU and / or DIO on the optimal grass length for their Aerodrome and its usage, taking into account the type of grass present and the type of birds that most commonly inhabit it. Units may refer to CAP 772⁸◀ for further information on Aerodrome grass management.

a. Some Aerodromes may contain Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or other Nature Conservation designation areas which may influence the grass regime adopted. Further, any proposed major changes to habitat will

⁷ Associated with the development, rather than the aerodrome.

⁸ ► Refer to CAP 772: Wildlife Hazard Management at Aerodromes. ◀

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require a Sustainability Appraisal to ensure compliance with legislation and MOD policy. Advice can be sought from the DIO Environmental Support Team. JSP 850⁹ provides direction on the management of SSSIs.

b. The Environment Agency may impose restrictions on the use of certain fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides due to the potential pollution of water course, catchments or tables. Specialist advice must be sought from the appropriate authority before proceeding.

7. Units may utilize CAP 772⁸ to assist in the development of an AWCMP.

⁹ ▶ Refer to JSP 850 - Part 2 Estate Management - Biodiversity and Natural Capital. ◀

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