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MIRATIMIN E “GUIDANCE MATERIAL FOR ATC CLEARANCES”

Në mbështetje të pikës “ë”, të nenit 14, të Ligjit Nr.53/2022 “Për organizimin dhe funksionimin e Autoritetit të Aviacionit Civil”:

V E N D O S A

1. Miratimin e ACAA-DFS-GM9-ATC “Guidance Material for ATC Clearances”, Lëshimi 01, Rishikimi 00.
2. Ngarkohet Drejtoria e Standardeve të Fluturimit, të sigurojë shpërndarjen dhe përdorimin e këtij manuali tek operatorët.
3. Ky vendim hyn në fuqi menjëherë.

DREJTOR EKZEKUTIV

Maksim Et'hemaj





REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA



ALBANIAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

Guidance Material for ATC Clearances

ACAA-DFS-GM9-ATC

Issue: 01, Revision 00

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Approved by:

Maksim Et'hemaj

Executive Director of Albanian Civil Aviation Authority



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0.1 Record of Amendments

The table below describes the dates and reasons for the different amendments of the current procedure. A vertical black line on the left-hand side of the page identify the changes with the previous version.

Issue No.	Revision No.	Date	Amended by	Reason
01	00	14.11.2024		Initial Issue

In case of major amendment, a new issue will be released to replace the existing procedure. In that case, all the page will identify with a new issue and the revision will set back to zero. For a minor amendment to some provisions, when only a few pages are modified a vertical black line on the left-hand margin of the page identifying the change of the existing version. Users can focus their attention to the changes identified.

0.2 Approval List

Action	Name and position	Date	Signature
Prepared by:	Mr. Nuno Miguel, Specialist in SFO	01.11.24	
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	Mrs. Edlira Kraja, Director of DLS		
Approved by:	Mr. Maksim Et'hemaj, Executive Director	14.11.2024	





0.3 Revision table

Page #	Issue No.	Revision No.	Date	Edited by

0.4 Distribution List

Control #	Responsible Person	Type of Document
Original	SFO/DFS SSS/DAM	Hard Copy
Original (Electronic)	SFO/DFS Staff	Electronic Copy at DRMS

Note: In case of interested party involved in ACAA activities, access rights shall be given on case-by-case basis by the concerned Directorate/ Sector (s).

0.5 Definitions & Acronyms

Term	Definition
ATC Clearance	Authorization for an aircraft to proceed under conditions specified by an air traffic control unit.
SID	A designated instrument flight rule (IFR) departure route linking the aerodrome or a specified runway of the aerodrome with a specified significant point, normally on a designated ATS route, at which the en-route phase of a flight commences.
STAR	A designated IFR arrival route linking a significant point, normally on an ATS route, with a point from which a published instrument approach procedure can be commenced.
Transition Altitude	The altitude at or below which the vertical position of an aircraft is controlled by reference to altitudes.
Transition Level	The lowest flight level available for use above the transition altitude.

0.6 Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation or Acronym	Meaning
ACAA	Albanian Civil Aviation Authority
AGL	Above Ground Level
AOC	Air Operator Certificate
AOCR	Air Operator Certificate Requirements
ATC	Air Traffic Control
ATCO	Air Traffic Control Officer
ATS	Air Traffic Services
CFIT	Controlled Flight Into Terrain
FC	Flight Crew
Ft	Feet
GM	Guidance Material
GPS	Global Positioning System
GPWS	Ground Proximity Warning System
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation

IFR	Instrument Flight Rules
IMC	Instrument Meteorological Conditions
M	Meter
MFD	Multi-Functional Display
NM	Nautical Mile
PANS	Procedures for Air Navigation Services
VFR	Visual Flight Rules
SARP	Standards and Recommended Practices
SID	Standard Instrument Departure
STAR	Standard Terminal Arrival Route
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Guidance Material (GM) for Air Traffic Control (ATC) Clearances is issued by the Executive Director of the Albanian Civil Aviation Authority (ACAA) from time to time to provide practical guidance or certainty in respect of the statutory requirements for aviation safety. GM contains information about standards, practices and procedures acceptable to ACAA.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this publication is to enhance both Operator's and Flight Crew (FC) knowledge on terrain and obstacle clearance responsibilities, addressing the requirements and procedures to be followed by them in order to prevent flight collisions with the terrain while following ATC Clearances.

1.3 Applicability

All aircraft operators conducting operations under Albanian Air Operator Certificate Requirements (AOCR) and their respective FC shall meet the requirements set forth in this GM.

1.4 References

- Minister Order No.327/2019 "On the approval of Regulation on the definition of common air regulations and operational provisions relating to services and procedures in air navigation".
- Minister Order No.80, dated 30.06.2023, "For the approval of the regulation on technical requirements and administrative procedures for air operations".

2. General

2.1 Contextualisation

The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Procedures for Air Navigation Services (PANS) and Standard and Recommended Practices (SARP) define the procedures and responsibilities for terrain and obstruction avoidance for Air Traffic Services (ATS) Providers, Air Traffic Control (ATC) and ATC Officer (ATCO), FC and Operators.

Given recent developments, particularly in airspace design, the issue of responsibility for terrain and obstacle avoidance became more complex and therefore less clear for each of these four actors.

Under these circumstances, there is a higher risk of Controlled Flight into Terrain (CFIT) occurrences to occur, despite all the new technologies that are now available in the flight deck, namely the Ground Proximity Warning System (GPWS)¹. By definition, CFIT accidents occur when an airworthy aircraft, under pilot control, is unintentionally flown into the ground, a mountain, water, or an obstacle. In these types of accidents, pilots are generally unaware of the danger until it is too late.

Given all these facts, the goal of this GM is to clarify the Operator's responsibilities and FC procedures in avoiding any obstacle, particularly when terrain clearance is involved, while complying with ATC Clearances.

2.2 ATC Clearance

Clearances are issued solely for expediting and separating air traffic and are based on known traffic conditions which affect safety in aircraft operation. The traffic conditions include:

- Aircraft in the air;
- Aircraft on the manoeuvring area;
- Vehicles on the manoeuvring area;
- Obstructions not permanently installed on the manoeuvring area.

ATC clearances do not constitute authority to violate any applicable regulations for promoting the safety of flight operations or for any other purpose; neither do clearances relieve a pilot-in-command of any responsibility whatsoever in connection with a possible violation of applicable rules and regulations.

If an ATC clearance is not considered suitable by the pilot-in-command of an aircraft, the flight crew may

¹ For the purpose of this GM, the term GPWS will be used as a synonym of more recent equipment's built for the same goal but with enhanced capabilities, namely a terrain forward looking capability, such as the Enhanced Ground Proximity Warning System (EGPWS), also known as Terrain Avoidance and Warning System (TAWS).

request and, if practicable, obtain an amended clearance.

ATC clearances are issued for controlled flights only, i.e.:

- When a flight plan specifies that the initial portion of a flight will be uncontrolled, the pilot needs to obtain a clearance from the relevant ATC unit before entering controlled airspace;
- When a flight plan specifies that the first portion of a flight will be subject to ATC, and that the subsequent portion will be uncontrolled, the aircraft is normally cleared to the point at which the controlled flight terminates;
- For flights through intermediate stops, the initial clearance limit is be the first destination aerodrome and new clearances are to be issued for each subsequent portion of flight. By prior arrangement between ATC units and the operators however it is possible to clear the flight through intermediate stops.

A flight is subject to ATC clearance depending on the flight rules and airspace, i.e.:

- IFR flights are subject to ATC clearance in airspace classes A, B, C, D and E;
- VFR flights are subject to ATC clearance in airspace classes B, C and D. They are not permitted in class A airspace and are not controlled in class E.

3. Operator's Responsibilities

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

The Operator must assure its FC follow company's SOP which in turn ought to comply with national and international air laws; should reflect industry best practices; must be kept updated; and promote safety operations in all areas.

Regarding the area addressed in this GM the SOP should clearly state the pilot in command and FC responsibilities' towards compliance with ATC Clearances in the vicinity of terrain obstacles.

Knowing that there are specific flight phases which are more prone to endanger flight safety as they imply lower altitude clearances to known obstacles, they should be properly considered in the development of SOP.

These particular flight phases are the typically the following:

- Take off;
- SID;
- STAR;

-
- Instrument Approach Procedures;
 - Missed Approach Procedure and/or Go Around.

3.1 Training and Evaluation

The goal of this GM is not to establish detailed description on the training and evaluation the operator should conduct in order to enhance safety operations specifically targeted to dealing with ATC Clearances given to the FC.

Nevertheless, during training the operator should stress out some important areas FC must always keep in mind regarding this subject, such as:

1. Knowledge and understanding of standard ATC phraseology used in each area of operations;
2. Importance of crew members cross-checking to ensure that ATC clearances are promptly and correctly complied with;
3. The meaning and significance of minimum IFR Altitudes;
4. The cold temperature corrections to be made in certain altitudes and the necessary coordination with ATC;
5. The monitoring of radio altimeter below 2500 ft AGL (Above Ground Level);
6. The relevance of GPWS and the correct setting of terrain display in the MFD (Multi-Functional Display), particularly when flying in mountainous areas²;
7. The importance of FC maintaining its situational awareness throughout the whole flight, but especially when reaching the approach and landing phase (which is the highest risk phase of flight, accounting for over 50 percent of all accidents at every level of aviation).

It is important that the operator trains its FC in realistic and demanding scenarios, while conducting its initial and recurrent training in flight simulators. Flight instructors and examiners should test FC abilities to maintain their situational awareness within different meteorological environments such as IMC or night flying.

The instructors should emphasize the importance of FC reading back ATC Clearances and also the relevance of questioning ATC when in doubt.

² Mountainous area means an area of changing terrain profile where the changes of terrain elevation exceeds 900m (3000 ft) within a distance of 18,5km (10 NM).