

# Safety Bulletin

## SAFETY OF GROUND MOVEMENT ON A CONTROLLED AERODROME

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### BACKGROUND

Airservices has identified some misinterpretation among pilots, airside drivers and ground crew regarding the responsibilities for collision avoidance on aerodrome movement areas and the services Air Traffic Control (ATC) provide to aircraft and/or vehicles operating on these areas. To clarify the responsibilities and services available, Airservices has released [AIC 32/15](#). This Safety Bulletin aims to highlight the issue and provide guidance regarding aircraft ground movements.

### DEFINITIONS

The aerodrome surface is separated into different areas, with varying requirements and ATC services. The following definitions are from AIP GEN 2.2 - DEFINITIONS:

**Movement Area:** That part of an aerodrome to be used for the take-off, landing and taxiing of aircraft, consisting of the manoeuvring area and the apron(s). The Movement Area is divided into two parts:

- **Apron:** A defined area on a land aerodrome, intended to accommodate aircraft for purposes of loading or unloading passengers, mail, cargo, fuelling, parking or maintenance.
- **Manoeuvring Area:** That part of an aerodrome to be used for the take-off, landing and taxiing of aircraft, excluding aprons

**Helicopter Movement Area:** The movement area for helicopters is the part of an aerodrome that can safely be used for the hovering, taxiing, take-off and landing of helicopters and consists of the manoeuvring area and aprons, but excludes those areas reserved for unrestricted use by the general public.

**Taxiway:** A defined path on a land aerodrome established for the taxiing of aircraft and intended to provide a link between one part of the aerodrome and another.

### INTRODUCTION

ATC clearances and instructions exist to facilitate safe and efficient operations at aerodromes by regulating aircraft/vehicle movement on the manoeuvring area. Although ATC and ground personnel reduce the likelihood of a collision on the ground, the ultimate responsibility lays with the pilot in command. The following is a summary of responsibilities.

### OPERATIONS ON THE APRON AND PUSH-BACK APPROVALS

The pilot in command (with any assisting ground personnel) is responsible for avoiding collision on the apron. ATC push-back approvals and taxi clearances are only to regulate entrance to, and movement on, the taxiways and do not relate to movement on the apron areas.

When ATC issue approval for push-back or taxi clearance, they will only provide information about relevant known aircraft moving on the same apron. This information may be incomplete as ATC has limited knowledge (or visibility) of movements on the apron.

Pilots must also obtain traffic information from assisting ground personnel and, where available, the apron service which may be established as a discrete service at some locations.

## **OPERATIONS ON TAXIWAYS AND TAXI CLEARANCES**

The pilot in command is responsible for avoiding collision on taxiways. ATC will issue clearances and instructions to aircraft under their control to assist flight crews to follow cleared taxi routes, to avoid collision with other aircraft or objects and to minimise the potential for the aircraft inadvertently entering a runway.

Pilots and vehicle drivers must obtain a clearance to taxi or proceed, prior to entering or moving on taxiways.

After landing, ATC will provide a taxi clearance to regulate entry onto the apron. This clearance does not relate to movement on the apron. ATC or the apron service (if established) may provide information about relevant known aircraft entering or leaving the same apron.

## **NON-STANDARD TAXI CONFIGURATION**

In addition to the responsibility of collision avoidance, it is essential that pilots advise ATC of any non-standard taxi configuration that may affect an aircraft's taxi performance. For example, many airlines use single engine taxi procedures to conserve fuel. This practice (and the subsequent reduction of taxi performance) may have both efficiency considerations for the aerodrome ground traffic flow and, more importantly, safety considerations if the aircraft performance reduces the ability of the pilot to comply with instructions. An aircraft conducting single engine taxi may be slower than expected to cross a runway and may not be able to accept a clearance to 'expedite'.

## **SUMMARY**

Regardless of whether an aircraft is in receipt of an ATC push-back approval or taxi clearance, the pilot in command is ultimately responsible for avoiding collision on the apron and manoeuvring areas of an aerodrome.

## **REFERENCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION**

- [AIP - GEN 2.2 Definitions and Abbreviations](#)
- [AIP – ENR 1.1 General Rules and Procedures](#)
- [AIC 32/15](#) – Safety of Ground Movement on a Controlled Aerodrome
- CASA have produced Manoeuvring Area Maps for Archerfield, Bankstown, Cairns, Cambridge, Camden, Jandakot, Launceston, Moorabbin, and Parafield. These are available at [http://www.casa.gov.au/scripts/nc.dll?WCMS:STANDARD::pc=PC\\_101463](http://www.casa.gov.au/scripts/nc.dll?WCMS:STANDARD::pc=PC_101463)
- Local aerodrome information can be found in [ERSA](#).

## **Further information**

For further information please contact [safety.promotions@airservicesaustralia.com](mailto:safety.promotions@airservicesaustralia.com).