

All NATMAC Representatives

28 April 2021

CAA DECISION LETTER

Dear Colleagues,

**PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AIR TRAFFIC ZONE AT RAF LITTLE RISSINGTON
ACP 2019-45**

The CAA is writing to inform all NATMAC representatives that the CAA has approved the establishment of an Air Traffic Zone (ATZ) at RAF Little Rissington. This change will be implemented at AIRAC 08/2021 on the 12 August 2021.

Background

The Royal Air Force (RAF) submitted a proposal to SARG for the establishment of an Air Traffic Zone (ATZ) around RAF Little Rissington. This was submitted due to an identified hazard between the Gliding operations in critical stages of flight and Powered aircraft overflying the site. Noting this request was not expected to significantly increase the level or type of operations conducted at RAF Little Rissington, it was deemed proportionate for them to follow the [2019 Policy Statement for the establishment of an ATZ](#).

This Policy Statement is designed to acknowledge the specific nature of an ATZ. In line with proportionality the Policy Statement may be applied where it will not significantly increase traffic levels, but instead is intended to provide an added layer of protection to aircraft in the critical stages of flight. This Policy Statement therefore sets out the requirements for a ATZ request as a scaled Level 2C Airspace Change, in line with CAP 1616. Aligned with proportionality, within this process the notification of approval is to be conducted through this NATMAC notification letter.

Following completion of this process the Sponsor submitted their ACP which was originally considered by SARG in September 2020. Due to the potentially cumulative impact of other ongoing ACPs within that airspace, SARG with agreement of the Sponsor delayed a decision until such time as the regulatory decision process for those ACPs had concluded. That conclusion was reached in February 2021 enabling SARG to then consider this application in context.

The CAA would note the following points within the submission and associated documentation:

- RAF Little Rissington is a Government aerodrome therefore satisfying Rule 11 of the Rules of the Air Regulations 2015.
- When considering the Gliding operations that occur at Little Rissington. A safety argument was presented highlighting a history of overflight by powered aircraft who have not been contacting the available Military AGCS, leading to experienced safety issues.
- During the proposed ATZ notified hours a Military AGCS will be available. This service is intended to facilitate safe access through the ATZ when notified.
- The proposed ATZ notified timings are 0900L-1700L at Weekends and Public Holidays.
- The proposed ATZ may be notified by NOTAM to facilitate Gliding camps that occur mid-week. With the expectation that there would be no more than 4 x1 weeklong gliding camps per year.
- The proposed ATZ would not be notified for the purpose of other activities routinely conducted at RAF Little Rissington.
- RAF Little Rissington are actively engaged within the aviation stakeholder community in the local area though established Letters of Agreement.
- The British Gliding Association (BGA) proposed the establishment of a self-regulated voluntary FLARM conspicuity area to address the safety concerns raised within the ACP. This was discounted by the Sponsor due to the primary driver for the ACP being the risk of 'powered aircraft to glider operations' and not 'glider to glider' operations.

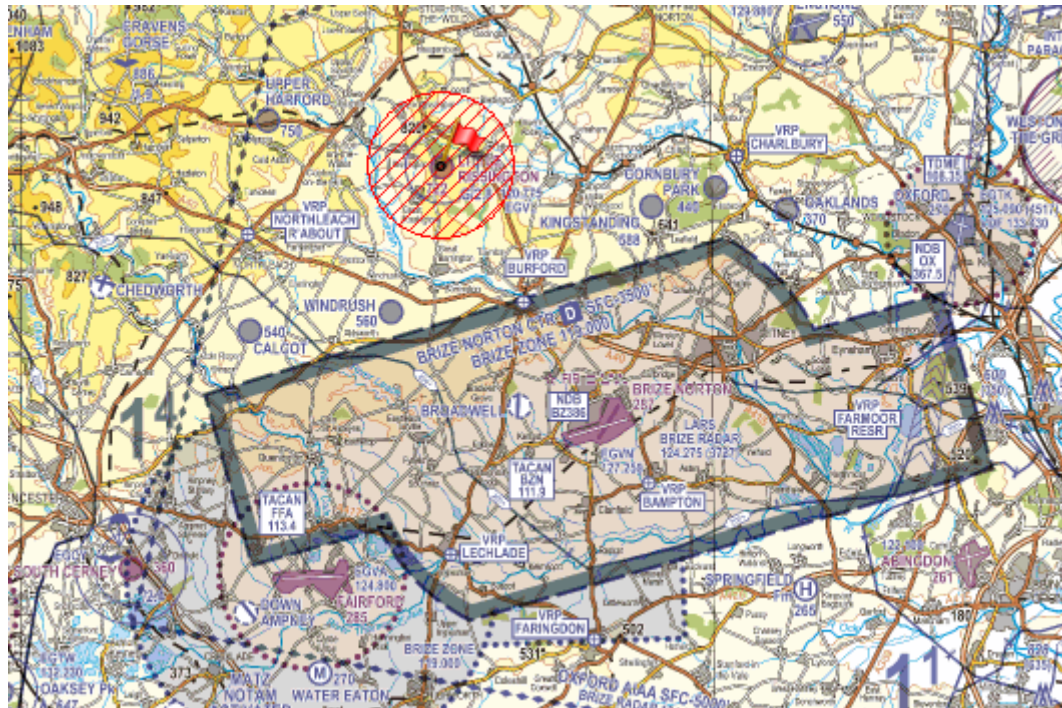


Figure 1. Location of new ATZ

Decision

RAF Little Rissington conducts Gliding operations within the Oxford Area of Intense Aerial Activity, where the level of traffic is likely a contributing factor to the driver for this ACP. Although aircraft are not required to contact RAF Little Rissington when overflying the aerodrome, there is evidence this has routinely been occurring leading to potential safety issues between powered aircraft and Gliders during critical stages of flight. This has been occurring despite the fact RAF Little Rissington is a charted Gliding site within the AIP. The purpose of this ACP was to establish an ATZ to increase the situational awareness of airspace users during critical stages of flight, therefore addressing this issue.

Noting RAF Little Rissington is Government aerodrome it satisfies Rule 11 of the Rules of the Air Regulation 2015. The CAA, having considered the factors set out in section 70 of the Transport Act 2000, approves the establishment of an ATZ at RAF Little Rissington, subject to the following conditions:

- The ATZ published timings will be 0900L-1700L at Weekends and Public Holidays within the AIP and at other times as issued by NOTAM.
- When notified the ATZ will be serviced by a Military AGCS.
- The ATZ must not be notified as active for more than 135 days in a calendar year without permission of the CAA.
- The Sponsor should continue to monitor the relevance of this structure against the specific risk outlined and when possible seek to remove the structure. This point should be addressed within the Post Implementation Review (PIR).

The ATZ will be implemented at AIRAC 08/2021 on the 12 August 2021.

In accordance with CAP1616 a PIR will be conducted within 12 months of implementation of the ATZ, expected 12 August 2022. The Sponsor should record all relevant data to support this review.