



## **SAFETY DECISION 2020-09**

### **Issue 01**

**Date of Issue: April 7, 2020**

#### **SUBJECT:**

FLEXIBILITY PROVISIONS DUE TO NOVEL CORONAVIRUS FOR ANSP AND ATCO

#### **REFERENCE PUBLICATIONS:**

SAFETY DECISION 2020-01  
SAFETY DECISION 2020-04  
SAFETY DECISION 2020-07

#### **APPLICABILITY:**

This Safety Decision shall be applicable up to 31 July 2020, unless otherwise specified.

This SAFETY DECISION does not apply to licences, ratings, certificates, authorisations, and endorsement that have expired prior to 19 March 2020.

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

The COVID-19 pandemic is having a significant impact on the aviation industry around the world. The measures taken by Governments and aviation related businesses are critical steps to ensure effective management of this international health emergency. The GCAA considers that in its role as a regulator, it must ensure not only the highest levels of safety, but also the regularity and efficiency of the aviation system in the UAE.

In order to support all Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSP) with their objectives to deliver safe air navigation services, the GCAA will be receptive to any request for that will allow their business continuity provided that it can be demonstrated that safety is not adversely affected.

- a) provide flexible competency conditions and minimisation of inter-personal contact for the immediate future; and
- b) ensure the continued availability of aeronautical navigation aids;

This Safety Decision is issued to:

- a) ensure the provision of services is maintained in the event COVID-19 impacts the facilities (Requirement No.1);
- b) provide flexibility to ATS scheduling, Unit Training, ATCO Licence holders and CoC (Requirements No. 2 to No. 7);
- c) defer the GCAA fee payments up to 1st July 2020 (requirement No. 8); and
- d) allow issuance of approval or other authorisations by email, without signature or stamp (requirement No. 9).

This SAFETY DECISION cancels and supersedes Safety Decision 2020-04 with regards to ATCO flexibilities, however any extension and flexibility given based on Safety Decision 2020-04 FLEXIBILITY PROVISIONS DUE TO NOVEL CORONAVIRUS – ISSUE 01 shall remain valid if extended before the entry into force of this SAFETY DECISION.

Flexibility provisions related to medical provisions are contained in Safety Decision 2020-07.



**DISCLAIMER:**

- a) If any other flexibility provision is sought, organisations/individuals shall communicate the same to their principal inspector for future consideration.
- b) This SAFETY DECISION has been approved electronically by HE the Director General of the GCAA – hence it does not bear any stamp or signature. To verify its authenticity, anyone can check on GCAA website: [https://www.gcaa.gov.ae/en/ePublication/Pages/OperationalDirectives.aspx?CertID=\(DIR\)](https://www.gcaa.gov.ae/en/ePublication/Pages/OperationalDirectives.aspx?CertID=(DIR))
- c) Once activities return to normal, the GCAA will process any expired certificate, licence, rating, etc. extended using this SAFETY DECISION using normal e-services platform and provided that the extension was issued in accordance with the SAFETY DECISION.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

**REQUIREMENT NO. 1:**

- a) ANSPs providing Air traffic services (ATS) shall ensure that ATS will remain offered to aircraft operations not restricted by Safety Decision 2020-01 regarding FLIGHT RESTRICTIONS DUE TO CORONAVIRUS SARS-CoV-2.
- b) All ANSP shall ensure that their contingency plan is activated and report to the GCAA if the ANSP is not capable to perform the required services.

**REQUIREMENT NO. 2:**

- a) The ATS scheduling system required by CAR VIII Subpart 4.45(d) may be adapted based on a fatigue-related risk assessment to allow extension of the duty period up to 12 hours and aggregate of duty period of 24 hours or less within 48 consecutive hours.
- b) Such adaptation does not require pre-approval from the GCAA and can be availed provided a risk assessment is established, implemented and monitored under the ATSU's SMS.

**REQUIREMENT NO. 3:**

- a) The ATS currency check for ATCO required by CAR VIII Subpart 4 A.3.11 and A.3.12. may be adapted as following:
  - i) For A.3.11 Minimum Time-In-Position: the minimum time-in position may be completed "during the previous 60 days" in lieu of "during previous calendar month"
  - ii) For A.3.12 Failure to maintain currency:
    - A. The CoC does not become invalid if an ATC licence holder has not exercise the privileges of the rating for a period not exceeding 120 days, instead of 90 days currently.
    - B. Following a currency check, the ATCO is required to consolidate the minimum period of time-in-position within 30 calendar days subsequent to the currency check, instead of 15 calendar days currently.
- b) Such adaptation does not require pre-approval from the GCAA and can be availed provided a risk assessment is established, implemented and monitored under the ATSU's SMS.

**REQUIREMENT NO. 4:**

- a) Unit training required by CAR VIII Subpart 4 A.2.10 and A.2.13 Development and Continuation Training shall be adapted to the potential unavailability of STDs (Synthetic Training Device). Other means shall be used to instruct or check competence.
- b) When operational environment traffic under normal operational conditions is not possible to complete the Minimum Experience requirement (prescribed by A.2.12), simulator training may be used provided that:



- i) the ATCO or student ATCO was previously exposed to a traffic representative of the level of density and complexity for that ATCU immediately prior to the reduction in traffic due to COVID-19; and
- ii) Simulation does not count for more than:
  - A. 50% of the required experience for ATCOs with previous experience in the same rating;
  - B. 20% for student ATCOs with no previous experience (ab-initio).
- c) Similarly, when operational environment traffic under normal operational conditions is not possible to complete the examination for a CoC, simulator training may be used.

**REQUIREMENT NO. 5:**

When operational environment traffic under normal operational conditions is not possible to complete the examination for a CoC (as per A.2.14 Certificate of Competence (CoC) Examination), simulator training may be used.

**REQUIREMENT NO. 6:**

Subject to fulfilling the applicable mitigating conditions as specified in Requirement No. 7, with regard to ATCO licences, ratings, certificates, authorisations, and endorsements issued by the GCAA, the following shall apply for licences, ratings, certificates, authorisations, and endorsements issued in accordance with CAR VIII Subpart 4 (appendices 2 and 3):

- a) Provided that the regular validity period of an endorsement or a certificate expires before or on 31 July 2020, the validity period of all of the following is extended by 4 months, in the case of:
  - i) ATC Licences, ATC ratings as per CAR VIII Subpart 4;
  - ii) ATCO English language proficiency endorsements as per CAR VIII Subpart 4; and
  - iii) ATC instructors and examiners as approved and endorsed on their respective ATC licences.
- b) Towards the end of the 4-month period, the GCAA will reassess the situation and decide if the validity period of the rating or certificate may be further extended for a period of up to 4 months or the end of the application of this Safety Decision, whichever comes first.

**REQUIREMENT NO. 7:**

The applicable mitigating conditions shall be complied to allow validity extension as stipulated under Requirement No. 6, above:

- a) ATCO licence holders shall comply with all of the following:
  - i) they shall hold a valid and current licence, rating, certificate, authorisations, and endorsement. Previously expired licences, ratings, certificates, authorisations, and endorsements are not eligible for extension as per this Safety decision.
  - ii) they shall operate under the management system of an organisation;
  - iii) they shall have received refresher training, followed by the completion of an assessment by means established by the operator to determine that the required level of knowledge are maintained;
  - iv) upon successful completion of the refresher training and the assessment as per point (iii), either the GCAA or an appropriately qualified examiner nominated by the ATSU shall issue a letter of extension as per point c)i).
- b) ATCO instructor and examiner certificate holders shall hold a valid instructor and examiner certificate. The GCAA or an appropriately qualified Examiner nominated by the ATSU shall issue a letter of extension as per point c)i).
- c) Recording of extension of licences, ratings, certificates, authorisations, and endorsements issued by GCAA:
  - i) The letter of extension required shall contain the following statement, unless different wording is acceptable to the GCAA:



*“This letter is issued to confirm that, (Mr/MS)(Name) complies with requirements No.2 a) (i), (ii) and (iii) of Safety Decision 2020-07 FLEXIBILITY PROVISIONS DUE TO NOVEL CORONAVIRUS adopted by the GCAA to address the COVID-19 outbreak. Therefore, his/her licence, rating, certificate, authorisation, and endorsement (as appropriate) are extended by 4 months from the date of expiry.*

*Due to current restrictions preventing a physical endorsement, this letter is issued in lieu of the licence alteration and all dates that expired after 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 shall be considered extended by 4 calendar months”.*

- ii) For extension other than points a)iv), and b), the ATSU may nominate the PH Training or another person to issue the extension.
- d) ATSU shall comply with all of the following:
  - i) No physical alternation of a licences, ratings, certificates, authorisations, and endorsements issued by the GCAA shall be made;
  - ii) An accurate record-keeping system is established for those licences, ratings, certificates, authorisations, and endorsements extended. A monthly report shall be provided to their respective GCAA Inspector;
  - iii) the ATSU shall determine which aviation personnel holding a licences, ratings, and certificates issued by the GCAA is eligible for extension as per Requirement No. 5. Such determination shall be based on a risk assessment with due consideration of operational needs, unavailability of resources to conduct renewal or revalidation of licences, ratings, and certificates as per applicable CAR, and current national and international precautions measures related to COVID-19.
  - iv) the operator shall ensure that ATCO comply with point a) and point b) as applicable;
  - v) the ATSU shall ensure all required aviation personnel complete additional training through any means.
  - vi) Note: The intent of “through any means” is that operators provide additional training to licence holders in order to compensate for the extended validity of the different training elements of CAR VIII Subpart 4. This could be done for example via briefing/leaflet/bulletin/CBT/video.
  - vii) the ATSU shall ensure that the potential unavailability of STDs is mitigated by other means, e.g. computer-based training.
  - viii) In the case of ATC English language proficiency endorsements, in the case of unavailability of a ELP Training Organisation, ATSU shall ensure that language training is ensured through other means, e.g. online courses.

**REQUIREMENT NO. 8:**

Payment of fees related to GCAA services for aviation safety activities shall be deferred up to 1st July 2020.

**REQUIREMENT NO. 9:**

Due to the current unforeseen circumstance, certificates or other authorisations may be required to be processed by email and may not bear a signature and/or stamp. Operators/Individuals are required to coordinate with concerned GCAA department.

**CONTACT:**

Further instructions or guidance may be obtained through: [ana@gcaa.gov.ae](mailto:ana@gcaa.gov.ae)