


<b>OPERATIONS ADVISORY NOTICE (OAN)</b>		 Transport Malta Civil Aviation Directorate Flight Operations Inspectorate Transport Malta Centre Triq Pantar Lija LJA 2021 Malta
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<b>Subject: Rescue and Firefighting Services (RFFS)</b>		

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Annex V to Decision 2019/019/R, includes new AMC and GM that operators may make use of when considering the adequacy of an aerodrome. AMC1 & GM1 CAT.OP.MPA.107 refers.

## 2.0 ACCEPTABLE RFFS & MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Operators requiring to operate to aerodromes with RFFS protection that go below those required in ICAO Annex 14, shall do so after the relates safety risk assessment is completed.

Furthermore, the operator shall include these provisions and information related to RFFS in the Operations Manual. These criteria shall be published in OMA Section 8.1 clearly identifying the RFFS levels required for each aircraft type under the AOC.

OMA Compliance checklists will be updated accordingly.

## 3.0 GUIDANCE ON ASSESSMENT

Attachment I to ICAO Annex 6 Part I provide the necessary guidance and level of RFFS. Operators are required to follow these guidelines should the operation necessitate such deviations.

Risk assessments shall take into consideration all the elements and possible variations if operating to aerodromes with RFFS below protection levels as defined in Tables I-1 and I-2 of the Attachment.

All risk assessments shall be kept as part of the established record-keeping processes.

A copy of Attachment I is being reproduced for ease of reference. *Operators are responsible to refer to the latest material as published.*

**Flight Operations Inspectorate**

# ATTACHMENT I. RESCUE AND FIRE FIGHTING SERVICES (RFFS) LEVELS

*Supplementary to Chapter 4, 4.1.4*

## 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

### 1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this Attachment is to provide guidance for assessing the level of RFFS deemed acceptable by aeroplane operators using aerodromes for differing purposes. This guidance does not relieve the operator from the obligation to ensure that an acceptable level of protection is available for the aeroplane intended to be used.

### 1.2 Basic concepts

1.2.1 For flight planning purposes, an aeroplane operator should utilize an aerodrome whose RFFS category, as required by Annex 14, Volume I, Chapter 9, 9.2, matches or exceeds the aeroplane's RFFS category. Some aerodromes currently used do not, however, meet these requirements. Furthermore, Annex 14, Volume I provisions relate to the level of aerodrome RFFS to be provided for aeroplanes normally using an aerodrome; hence, this level of RFFS protection does not take into account aeroplanes for which the aerodrome is selected as an alternate aerodrome.

1.2.2 If an aerodrome is exposed to a temporary reduction of its RFFS capability, Annex 14, Volume I, 2.11.3, requires that: "Changes in the level of protection normally available at an aerodrome for rescue and fire fighting shall be notified to the appropriate air traffic services units and aeronautical information services units to enable those units to provide the necessary information to arriving and departing aircraft. When such a change has been corrected, the above units shall be advised accordingly."

1.2.3 In order to determine the acceptability of an aerodrome RFFS protection level, the operator should consider:

- a) *for a departure or destination aerodrome*, the difference between the aerodrome RFFS category and the aeroplane RFFS category, and the frequency of flights to that aerodrome; and
- b) *for an alternate aerodrome*, the difference between the aerodrome RFFS category and the aeroplane RFFS category, and the probability that this alternate aerodrome will be used.

1.2.4 The intention is that the operator will consider the available RFFS as one element of a risk assessment process conducted under their safety management system (SMS), to ensure that the overall safety of the operation can be maximized. This risk assessment would also include considerations of aerodrome facilities, availability, terrain, weather conditions, etc. to ensure that the most appropriate aerodrome is selected.

*Note.— Annex 19 includes safety management provisions for air operators. Further guidance is contained in the Safety Management Manual (SMM) (Doc 9859).*

1.2.5 The following guidance is intended to assist operators in making the assessment required by Chapter 4, 4.1.4 with due consideration of the basic principles described in 1.2.1 to 1.2.4. It is not intended that this guidance limit or regulate the operation of an aerodrome.

## 2. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Aerodrome RFFS category.** The RFFS category for a given aerodrome, as published in the appropriate Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP).

**Aeroplane RFFS category.** The category derived from Annex 14, Volume I, Table 9-1 for a given aeroplane type.

**Temporary downgrade.** RFFS category as notified, including by NOTAM, and resulting from the downgrade of the level of RFFS protection available at an aerodrome.

## 3. MINIMUM ACCEPTABLE AERODROME RFFS CATEGORY

### 3.1 Planning

3.1.1 In principle, the published RFFS category for each of the aerodromes used for a given flight should be equal to or better than the aeroplane's RFFS category. However, if the aeroplane's RFFS category is not available at one or more of the aerodromes required to be specified in the operational flight plan, the operator should ensure that the aerodrome has a level of RFFS category which is deemed acceptable, based on a risk assessment conducted as part of the operator's safety management system (SMS). When establishing acceptable levels of RFFS category for these situations, the operator may use the criteria in Table I-1 and Table I-2. Notwithstanding these criteria, the operator may determine other acceptable levels of RFFS category in accordance with 3.1.3 of this attachment.

3.1.1.1 Intended operations to aerodromes with RFFS categories below the levels specified in Annex 14, Volume I, Chapter 9, 9.2, should be coordinated between the aeroplane operator and the aerodrome operator.

3.1.1.2 For departure and destination aerodromes, during flight planning, the acceptable RFFS protection level should equal or exceed the values specified in Table I-1.

**Table I-1. Acceptable aerodrome category  
for rescue and fire fighting (departure and destination aerodrome)**

<p><b>Aerodromes</b> (Required to be specified in the operational flight plan)<sup>(4)</sup></p> <p><i>Note.— If an individual aerodrome serves more than one purpose, the highest required category corresponding to that purpose at the time of expected use applies.</i></p>	<p><b>Acceptable aerodrome RFFS category</b> (Based on published aerodrome RFFS category, including any modification by NOTAM)</p>
<p>Departure and destination aerodrome</p>	<p>RFFS category for each aerodrome should be equal to or better than the aeroplane RFFS category.</p> <p>Where a suitable risk assessment has been conducted by the operator:</p> <p><b>One</b> category below the aeroplane RFFS category, or</p> <p><b>Two</b> categories below the aeroplane RFFS category, in the case of a temporary downgrade of 72 hours or less</p> <p>but not lower than aerodrome RFFS Category 4 for aeroplanes with maximum certificated take-off mass of over 27 000 kg and not lower than Category 1 for other aeroplanes.</p>

3.1.1.3 So as to comply with the operational regulations applicable to a given flight, the operator selects alternate aerodrome(s) for various uses. During flight planning, the acceptable aerodrome RFFS category at a selected alternate aerodrome may equal or exceed the values specified in Table I-2.

**Table I-2. Acceptable aerodrome category  
for rescue and firefighting (alternate aerodromes)**

<p><b>Aerodromes</b> (Required to be specified in the operational flight plan)</p> <p><i>Note.— If an individual aerodrome serves more than one purpose, the highest required category corresponding to that purpose at the time of expected use applies.</i></p>	<p><b>Acceptable aerodrome RFFS protection level</b> (Based on published aerodrome RFFS category, including any modification by NOTAM)</p>
<p>Take-off alternate and destination alternate aerodromes</p>	<p>Where a suitable risk assessment has been conducted by the operator:</p> <p><b>Two</b> categories below the aeroplane RFFS category, or</p> <p><b>Three</b> categories below the aeroplane RFFS category in the case of a temporary downgrade of 72 hours or less</p> <p>but not lower than aerodrome RFFS Category 4 for aeroplanes with maximum certificated take-off mass of over 27 000 kg and not lower than Category 1 for other aeroplanes.</p>
<p>En-route alternate aerodromes</p>	<p>If at least 30 minutes notice is given to the aerodrome operator prior to the arrival of the aeroplane, a minimum of RFFS Category 4 for aeroplanes with maximum certificated take-off mass of over 27 000 kg, and RFFS Category 1 for other aeroplanes.</p> <p>If less than 30 minutes notice can be given to the aerodrome operator prior to the arrival of the aeroplane:</p> <p><b>Two</b> categories below the aeroplane RFFS category, or</p> <p><b>Three</b> categories below the aeroplane RFFS category in the case of a temporary downgrade of 72 hours or less</p> <p>but not lower than aerodrome RFFS Category 4 for aeroplanes with maximum certificated take-off mass of over 27 000 kg and not lower than Category 1 for other aeroplanes.</p>

3.1.2 For all-cargo operations, further reductions might be acceptable provided that the RFFS capability is adequate to arrest fire around the flight deck area long enough for the persons on board to safely evacuate the aeroplane.

### 3.1.3 Variations

3.1.3.1 Notwithstanding the guidance developed in 3.1.1, an aerodrome RFFS category below the protection levels defined in Tables I-1 and I-2 may be acceptable if other considerations prevail, such as weather conditions, runway(s) characteristics, or length of diversion. Such variations should be based on a specific risk assessment conducted by the operator as part of its safety management system (SMS).

3.1.3.2 Variations to the aerodrome RFFS category may concern, among other cases:

- a) an occasional flight; or
- b) temporary downgrades exceeding 72 hours.

Where applicable, a variation may be used for a group of aerodromes selected for the same purpose, for a given aeroplane type.

3.1.3.3 The aforementioned variations may be based on additional or other criteria relevant to the type of operations. For instance, the 72-hour threshold for RFFS temporary downgrades may not be relevant for a single flight to or from the aerodrome concerned, such as a non-scheduled flight, whereas it is fully relevant for operations carried out on a continuous and daily basis. A variation may be time limited. A variation may also be modified to reflect the changes of the RFFS protection level available at the aerodrome(s) concerned. In accordance with Chapter 4, 4.1.5, the variations and their validity periods should be included in the operations manual.

3.1.3.4 For variations to the acceptable RFFS category at departure and destination aerodromes, the aeroplane operator's specific safety risk assessment for an aerodrome intended to be used as a departure or destination aerodrome may be based on the following elements:

- a) the frequency of flights intended by the aeroplane operator in relation to a lowered aerodrome RFFS category;
- b) coordination between the aeroplane operator and the aerodrome operator (for instance, reducing intervention time by repositioning the existing RFFS means along the runway before the intended take-off or landing).

3.1.3.5 For regular flights, the coordination should take into account the principles of Annex 14, Volume I, Chapter 9, 9.2.5 and 9.2.6 which are applicable to the aerodrome operator, as well as the possibilities to modulate the aerodrome RFFS category available on a daily cycle or seasonal cycle.

3.1.3.6 For variations in acceptable RFFS for an alternate aerodrome, the aeroplane operator's specific safety risk assessment for an aerodrome selected as a take-off alternate aerodrome, a destination alternate aerodrome or an en-route alternate aerodrome may be based on the following elements:

- a) the probability of effective use of the aerodrome concerned; and
- b) the frequency of selection of the aerodrome for the respective purpose of use.

### 3.2 In flight

3.2.1 The information contained in the operations manual according to Chapter 4, 4.1.5 about the aerodrome RFFS category acceptable at the planning stage (including Tables I-1, I-2 and, where usable, the variations under the specifications in 3.1.3) is applicable at the in-flight re-planning point.

3.2.2 In flight, the pilot-in-command may decide to land at an aerodrome regardless of the RFFS category if, in the pilot's judgement after due consideration of all prevailing circumstances, to do so would be safer than to divert.

Uncontrolled