

Inclement Weather Procedures

Airside Operational Instruction 23

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AOI Owner - Airfield Operations



AOI 23 'INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES'

Introduction

Airports are a hazardous environment and the hazards are increased by inclement weather. To ensure the safety of personnel and equipment during periods of inclement weather the following precautions should be taken.

SECTION 1 - HIGH WINDS PLAN

1.1 HIGH WINDS POLICY STATEMENT:

“High winds have the potential to cause damage to aircraft on the ground and/or serious injury to personnel. East Midlands Airport requires airside service partners to maintain and implement their own high wind operating procedures upon receipt of notification that a high wind warning is in force. High wind warnings are issued with a validity period from/to by the Met Office where sustained mean speeds above 15kts or frequent gusts in excess of 20kts are forecast. East Midlands Airport will reduce the risk of damage or injury through educating airside users about the hazards of operating in high winds, informing airside service partners when a high winds warning has been issued by the Met Office and actively enforcing the High Winds Policy”.

1.2 DEFINITION OF WIND CONDITIONS

- Strong Wind - Mean speed 24+ kts
- Gale Force Wind - Mean speed 34+ kts
- Severe Gale Force Wind - Mean speed 44+ kts
- Storm Force Wind - Mean speed 52+ kts
- Violent Storm Force Wind - Mean speed 60+ kts

1.3 NOTIFICATION

1.3.1 The Met Office issues Strong Wind and Gale Warnings direct to ATC.

1.3.2 Weather warnings with a validity period will be removed from screen displays on expiry.

1.4 RESPONSE ACTIONS

1.4.1 ATC is responsible for:

Implementing the notification procedure by issuing a '*gale and strong wind*' warning on the message bar of CHROMA FUSION to EMA operational departments, airlines and airside tenants / operators.

1.4.2 The Control Room are responsible for:

Implementing the Adverse Weather and Potential Disruption Notifications procedure.

1.4.3 Airfield Operations are responsible for:

Instigating inspections to ensure that the possibility of FOD blowing on the movement areas is minimised, including confirming all skips or other litter/FOD receptacles are covered and secure. Instigating inspections to ensure that apron equipment is secured and parked appropriately in order to minimise the possibility of such equipment blowing on to persons, aircraft or vehicles. Ensuring that any contractors take appropriate action to secure equipment and materials, as well as lowering cranes etc when appropriate.

Instigating inspections to ensure aircraft are adequately chocked and/or tied down to prevent weathercocking. Particular attention should be paid to aircraft parked in exposed parts of the airfield, i.e. remote stands.

1.4.4 The Head of External Engineering is responsible for:

Ensuring that, should the warning also include the possibility of severe rain/flooding, the impact upon water levels and effluent disposal is assessed. Any likely implications identified should be passed to the ADM and Airfield Operations Duty Manager.

1.4.5 Ground Service Providers are responsible for:

- a) Taking extra care when operating airside during high winds, and vehicle speeds should be reduced accordingly.
- b) Removing vehicles and equipment from within the footprint of aircraft and surrounding areas.
- c) Ensuring traffic cones used around the aircraft are suitably weighted in order to prevent untoward movement in high winds.
- d) Ensuring that all covers on trucks and trailers are lashed down.
- e) Removing any items likely to constitute a FOD Hazard to aircraft.
- f) Ensuring Passengers secure loose items upon entering the apron area.
- g) Operating with extreme caution when towing (aircraft steps etc.) or operating high sided vehicles. Vehicle tail lifts must not be raised if the wind speed exceeds the operational limit of the vehicle.
- h) Ensuring aircraft steps are fully lowered and, where possible, turned into wind with stabilisers down and brakes ON.
- i) Avoiding towing empty ULD containers; if transportation is required, appropriate measures should be taken to ensure they remain secure.
- j) Checking ULD's to ensure they are correctly racked with stops¹ raised. Stowing ULD's on Weldwork Trailers will not normally be acceptable.
- k) Operating with extreme caution whilst servicing aircraft, extra care should be taken when manoeuvring vehicles or equipment adjacent to aircraft. Brakes should be securely applied, and/or chocks used, at all times when the vehicle is stationary.

1.4.6 Aircraft Engineers are responsible for:

Ensuring aircraft are fully chocked and the parking brake is reset in accordance with company and aircraft manufacturer requirements.

1.5 NON-STANDARD PARKING OF AIRCRAFT

Parked aircraft may sustain damage to control surfaces or may risk ground-swinging ('weathercocking') in strong wind conditions. It will be for airlines and aircraft engineers to determine whether it is desirable to park any particular aircraft facing into the prevailing wind.

When this is the case the relevant operator must contact the Operations Control Room on 01332 852973 or ext. 2973 to make this request. Aircraft must not be re-positioned without approval.

Permission to park non-standard will be given by Airfield Operations, consulting with the operator's representative as required. Aircraft will not normally be allowed to park non-standard under their own power but will require to be re-positioned by a tug after arrival and disembarkation. Likewise, aircraft parked non-standard into wind will not normally be permitted to self-manoeuve off stand due to the hazards posed by jet blast.

SECTION 2 - THUNDERSTORMS

2. Introduction

During periods of thunderstorms and precipitation, the Airport shall undertake specific actions to safeguard the aerodrome. Organisational and personnel responsibilities are to be implemented upon promulgation of aerodrome weather warnings.

Thunderstorms represent a hazard to airport operations due to the potential for:

- a) Lightning bolt striking aircraft, vehicles, buildings, or persons.
- b) Very heavy rain or hail
- c) Poor visibility
- d) Strong gusty winds
- e) Wind shear
- f) Airframe and engine icing
- g) Interference with radio transmissions and compasses
- h) Electrical outages

2.1 Notification

The Met Office will issue a Thunderstorm warning when forecast weather conditions present a significant risk of thunderstorm activity in the vicinity of East Midlands Airport. Such warnings may be valid for up to 24 hours although they may give little notice of the arrival of storms.

2.1.1 Air Traffic Control will promulgate thunderstorm warnings via the message banner on CHROMA FUSION.

2.1.2 If there is lightning within 5km of the airfield, and a StormGeo notification is received the Control Room and Airfield Operations will issue an alert to inform all airport operators. This communication is to update on the weather situation only. It is the responsibility of airside companies to action their internal procedures as required.

2.1.3 If for any reason, an alert has not been received from the airport but operators have been alerted to lightning by other means, they should not wait to receive communication from the airport to action any of their internal procedures.

2.1.4 Once the lightning has moved more than 5km away from the airfield, an alert will be sent out to advise of this from the Control Room.

2.2 Air Traffic Control

Aerodrome flight operations will not be affected during thunderstorms and are carried out at operator / aircraft commander discretion.

2.3 Airfield Operations

Airfield Operations shall remain on the airfield to carry out essential duties (i.e., wildlife control, patrols, inspections, etc) but personnel are required to remain in their vehicles until the lighting is clear of the aerodrome and greater than 5km of the airfield. Depending on the conditions of the thunderstorm, increased surface inspections may be carried out to monitor localised flooding, FOD and infrastructure.

2.4 Ground Service Providers

2.4.1 Where ground servicing is restricted or suspended, this must be communicated to Airfield Operations and the Operations Control Room who will communicate to the relevant airport stakeholders impacted.

2.4.2 Thunderstorms and precipitation can cause issues with braking distances, puddles, and general disruption to the apron. All operators must proceed with extra care and drivers should be aware of the differing driving performance.

2.4.3 Restricted duties carried out on the apron should reflect the unique hazards created by thunderstorms including fuelling and the use of headsets.

2.4.4 All companies operating airside should regularly review the risk arising from thunderstorm activity on their operations and ensure that policies, risk assessments and documented procedures are in place. These should be made available to Airfield Operations upon request.

SECTION 3 - WINTER OPERATIONS

3. Introduction

Winter conditions introduce hazards to aerodrome operations. Whilst the Airport makes every reasonable effort to clear frost, ice, and snow, it can be a lengthy process, especially with persistent or heavy snowfall. It is therefore essential that all Airport personnel, regardless of organisation are constantly aware that frost, ice and snow may present and take extra precautions. Snowfall can impose significant restrictions on airfield capacity and can lead to disruption, in prolonged or severe snowfall, disruption can last for many days.

3.1 Winter Operations Plan

The Head of Airfield Operations (HAO) is responsible for the planning, organisation, and annual review of the Winter Operations Plan (WOP), as the document owner. The Winter Operations Plan is released annually on 1st October. Companies requiring access to the plan, should request to be added to the distribution list via emastandingorders@eastmidlandsairport.com

Departmental Managers are responsible for ensuring robust procedures are in place and reviewed annually in line with the WOP.

Line Managers and Supervisors are responsible for communicating the WOP and Safety Alerts to their employees.

3.2 Winter Operations Committee

The Winter Operations Committee meets annually prior to the start of the winter season. All operators are expected to attend, and the minutes of the meeting are circulated as a record discussions and decisions made.

3.3 Roles and Responsibilities

The HAO is responsible for the aerodrome response to winter operations as detailed within the Winter Operations Plan and for ensuring that the plan is communicated in a timely manner to ensure all key postholders and operators are fully conversant with their roles and responsibilities.

3.3.1 All personnel

- All personnel working airside are responsible for ensuring their own Health and Safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. All personnel shall:
- Take extra precautions during Winter Operations.
- Keep to designated pedestrian walkways and footpaths.
- Wear the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and clothing which is appropriate for the prevailing weather conditions.
- Adhere to the guidance and procedures contained within the Winter Operations Plan and through any other documentation periodically issued throughout the winter season.
- Report areas that are potentially unsafe, posing a risk to colleagues, members of the public and to the Airfield Operation.
- Drive with extreme caution on and around the Aerodrome, reduce speed to consider surface conditions, increased stopping distances and proximity to personnel, aircraft, and other vehicles.
- Minimise any vehicle and equipment movements over fresh snow so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Assist in the clearance of frost, ice, snow or other contaminants from passenger walkways.

3.3.2 Ground Handlers

In addition to the responsibilities outlined in “All personnel”, Ground Handlers who carry out de-icing activities on the airfield, are required to comply in accordance with AOI 24 Environmental Procedures.

3.3.3. Communications

Communications between Airfield Operators and the Airport in relation to Winter Operations, should be done via the Control Room on 01332 852840 (ext. 2840). This includes but is not exclusively:

- Reporting and requesting areas contaminated and / or requiring de-icing or snow clearing.
- Changes in operating schedules to ensure clearance priorities can be updated.