

Annex 2 to NPA 2023-106
Proposed amendments to Regulation (EU) 965/2012 and EASA AMC and GM
RMT.0728 Ground Handling Requirements

Annex I Definitions**Annex I Definitions for terms used in Annexes II to VIII**

(54a) 'ground supervision' means a ground handling service consisting of activities related to the supervision of all GH operations to an operator at an aerodrome. This service may be contracted to a GH organisation or performed by the aircraft operator itself, as self-handling.

(72c) 'load control' means a process under the responsibility of the aircraft operator, to ensure that the aircraft is safely and efficiently loaded before each flight;

(72e) 'loadsheets' means a load control document that contains the mass and balance data for a particular flight, including:

(a) the dry operating mass of the aircraft fuel, other consumables, other consumables and load components; and

(b) the distribution of the load in the aircraft and the CG position;

(72f) 'loading instruction/report (LIR)' means a load control document issued for the purpose of aircraft loading;

Rationale

New definitions are proposed for the new text added to Part-CAT related to the mass and balance and the load control process of an air operator (72 c, e, f). The load control process is one of the most important ground handling processes, and it is closely linked to the operator's operational control functions. Annex II Part-ARO.

The definition of ground supervision (54a) covers another specific ground handling function that is introduced with the GH Regulation. When this function is performed as a self-handling service, by the operator's own personnel, the operator only needs to comply with the requirements on ground supervision included in this regulation and can thus be exempted from compliance with the whole GH Regulation.

ARO.GEN.120 Means of compliance

[...]

(d1) Notwithstanding point (d), the applicable requirements of point ARGH.GEN.120 of Regulation (EU) 2024/XX [ground handling] shall apply to CAT operators of complex motor-powered aeroplanes when performing self-handling.

Rationale

This new paragraph is proposed to ensure the same treatment of AltMOCs for ground handling activities, regardless of who the provider of the GH services is – an aircraft operator, an aerodrome

operator, or a GH organisation. A GH organisation only needs to inform its competent authority of the list of the AltMoCs that it uses. The competent authority verifies the AltMoCs and the risk assessments related to them as part of the GH oversight programme. There is no need for prior approval of the AltMoC and also the organisation is not required to send the AltMoC or the associated risk assessment to the competent authority before applying it. To ensure a level-playing field with the other organisations providing ground handling services (aircraft operator or aerodrome operator), the AltMoC requirements related to GH services should be the same. A similar amendment is proposed also in Regulation (EU) 139/2014 if an aerodrome operator performs GH services.

Annex III Part-ORO

AMC3 ORO.GEN.110(f) Operator responsibilities

INSTRUCTIONS AND PROCEDURES FOR AIRCRAFT GROUND HANDLING

- (a) When contracting the ground handling services to a third-party ground handling organisation, the operator should ensure that the GH organisation is provided with the operator's instructions and procedures for ground handling activities.
- (b) The instructions and procedures for ground handling should specify the exceptions or deviations from the industry standards and good practices.

Rationale

This new AMC is proposed to clarify that the operator is responsible to ensure that the contracted GH organisation has received the operator's operational procedures for GH services. As per the Essential Requirements of Annex VII (pt. 4.1(c)) to Regulation (EU) 2018/1139, the GH organisation must provide GH services in accordance with the operational procedures and instructions of the aircraft operator.

Point (b) should make it easier for GH organisations to spot the differences in the operator procedures from the otherwise standard operational procedures for aircraft handling, so that it can incorporate those differences in its own GOM more easily.

AMC4 ORO.GEN.110(f) Operator responsibilities

TURNAROUND COORDINATION

- (a) The operator should establish a ground handling procedure for the coordination of the aircraft turnaround activities.
- (b) This procedure should cover, as applicable, the case when more than one GH organisation is involved in the provision of GH services during aircraft turnaround.

Rationale

This new AMC is proposed to address the coordination of the turnaround activities during aircraft turnaround. Some operators outsource this function to one of the contracted GH service providers, while other operators do not have or require such an individual function as they assign the specific tasks of turnaround coordination to other ground handling functions that they have, for example, ramp

coordination. It is likely that in the future this function will become completely automatised, with no need of human intervention.

This AMC is in line with the proposed AMC1 GH.OPS.405 in the draft GH regulation (see Annex 1 to NPA 2023-10x).

AMC5 ORO.GEN.110(f) Operator responsibilities

FUELLING SUPERVISION

The operator should include a function responsible for the fuelling supervision in its operational procedures for ground handling. This function may be assigned to its own personnel or delegated to a contracted ground handling organisation. The fuelling supervisor should be easy to identify on the apron and should remain in the area during aircraft refuelling.

Rationale

This new AMC is proposed to address the refuelling safety issues identified in the occurrence reports (see the data provided in the safety impact assessment in Appendix 1 to this NPA). It creates a link to the GH requirement on refuelling (see proposed GH.OPS.315) and also to AMC6 CAT.OP.MPA.200 pt. (c)(2).

The AMC is in line with the JIG standards on refuelling.

ORO.GEN.120 Means of compliance

(e) When a CAT operator of complex-motor-powered aeroplanes uses alternative means of compliance to comply with Regulation (EU) 202x/yy [ground handling], it shall provide the competent authority with the list of those alternative means of compliance and shall make them available to the competent authority in due time for oversight purposes.

Rationale

The new point (e) is proposed to ensure the same treatment of the AltMoCs used by the operator to comply with the GH Regulation as any other GH organisation.

GM1 Means of compliance

COMPETENT AUTHORITY

The competent authority for ground handling purposes is the authority established in accordance with Regulation (EU) 202x/yy [ground handling].

ORO.GEN.150 Findings and corrective actions

After receipt of notification of findings, the operator shall:
[...]

- (d) inform any contracted ground handling organisations of the actions taken to address the non-compliance if that non-compliance directly affects the safety risk within, or the responsibilities of, that ground handling organisation.

Rationale

This new point is proposed to align this regulation with the GH regulation and the Aerodrome regulation with regard to the sharing of safety-relevant information among the three stakeholders that have most of the safety interfaces in ground handling services. The GH expert group supporting EASA in the development of the draft rules on ground handling has often highlighted that communication of safety-relevant information was rather uni-directional from the GH organisation to the air operator, but not the other way around. To improve the safety of ground operations, GH organisations need to receive safety relevant information that directly affects their responsibility for the safe provision of services.

A similar amendment is proposed also in the Aerodrome Regulation and, of course, in the GH Regulation.

ORO.GEN.200 Management system

- (a) The operator shall establish, implement and maintain a management system that includes:
- [...]
- (3) the identification of aviation safety hazards entailed by the activities of the operator, including those originating from interfaces with ground handling organisations, the evaluation and the management of associated risks, including taking actions to mitigate the risks and verifying the effectiveness of those mitigating actions;
- [...]

Rationale

The new text is proposed to ensure consistency with the aerodrome and ground handling domains. Regulation (EU) 139/2014 has the interfaces covered in ADR.OR.D.025 'Coordination with other organisations'. The proposed GH Regulation includes this element in ORGH.GEN.200 and GH.OPS.010.

GM5 ORO.GEN.200(a)(3)

INTERFACES WITH GH ORGANISATIONS AND AERODROME OPERATORS

When identifying aviation safety hazards entailed by its activities, the operator should consider interfaces with GH organisations and aerodrome operators.

Not all stakeholders will have a role to play in each of the operational procedures that are part of the interfaces. In order to avoid any confusion in this sense, it is important that they clarify their responsibilities and tasks for each of the common activities and that their personnel are familiarised with them.

The operational interfaces should identify the clear tasks and responsibilities for at least the following processes and activities. However, it should be kept in mind that the interfaces may involve more stakeholders depending on the contracted activities and the concluded agreements.

It is recommended that the aircraft operator uses the guidelines for establishing operational interfaces provided in ICAO Doc 10121 Manual on Ground Handling, particularly Chapter 6 thereof.

AMC1 ORO.GEN.200(c) Management system

INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

To ensure the implementation of an integrated management system, the operator should identify the following elements in its management system structure and documentation:

- (a) the organisations certified, approved or declared under Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 and its delegated and implementing acts that are covered by its management system;
- (b) the areas of activities that are integrated in its management system, with the proper interfaces that enable effective functioning and communication between them; and
- (c) applicable requirements for each area of activity.

Rationale

This new AMC is proposed to bring more details to support the implementation of an integrated management system by an organisation that holds an AOC and also other certificates, authorisations, or submits a declaration – all of which covering different aviation domains. This was drafted having in mind the case when an AOC holder also needs to declare its self-handling activities (under the new GH Regulation), knowing that this is the same organisation having one management system to cover both domains, so there should be a streamline process to integrate the new GH elements into an existing management system and avoid any duplications.

Note: Stakeholders should be aware of an administrative issue about this AMC: the related amendment to the implementing rule (point (c) of ORO.GEN.200) was proposed in another rulemaking task (RMT.0392) and published in [NPA 2022-11](#). It is expected that the adoption of the two proposed amendments (to the implementing rule under RMT.0392 and this AMC under RMT.0728) are not synchronised. As a solution, it could be proposed that this AMC is moved under RMT.0392 so that the implementing rule and the related AMC are published together. The implementation of this amendment should pose no problem in terms of timelines; it is expected that this rule and its AMC can be implemented in due time before the GH regulation becomes applicable.

AMC1 ORO.GEN.205 Contracted activities

RESPONSIBILITY WHEN CONTRACTING ACTIVITIES

- (a) The operator may decide to contract certain activities to external organisations.
- (b) A written agreement should exist between the operator and the contracted organisation clearly defining the contracted activities and the applicable requirements. In case of ad-hoc operations without a prior ground handling agreement, the ground handling services may be provided in basis of a short notice from the operator or the commander/pilot-in-command.
- (c) The contracted safety-related activities relevant to the agreement should be included in the operator's safety management and compliance monitoring programmes.

- (d) The operator should ensure that the contracted organisation has the necessary authorisation or approval when required, or that a ground handling organisation contracted to provide services at an EU aerodrome in the scope of Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 operates under a declaration and commands the resources and competence to undertake the task.

Rationale

New text is proposed to this AMC to cover the provision of GH services when they are not contracted in advance of a flight.

The new proposed text in point (d) ensures that the operator, be it an AOC holder, an NCC or a SPO operator, when operating in EASA Member States, uses only the GH services of a GH organisation that has declared its activities.

AMC3 ORO.GEN.205 Contracted activities

GROUND HANDLING SERVICES

When contracting a GH organisation that has declared its activities in accordance with Regulation (EU) 202x/yy [ground handling], the operator should adopt a risk-based approach to comply with the requirements of ORO.GEN.205.

Rationale

This new proposed AMC aims at enabling operators to reduce the number of audits on contracted GH organisations as these will take full responsibility for the safe provision of GH services under the new GH Regulation. At the same time, those GH organisations will be overseen by the competent authority, which should already provide a certain level of certainty for the safety of their operation. Nothing prevents the GH organisation from showing the aircraft operators the results of audits and inspections performed by its competent authority.

It is expected that the operator's confidence in the results of competent authority oversight on the GH organisation will increase in time. Consequently, operators should be released from exercising the same level of control over GH organisations as today, when there is no GH regulation in place. They will no longer have to verify all aspects of a GH organisation's management system (as this will be covered by the oversight of the competent authority), but rather focus on the elements that are directly applicable to the safe provision of GH services to their aircraft and passengers.

GM1 ORO.GEN.205 Contracted activities

CONTRACTING — GENERAL

- (a) Operators may decide to contract certain activities to external organisations for the provision of services related to areas such as:
- (1) ground de-icing/anti-icing;
 - ~~(2)~~ ground handling;
 - ~~(2)~~ flight support (including performance calculations, flight planning, navigation database and dispatch);

- (34) training; and
- (45) manual preparation.
- (b) Contracted activities include all activities within the operator's scope of approval that are performed by another organisation either itself certified, ~~or~~ authorised or covered by a declaration to carry out such activity or, if not certified, ~~or~~ authorised or declaring its activity, working under the operator's approval.
- (c) The ultimate responsibility for the product or service provided by external organisations should always remain with the operator.
- (d) Notwithstanding point (c), a ground handling organisation providing services to an operator is not exonerated from its own responsibility for the safe provision of services in compliance with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 and its delegated and implementing acts.

Rationale

New point (d) is proposed to be added to clarify that while the aircraft operator remains ultimately responsible for any service that it contracts for its operation, the GH organisation has its own responsibility to provide GH services in a safe manner under the declaration that it signs and under the

ORO.GEN.315 Operational procedures for ground handling

- (a) The operator shall ensure the ground handling services for its own aircraft, passengers, mail and cargo are provided either as self-handling with its own personnel or as contracted services to a third-party ground handling organisation, or a combination of both.
- (b) When providing self-handling services, the CAT operator of complex-motor-powered aeroplanes shall comply with the requirements of CAT.GEN.MPA.220.
- (c) When contracting the ground handling services to a declared organisation operating under the terms of a declaration in accordance with Regulation (EU) 202x/yy [ground handling], the operator may use the operational procedures of the contracted GH organisation in either of the following cases:
 - (1) the operator agrees that the GH organisation applies its own operational procedures for the provision of GH services, in accordance with point GH.OPS.005(b) of Regulation (EU) 202x/yy [ground handling]. This shall be documented;
 - (2) the operator cannot provide its own procedures and instructions to the GH organisation.

Rationale

A new implementing rule is proposed to clarify the conditions in which GH services are provided – when self-handling or when contracted to a third-party GH organisation. Secondly, the new proposed rule establishes the applicable requirements for self-handling operations.

Point (c) enables the operator to use the operational procedures of the GH organisation instead of its own procedures. This proposed rule aims at harmonising the operational procedures for GH services.

AMC1 ORO.GEN.315(c)(1) Operational procedures for ground handling

HARMONISATION OF OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES BETWEEN THE OPERATOR AND THE CONTRACTED GH ORGANISATION

If both the operator and the GH organisation apply ground handling operational procedures based on the same industry standards or good practices, the operator should consider reducing the deviations from those industry standards and good practices based on a safety risk assessment to prove that those deviations ensure a higher safety level than the industry standards.

Rationale

This new AMC is proposed to lead towards a harmonisation of the operational procedures for GH services.

AMC3 ORO.MLR.100 Operations manual

TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR THE OPERATOR'S PERSONNEL PERFORMING GH ACTIVITIES

[...]

D TRAINING

[...]

2.5 for operations personnel other than crew members (e.g. **flight** dispatcher, **ground** handling personnel, etc.), all other relevant items prescribed in Annex IV (Part-CAT) and in this Annex pertaining to their duties.

[...]

Rationale:

Introduction of the clarification '**flight** dispatcher', to distinguish it from the dispatch function related to ground handling activities, the latter having nothing to do with the flight dispatch function as described in ICAO Annex 6 and this Regulation. The new term for the dispatcher in ground handling, associated to a different role (i.e., coordination function of activities on the ramp and confirming the aircraft is ready to depart upon completion of ramp handling activities) will be 'ground dispatcher'. The term is introduced in the GH Regulation, with the intention to clarify the confusion caused by the term 'dispatcher' used in flight operations and ground operations, with different meanings.

Annex IV Part-CAT

CAT.GEN.MPA.220 Additional responsibilities for CAT operators of complex motor-powered aeroplanes performing self-handling

(a) The operator providing any of the GH activities listed in Article 1 of Regulation 202x/yy [ground handling] on ground handling to itself or within a single air carrier business grouping (self-

handling) shall comply with the applicable requirements of Annex III and Annex IV to Regulation (EU) 202x/yy on ground handling, except for the requirements applicable to the ground supervision function.

- (b) The training programme for ground handling personnel shall be submitted to the competent authority for the oversight of GH activities as required by point ORGH.DEC.100(a) of Reg. (EU) 202x/yy [ground handling].
- (c) The operator shall ensure that its ground supervision function complies with point ORO.GEN.110 and that its procedures describe the following:
 - (1) the activities included within the scope of ground supervision,
 - (2) the responsibilities associated to this function,
 - (3) the training programme for this function.

Rationale

This new implementing rule is proposed to clarify the applicable requirements to an operator when it performs self-handling. They will have to comply with the GH Regulation with certain exceptions (ground supervision, which shall remain covered by the Air Ops regulation). This rule covers self-handling also when the operator provides GH services to other aircraft operators that are part of the same business grouping.

Point (b) ensures the application of the same treatment of the training programme for GH personnel – which does not require any approval by the competent authority, as the GH organisations operate under a declaration regime, while for aircraft operators some elements of their management system are subject to approval. A new GM is also proposed to clarify this aspect.

GM1 CAT.GEN.MPA.220(a) Additional responsibilities for CAT operators of complex motor-powered aeroplanes performing self-handling

SINGLE AIR CARRIER BUSINESS GROUPING

The term 'single air carrier business grouping' refers to two or more operators (AOC holders) having their principal place of business in the territory to which the Treaties apply, that facilitate the harmonisation of their management systems, operations and other processes for the purpose of applying the requirements for self-handling. This includes applying common standards to components of their management system addressing ground handling, training of personnel performing GH activities, ground operational procedures, and the maintenance programme for ground support equipment.

GM1 CAT.GEN.MPA.220(b) Additional responsibilities for CAT operators of complex motor-powered aeroplanes performing self-handling

TRAINING PROGRAMME

The training programme for the operator's ground handling personnel does not require prior approval of the competent authority.

This approach is consistent with Regulation (EU) 202x/yy [ground handling], which establishes the requirements for GH training applicable also to a CAT operator of complex motor-powered aeroplanes performing self-handling. The GH Regulation does not require any prior approval of any element of the organisation's management system, as organisations providing GH services operate under a declaration regime.

CAT.POL.MAB.105 Mass and balance data and documentation

- (a) [...]
- (b) Where mass and balance data and documentation is generated by a computerised mass and balance system, the operator shall:
- (1) verify the integrity of the output data to ensure that the data are within AFM limitations or the operations manual limitations if more restrictive; and
 - (2) specify the instructions and procedures for its use in its operations manual.
- [...]

CAT.POL.MAB.110 Load control process

The operator shall establish and implement a load control process and associated procedures, which shall be included in the operations manual.

Rationale

A new implementing rule and related AMC&GM are proposed to cover the load control process. This process contains many safety-critical functions as it plans the aircraft load so that it respects the mass and balance calculations. The different steps of the load control process are now better identified, as the operator will need to establish tasks and objectives, as well as to ensure that the personnel performing those tasks are properly trained.

Whether these tasks are performed by the operator's own personnel or are outsourced to a third-party GH organisation, the requirements need to be observed in all cases.

Similar requirements and AMC&GM are proposed also for NCC and SPO operators.

AMC1 CAT.POL.MAB.110 Load control process**LOAD CONTROL PROCESS**

- (a) The operator should ensure the load control process covers at least the following:
- (1) identification of the roles and functions within the load control process and the tasks and responsibilities associated to each of them;
 - (2) where applicable, the aircraft loading and unloading supervision should be done by a different person than the one(s) responsible for load planning and loadsheet issuance;
 - (3) the loadsheet, the loading instructions, and, if applicable, the NOTOC are signed (by wet or electronic signature) by the responsible persons and distributed to the relevant persons as identified in the load control process;
 - (4) effective communication of information related to aircraft loading between the loading supervisor and
 - (i) the persons responsible for issuing the loadsheet, the loading instructions and the NOTOC and
 - (ii) the flight crew;
 - (5) the loading is performed in accordance with the loading instructions (LIR);
 - (6) any deviations from the LIR are reported to the flight crew for acceptance in accordance with CAT.POL.MAB.105.
- (b) When the loadsheet preparation and loading/unloading of baggage are performed by the commander, then point (a)(2), the document distribution in point (3), points (4), (5) and (6) do not apply.

GM1 CAT.POL.MAB.110 Load control process**LOADING INSTRUCTIONS/REPORT (LIR)**

The LIR contains a loading instruction part, completed by the load planner, and a loading report part, completed by the loading supervisor. The loading instruction part contains information about the maximum mass of load items that may be loaded in each cargo compartment and instructions for safe and optimal distribution of items to be loaded in the aircraft cargo compartments. The loading report part contains a confirmation that the aircraft has been loaded according to the instructions and includes any last-minute changes.

Annex VI Part-NCC**NCC.POL.116 Load control process**

The operator shall establish and implement a load control process and associated procedures, which shall be included in the operations manual.

AMC1 NCC.POL.116 Load control process**LOAD CONTROL PROCESS**

- (a) The operator should ensure the load control process covers at least the following:
- (1) identification of the roles and functions within the load control process and the tasks and responsibilities associated to each of them;
 - (2) where applicable, the aircraft loading and unloading supervision should be done by a different person than the one(s) responsible for load planning and loadsheet issuance;
 - (3) the loadsheet, the loading instructions, and, if applicable, the NOTOC are signed (by wet or electronic signature) by the responsible persons and distributed to the relevant persons as identified in the load control process;
 - (4) effective communication of information related to aircraft loading between the loading supervisor and
 - (i) the persons responsible for issuing the loadsheet, the loading instructions and the NOTOC and
 - (ii) the flight crew;
 - (5) the loading is performed in accordance with the loading instructions (LIR);
 - (6) any deviations from the LIR are reported to the flight crew for acceptance in accordance with NCC.POL.110.
- (b) When the loadsheet preparation and loading/unloading of baggage are performed by the commander, then point (a)(2), the document distribution in point (3), points (4), (5) and (6) do not apply.

SPO.POL.117 Load control process for complex motor-powered aircraft

The operator shall establish and implement a load control process and associated procedures which shall be included in the operations manual.

AMC1 SPO.POL.117 Load control process for complex motor-powered aircraft**LOAD CONTROL PROCESS**

- (a) The operator should ensure the load control process covers at least the following:
- (1) identification of the roles and functions within the load control process and the tasks and responsibilities associated to each of them;
 - (2) where applicable, the aircraft loading and unloading supervision should be done by a different person than the one(s) responsible for load planning and loadsheet issuance;

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- (3) the loadsheet, the loading instructions, and, if applicable, the NOTOC are signed (by wet or electronic signature) by the responsible persons and distributed to the relevant persons as identified in the load control process;
 - (4) effective communication of information related to aircraft loading between the loading supervisor and
 - (i) the persons responsible for issuing the loadsheet, the loading instructions and the NOTOC and
 - (ii) the flight crew;
 - (5) the loading is performed in accordance with the loading instructions (LIR);
 - (6) any deviations from the LIR are reported to the flight crew for acceptance in accordance with SPO.POL.115.
- (b) When the loadsheet preparation and loading/unloading of baggage are performed by the pilot-in-command, then point (a)(2), the document distribution in point (3), points (4), (5) and (6) do not apply.