

# AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION CIRCULAR Y 033/2024

## UNITED KINGDOM



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## BRITISH AEROBATICS - CONTESTS AND EVENTS 2024

### 1 General

- 1.1 British Aerobatics (BA) organises and runs aerobatic contests and training events at airfield locations throughout the United Kingdom. BA is the recognised National Governing Body (NGB) for air sports (aerobatics) under the auspices of the Royal Aero Club and is affiliated to the Federation Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) for the administration of contests to international rules.
- 1.2 Details of the dates and times of all contests and events are notified via the United Kingdom NATS NOTAM system. The purpose of this circular is to explain the activity likely to be encountered by pilots attending these contests and events, local and visiting pilots at the host airfields and pilots transiting local airspace.
- 1.3 Details of individual contests and events, together with contact telephone numbers for airfields and officials are available at [www.aerobatics.org.uk](http://www.aerobatics.org.uk) under Competitions and Events Calendar. The 2024 schedule is also listed in Annex A below.
- 1.4 The BA Head of Contest Organisation can be contacted on: 07808-160912 or at [contests@aerobatics.org.uk](mailto:contests@aerobatics.org.uk).

### 2 Contest Activity

- 2.1 Aerobatic contest flying is subject to the Rules and Code of Conduct of BA, FAI (CIVA) Sporting Code and agreed local flying regulations. Contests may be subject to CAA exemptions from the SERA and the Air Navigation Order and participating aircraft may not always be able to comply with the Rules of the Air, especially when engaged in a contest flight.
- 2.2 Contest flights will take place in the aerobatic box, a notional 1000 M cube of airspace usually orientated over, or to one side of the airfield. The location of this box is shown on the relevant contest page at [www.aerobatics.org.uk](http://www.aerobatics.org.uk). Although competitors are penalised for flying outside of the box, wind conditions and the circumstances of an individual flight may mean that a competitor is unable to keep entirely within these limits.
- 2.3 A contest NOTAM will specify a 2 NM 'safety zone', usually up to 5000 FT above aerodrome level (AAL) centred on the airfield. This is to allow for aircraft climbing into and exiting the aerobatic box and repositioning to compensate for wind or meteorological conditions. Non-participating pilots are strongly advised to avoid this area at all times, unless complying with agreed joining, departing or local procedures in force at the time of the contest or event.
- 2.4 In the event that the notified airspace of 2 NM and 5000 FT AAL encroaches into Controlled Airspace (CAS) the Contest Director (CD) is to contact the controlling authority of the controlled airspace at least 28 days before the competition to seek approval for aerobatic aircraft to operate within CAS. The CD must also agree any specific procedures and use of SSR that the controlling authority require. If no approval is granted all participating aerobatic aircraft are to remain clear of CAS.
- 2.5 Within the aerobatic box and around its boundaries aircraft will be manoeuvring at varying speeds, heights and g-loadings. Abrupt changes of direction, height and speed are the norm and pilots will not always be able to take avoiding action, nor comply with the Rules of the Air. A competition aircraft at full speed will transit the 1000 M aerobatic box in approximately 8 seconds and can climb from the base to the top of the box in under 20 seconds.
- 2.6 During the course of a contest it is not unusual to have up to 80 competitor flights on each of the notified contest days.
- 2.7 Before the contest and once the contest is completed there will be additional activity at the airfield and in the local area as aircraft arrive and depart. This activity may be outside of the times set out in the contest NOTAM.
- 2.8 At venues for glider aerobatic contests there will additionally be tug aircraft operating. Gliders will be towed to height and will then be released at 4000 FT in a location suitable for positioning into the aerobatic box. This will depend on the wind on the day.
- 2.9 At venues where Club level events are taking place there will additionally be dual training flights in the local area up to 10 NM from the host airfield. Such flights will be conducted in accordance with the normal Rules of the Air.

### 3 Safety

- 3.1 BA employs a range of safety measures, which are supervised by the CD and Chief Judge (CJ). These start with a comprehensive

briefing before competition flying starts, which is compulsory for all competing pilots. At this briefing any local flying procedures to be used during the contest duration will be confirmed by the representative of the host airfield. Additional briefings are conducted daily, by the CD, CJ and airfield representative, before competition flying commences.

- 3.2 The CD and CJ are equipped with hand-held radios tuned to the local frequency and to a specially allocated safety frequency. All contest aircraft are in contact with the CJ during their competing flight. This is to allow a flight to be suspended or discontinued if an urgent safety or emergency situation should arise.
- 3.3 Pilots planning a flight to or from the host airfield should make contact with the airfield management on the telephone number published to establish local flying procedures and obtain PPR, even if this is not their normal practice.
- 3.4 Pilots transiting nearby should remain clear of the notified safety zone, taking into account the TAKE 2 code - remaining at least 2 NM and 200 FT clear of notified airspace. Early contact on the local ATC/AFIS/RADIO frequency announcing your intended transit route will help co-ordinate.
- 3.5 Pilots should not transit through the overhead of the host airfield during the contest or attempt an overhead join unless this has been notified and agreed with the supervising radio operator.
- 3.6 In the event of an urgent safety or emergency situation requiring that a non-competing pilot enter the safety zone or effect a priority landing, earliest safe contact should be made with the supervising radio operator on the published airfield frequency.

#### **4 Ground Operations**

- 4.1 Aircraft participating in the contest or event will endeavour to comply with local practice and agreed procedures at all times. However, ground activity in the form of taxiing aircraft, refueling and aircraft holding awaiting their contest flight may be significantly more than is usual. Local and visiting pilots should take account of this in preparing their arrival and departure plans.
- 4.2 Judging officials will be located around 200 M from the edge of the aerobatic box. The judging position may vary during the course of the contest, depending on the wind direction. Where the judging line is established within the airfield boundary, this will be clearly notified. Pilots must not overfly this position and should take particular care if taxiing or hover taxiing near to the position, or near any box markers which may be in position on the airfield.
- 4.3 Members of the public are not permitted airside during a contest or event, unless notified to the airfield management and directly supervised by a suitably trained escort.

#### **Annex A - List of British Aerobatics Contests 2024**

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Airfield</b>
6-7 April	Dunstable London Gliding Club
3-5 May	Sleap (EGCV)
11-12 May	Popham (EGHP)
18-19 May	Fenland (EGCL)
1-2 June	Compton Abbas (EGHA)
14-16 June	Leicester (EGBG)
10-14 July	Sywell (EGBK)
12-14 July	Saltby Airfield
3-4 August	Brighton (EGBR)
17-18 August	Leicester (EGBG)
5-7 September	Sleap (EGCV)
21-22 September	Leicester (EGBG)