



Australian Government
Department of Defence



Defence Aviation
Safety Authority

ADVISORY CIRCULAR

AC 004/2020 v2.0

Transition to DASR 139 – Aerodromes

BP7839301

V2.0 – 09 Jul 2024

An Advisory Circular is issued by the Authority to promulgate important information to the Defence Aviation community, but does not mandate any action. This includes informing the community on aviation safety / airworthiness matters, information that enhances compliance understanding for existing regulation, or policy guidance for aviation issues not yet regulated that requires further understanding.

Audience

This Advisory Circular (AC) is relevant to:

- Proposed/current Aerodrome Operators (AD OPR)
- Aerodrome Certificate applicants
- Environmental Commanders
- Security and Estate Group (SEG)
- Aerodrome management personnel

Purpose

The purpose of this Advisory Circular (AC) is to provide updated guidance to stakeholders on the DASR 139 transition strategy and activities. This includes an overview of updated DASR 139 Aerodrome operation arrangements and Aerodrome Certification processes. This AC does not cover processes for managing major changes to Aerodrome facilities and equipment—DASPMAN Volume 3 covers these areas separately.

Further information

For further information on this AC, contact: dasa.aerodromes@defence.gov.au

Status

This AC will remain current until cancelled by DASA.

Version	Date Approved	Approved By	Details
1.0	10 April 2020	DG DASA	Initial release
2.0	09 July 2024	DG DASA	<p>Changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• updated references and acronyms• added requirement for AD OPRs to operate Aerodromes IAW DASR 139 requirements, regardless of DASR 139 Aerodrome certification or AD OPR approval status• updated Aerodrome certification processes• removed Aerodrome certification schedule• removed information duplicated in DASPMAN Volume 3.

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1 Reference material

1.1 Acronyms

The table below lists the acronyms and abbreviations used in this AC.

Acronym	Description
AC	Advisory Circular
AD OPR	Aerodrome Operator
CB	Certification Basis
CASA	Civil Aviation Safety Authority
DASA	Defence Aviation Safety Authority
DASDRM	Defence Aviation Safety Design Requirements Manual
DASPMAN	Defence Aviation Safety Program Manual
DASR	Defence Aviation Safety Regulation
OIP	Orders, Instructions and Publications
OpSpec	Operations Specification
RDB	Risk Decision Brief
SFARP	So Far As is Reasonably Practicable
SMS	Safety Management System
SOIU	Statement of Operating Intent and Usage

1.2 Definitions

The table below defines terms that have specific meaning in this AC and are not defined in the DASA Glossary of Terms.

Term	Definition
Applicant	Any Defence organisation or operator or its representative, which applies for an Aerodrome Certificate. The applicant submits the Aerodrome Certificate application on behalf of the AD OPR.

1.3 DASR Forms

1.3.1 DASR Forms –

- a. Form 1186 – Application for Aerodrome Certificate

Unless specified otherwise, all regulation references in this AC refer to the Defence Aviation Safety Regulation (DASR).

2 Introduction

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 DASA published DASR 139 – Aerodromes on 10 Apr 20. A formal DASR 139 transition period commenced on 01 Jan 21, with DASA providing:
- 2.1.1.1 a two-year transition period for AD OPRs to achieve organisational approval (ie by 31 Dec 22)
 - 2.1.1.2 a five-year transition period for Defence Aerodromes to achieve a DASR 139 Aerodrome Certificate (ie by 31 Dec 25).
- 2.1.2 The transition arrangements published in AC 004-2020 V1 permitted the AD OPR to continue to operate Defence Aerodromes IAW historical regulations¹ until an Aerodrome was certified IAW DASR 139. However, the process of certifying Defence Aerodromes has demanded greater skilling, expertise and support than originally expected, and saw prolonged certification timeframes, that would require extension beyond the original 31 Dec 25 timeframe. DASA identified that continued operations under the transitional arrangement (permitting operations IAW a historical regulation) no longer reflected best practice, and that a revised arrangement was required to expedite AD OPR transition to DASR 139. To address, DASA introduced the following measures:
- 2.1.2.1 In April 2024, DASA introduced limited scope certification of Defence Aerodromes to in response to resource issues across the enterprise.²
 - 2.1.2.2 In May 2024, DASA issued Authoritative Regulatory Advice (ARA) to AD OPRs³ and AVNCOMD⁴ directing the operation of all Defence Aerodromes identified for DASR 139 certification⁵ is to be IAW DASR 139 arrangements WEF 01 Jul 24, regardless of Aerodrome certification status.
- 2.1.3 Version 2.0 of this AC provides guidance to stakeholders on the updated DASR 139 transition strategy to enable AD OPRs to implement good practices prior to, and following, DASA issuing a DASR 139 Aerodrome Certificate.

Note: The transition strategy and activities described in this AC only apply to existing Defence Aerodromes. All new Aerodromes are required to comply with the DASR 139 from the outset.

¹ That is, IAW *DASR Aerodromes (historical)*, released 10 Oct 19 ([BP34724546](#)), as previously advised in Version 1 of this AC.

² *Minute – Land Based Fixed Wing Aerodrome Certification with Exceptions* ([BP40019798](#))

³ ARA 08-2024 – CSG Aerodrome operation arrangements WEF 01 Jul 24 ([BP39401128](#)) and ARA10-2024 - SPTFOR Aerodrome operation arrangements WEF 01 Jul 24 ([BP39523809](#))

⁴ ARA 12-2024 – AVNCOMD Aerodrome operation arrangements WEF 01 Jul 24 ([BP39523933](#))

⁵ *Minute - DASR.139 Certified Aerodromes - Final Determination*, of February 2021 refers ([BP13215660](#)).

3 Transition to DASR 139 – Aerodromes

3.1 DASR 139 transition timeline

- 3.1.1 DASA no longer has a set timeline for transition to DASR 139 compliance. Schedule for AD OPR compliance for AVNCOMD and Aerodrome Certification across the enterprise will be established in consultation with each AD OPR with an aim to complete the activities as soon as is practicable.

3.2 AD OPR transition strategy and activities

- 3.2.1 **AD OPR initial approval.** AD OPRs must establish systems, structures and arrangements as necessary to comply with the DASR 139. Once these arrangements are sufficiently mature, the AD OPR should consult DASA for informal review. The AD OPR should then finalise necessary artefacts and submit a Compliance Statement to DASA. DASA will formally assess the AD OPR Compliance Statement and award successful applicants an organisational approval through issuing an AD OPR Certificate (AD OPRC) and accompanying Operations Specification (OpSpec).⁶

***Note:** if DASA issues an Aerodrome Certificate prior to AD OPR organisational approval⁷, the AD OPR must comply with all DASR 139 obligations for the operation of the Certified Aerodrome.*

- 3.2.2 **Aerodrome operation arrangements WEF 01 Jul 24.** From 01 Jul 24, AD OPRs must operate Defence Aerodromes identified for DASR 139 certification, IAW DASR 139 requirements—regardless of Aerodrome certification status or AD OPR approval status. The following specific Aerodrome management arrangements apply:

- 3.2.2.1 **Management of known Aerodrome design technical non-compliances.** For each Aerodrome identified for DASR 139 Certification, where an AD OPR identifies a design non-compliance against requirements of Defence Aviation Safety Design Requirements Manual (DASDRM), the AD OPR must address this non-compliance following Defence's 7- Step Safety Risk Management (SRM) process to ensure risks are eliminated or otherwise minimised So Far As is Reasonably Practicable (SFARP). DASPMAN Volume 3 and DASA Factsheets⁸ contain detailed information on the required documentation for the DASR 139 Aerodrome certification process, including management of non-compliances. The AD OPR is encouraged to seek early advice from DASA regarding management of identified technical

⁶ GM 139.30 provides further details on the ADOPRC and OpSpec.

⁷ For example, in the event of responsibility for an Aerodrome transferring to a new organisation.

⁸ The current factsheets identified formal processes, however DASA has identified other streamlined approaches. DASA should be consulted prior to starting any work on risk management of non-compliances.

non-compliances. (Contact DASA via the DASA Aerodromes Mailbox dasa.aerodromes@defence.gov.au.)

- 3.2.2.2 **Management of new Aerodrome design features.** New Aerodrome features should meet standards IAW DASDRM Section 6. Where a new Aerodrome design feature does not comply with the requirements of DASDRM Section 6, the documentation (as detailed above) should also document the capability imperative—providing justification to support the decision that will introduce a new aviation hazard.
- 3.2.2.3 **Management of operational non-compliances.** Where an AD OPR has a deficiency in DASR 139 compliance in any other DASR 139 subpart, the AD OPR must address known operational non-compliances using Defence’s 7-Step SRM process. The AD OPR should document associated risk management evidence via:
 - 3.2.2.3.1 an RDB and associated Risk Control Plan (where necessary), or
 - 3.2.2.3.2 any other suitable form of risk management documentation.

3.3 Aerodrome certification transition activities

3.3.1 Aerodrome Certification.

- 3.3.1.1 An Applicant must obtain an Aerodrome Certificate for each Defence Aerodrome requiring certification.⁹ To achieve aerodrome certification, the Applicant must:
 - 3.3.1.1.1 define a DASA-agreed Certification Basis (CB) for the aerodrome
 - 3.3.1.1.2 demonstrate that the aerodrome design and construction complies with the agreed CB
 - 3.3.1.1.3 declare that the aerodrome design and construction complies with the agreed CB
 - 3.3.1.1.4 implement arrangements to support continued aerodrome compliance with the CB
 - 3.3.1.1.5 provide design information to support continuing safe operation of the aerodrome.
- 3.3.1.2 For further information, see [DASPMAN Vol 3 chapter 11.2 - Aerodrome Certification](#).
- 3.3.1.3 Note DASA has introduced limited scope certification—to provide a more efficient method of certification—in response to resource issues across the enterprise. The AD OPR is encouraged to consult DASA prior to starting

⁹ *Minute - DASR.139 Certified Aerodromes - Final Determination*, of Feb 21 refers ([BP13215660](#)), however this list and associated priority is expected to be formally revised by the end of 2024.

work on an aerodrome certification.

3.3.2 CB development and approval

- 3.3.2.1 **CB development.** The first step of the certification process is for the Applicant to develop an Aerodrome CB (considering the Aerodrome operating intent) and gain DASA approval of the CB. An Aerodrome CB is an agreed set of design requirements that an aerodrome must be compliant with for DASA to issue an Aerodrome Certificate. Whilst the DASR 139 does not require a formal Statement of Operating Intent and Usage (SOIU) (or operating and support intent), the AD OPR should ensure documentation exists to capture sufficient detail of the operating intent for developing the CB from the baseline standard prescribed in the DASDRM.
- 3.3.2.2 DASA will support the applicant to develop the CB by providing guidance¹⁰ and the necessary forms and templates. DASA will also review mature drafts, if requested by the Applicant. Once the AD OPR submits the CB to DASA for review, DASA will either approve the CB or communicate the reasons for not approving the CB.

3.3.3 Demonstrating compliance with the CB and supporting arrangements for continued compliance and continuing safe operations

- 3.3.3.1 Once DASA has approved the CB, the applicant must collate evidence to demonstrate that the design and construction of the Aerodrome meets the agreed CB.
- 3.3.3.2 Any non-compliances to the DASA-agreed CB are to follow the non-compliance management process, where the applicant must take the necessary steps to ensure any risks are eliminated SFARP or otherwise minimised SFARP following Defences 7-Step Safety Risk Management (SRM) process.
- 3.3.3.3 When all non-compliances been approved and all compliance demonstration evidence has been developed, the Applicant is in a position to make a declaration that the design and construction of the Aerodrome entirely meets the requirements of the CB.
- 3.3.3.4 The Applicant is also required to implement arrangements to support continued Aerodrome compliance with the agreed CB and continuing safe Aerodrome operations. The Applicant is required to provide evidence of these arrangements as part of their Aerodrome Certificate application.

¹⁰ DASA Factsheets provide further detail on the process for defining the CB, including tailoring requirements to meet each Aerodrome's SOIU (or operating and support intent).

3.3.3.5 DASA will support the Applicant by providing guidance¹¹ and the necessary forms and templates.

3.3.4 **Aerodrome Certificate application submission, DASA review and Aerodrome Certificate issue**

3.3.4.1 DASR 139 Aerodrome certification involves the Applicant submitting an application for an Aerodrome Certificate, and DASA reviewing the application and issuing an Aerodrome Certificate (if successful).

3.3.4.2 DASA will provide progressive updates to the Applicant throughout the application review process. If DASA rejects the application, DASA will provide an explanation and work with the applicant to identify what changes the applicant needs to implement.¹²

3.3.5 **Managing Design Non-Compliances prior to DASA Approval of a CB.**

3.3.5.1 Prior to commencement of a certification activity for an Aerodrome, an AD OPR may undertake upgrades or initiate works at an Aerodrome. In addition, the AD OPR may become aware of design non-compliances inherent in the current designs that may pose a risk to safe flight operations. In each of these instances, the AD OPR or relevant project should use the DASDRM requirements as the basis for the works or assessments, taking the operating intent of the aerodrome into consideration, and capture any non-compliances against these requirements. These non-compliances should be managed IAW Defence's 7 Step SRM process, and any identified risk eliminated or otherwise minimised SFARP. Commanders responsible for a non-certified aerodrome are to ensure the aerodrome is safe to provide the intended service for aircraft operating to the aerodrome.

3.4 **Defence Aerodromes with Civilian Agreements**

3.4.1 DASA is investigating the requirements for Defence certification (or part thereof) of Joint User Aerodromes (i.e. Darwin and Townsville) and for certification of Military Aerodromes with civilian lodgings (e.g. Williamtown and Learmonth).

3.4.2 Military Aerodromes will require DASR 139 Certification, however the scope and coverage of this certification requires further clarity of CASA requirements. DASA will advise all stakeholders once a policy decision is completed. The AD OPR is encouraged to engage with DASA prior to commencing certification activities for Military Aerodromes with civilian lodgings.

¹¹ DASA Factsheets provide further detail on what constitutes compliance evidence; the non-compliance approval process; and implementing and providing evidence of the supporting arrangements for continued CB compliance and continuing safe Aerodrome operations.

¹² DASA Factsheets provide further detail on the Aerodrome Certificate application process.

4 DASA Training, Education and Support

- 4.1 DASA has developed formal education programs and promotional material to support DASR 139 implementation. These are relevant to all staff supporting the AD OPR AM, as well as Aerodrome designers and facilities managers.
- 4.2 DASA offers the following training courses to support DASR 139 understanding:
 - 4.2.1 **DASR 139 AD OPR Supporting Staff Course (PMKeyS 217300).** This course provides AD OPR staff and Aerodrome management staff with an understanding of their DASR 139 accountabilities and responsibilities. The course also explains the steps needed to achieve and maintain an AD OPR organisational approval, such as developing a Compliance Statement.
 - 4.2.2 **DASR 139 Certification Practitioners Course (PMKeyS 217563).** This course provides an understanding of the activities required to achieve and maintain a DASR 139 Aerodrome Certificate. DASA acknowledges that this course will target a wide range of stakeholders with varying technical backgrounds. The course content includes:
 - 4.2.2.1 Aerodrome design standards (including the DASDRM)
 - 4.2.2.2 the purpose of a CB and the CB development process
 - 4.2.2.3 the process for demonstrating compliance evidence (ie what constitutes evidence, and how evidence should be gathered and recorded)
 - 4.2.2.4 the process for managing non-compliances against the DASA-agreed CB
 - 4.2.2.5 how and when to declare compliance
 - 4.2.2.6 supporting arrangements for continued compliance with the CB and continuing safe flight operation.
- 4.3 The [DASA Training](#) webpage contains further details on course offerings and the nomination process.
- 4.4 **Factsheets.** In addition to the training courses, DASA has developed several factsheets providing further guidance on DASR 139 implementation. The [DASP Policy and Guidance Portal](#) contains links to all factsheets.
- 4.5 **Aerodromes and Heliports website.** The [DASA Aerodromes and Heliports website](#) provides information on all aspects of DASR 139. The website will contain relevant templates and exemplar documentation when available.
- 4.6 **DASPMAN Volume 3.** DASPMAN Volume 3 contains information related to Aerodrome regulation and certification to supplement information contained in DASR 139 Guidance Material.
- 4.7 **DASA Consultation.** DASA is available for ongoing DASR 139 consultation at dasa.aerodromes@defence.gov.au.