



# Safety net – safe operations around controlled and restricted airspace

**An Airspace Infringement (AI) is the unauthorised entry of an aircraft into airspace that requires a clearance to enter, may be restricted or closed for the purposes of special flying activity or other reasons.**

If you are involved in an AI, there is the potential for your aircraft to operate in unsafe proximity to other aircraft or harmful activity, e.g. where live weapons are being fired. An AI may also increase air traffic control (ATC) or pilot workload and result in delays to other aircraft.

There are a number of practices that may help you to avoid an AI.

## Planning your flight

- Ensure you use current airspace charts.
- Thoroughly familiarise yourself with local airspace and other aeronautical issues.
- Brief yourself on Restricted Area activations for your planned route, including NOTAM briefing. Some types of Restricted Areas may not be displayed on charts but will be activated by NOTAM.

*Note that Military Operating Areas (MOA) came into effect on 23rd March 2023 and also need to be considered with this advice.*

- Consider Control Area (CTA) steps along and around your planned route.

## Navigating

- Know your position accurately relative to CTA steps and Restricted Area boundaries.
- Verify your position if you unexpectedly arrive well ahead of or after your anticipated arrival time.
- If in doubt about your position, ask ATC for assistance.

## Using a transponder

Ensure your transponder is working before you fly.

If operating VFR in Class G or E airspace set your transponder to ON/ALT with code 1200 selected or ATC-assigned code. This will make your aircraft visible to ATC and the Airborne Collision Avoidance Systems in other aircraft.

Activate your ADS-B if fitted.

## Using the radio

- Actively monitor the appropriate area radio frequency and listen for transmissions.
- Be aware that ATC may direct calls to you based on your position, altitude or heading.
- Speak up if you think a transmission may have been directed at you.

## Using global navigation satellite system (GNSS)

Be aware that CTA steps may be based on various references, including the aerodrome DME, the Aerodrome Reference Point (ARP) or runway threshold. On the VTC, the steps will refer to the datum used, e.g. 30DME, 7NMARP, 8NM FM THR RWY 01.

## Using Air Traffic Control

- Controllers are there to help you.
- Subject to workload, a controller can assist with navigation advice, traffic information and weather.

## Diverting in-flight

If a change to your pre-planned route is required, be cautious, as these situations have led to infringements. If you require assistance with an in-flight diversion or a clearance request, contact ATC as soon as possible.

## Requesting clearance

- Request a clearance well before reaching the CTA step. Five minutes prior is a good guide.
- A submitted flight notification will expedite clearances.
- Have a contingency in case a clearance is not available.

## Restricted areas (RAs) and military operating areas

Restricted Areas may be permanent or temporary and not necessarily associated with military activity. For example, a police exclusion zone. Any Restricted

Area, including Temporary Restricted Areas (TRAs), can be made active with short notice.

TRAs associated with military exercises can be found in the AIP SUP.

MOA are generally established offshore (more than 12 NM from the coast, but may be closer).

Temporary MOA will be established for military exercises that are offshore.

### Restricted Area Classifications

Restricted Areas have been allocated a conditional status. This status is to give an indication of the likelihood of obtaining a clearance to fly through restricted airspace. NOTAMS may be issued to indicate changes to the conditional status, so it is important to check this during flight planning.

Conditional Status RA1: pilots may flight plan through the Restricted Area and, under normal circumstances when area is active, expect a clearance from ATC.

Conditional Status RA2: pilots cannot plan and should not expect a clearance through the area when active, although tracking may be offered on a tactical basis by ATC. Note that some routes specified in ERSA GEN FPR may be planned under agreement with the Department of Defence, however, a clearance from ATC is not assured.

Conditional Status RA3: pilots must not flight plan through the Restricted Area and clearances will not be available.

Read the Restricted Area conditional status carefully and plan accordingly. If you cannot determine the conditional status of an area, treat it as an 'RA3' and avoid it.

The En Route Supplement Australia - PRD areas lists standard active hours and classification levels.

If you have any doubt about the current status of a Restricted Area, check with ATC on the area frequency.



## Airspace infringement hot spots

At locations where airspace infringements occur frequently, Airservices and Defence have produced Airspace Infringement hot spot flyers to improve pilot awareness and provide additional planning advice.

Interactive maps are also available on the Airservices Australia website to provide further information.

[airservicesaustralia.com/industry-info/pilot-tools/pilot-and-airside-safety/airspace-infringement](https://airservicesaustralia.com/industry-info/pilot-tools/pilot-and-airside-safety/airspace-infringement)

## Prescribed standards

ATC are required to separate non-participating aircraft from Restricted Areas by the application of a separation standard.

The relevant separation standard can be complex to determine and depends on several factors including:

- the activity taking place in the Restricted Area
- whether there is surveillance available
- the type of Air Traffic Control service provided for the airspace.

Depending on these factors, in surveillance coverage, ATC may be required to apply 1.5NM, 2.5NM, 3NM or 5NM separation from the area. Larger separation standards are required outside surveillance coverage, or in some cases, around Temporary Restricted Areas.

When applying separation standards, controllers must ensure that clearances will not result in the breach of a standard.

## Restricted area boundaries

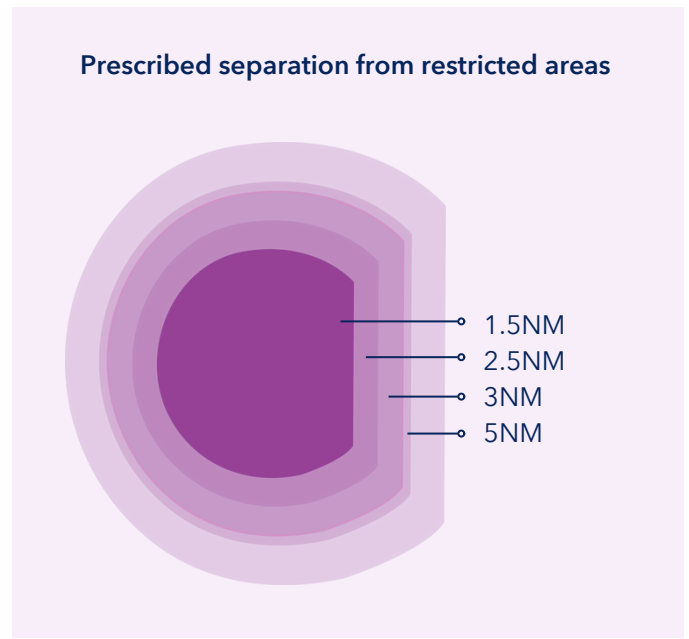
Controllers can only approve access to airspace closer than the required standard to an active Restricted Area if the Restricted Area is managed by ATC or the controlling authority provides permission for that aircraft to enter the area.

Even if the controlling authority permits the aircraft to operate "up to the boundary", this permission may not be sufficient for ATC to waive the required separation standard.

If you need to access the aerospace within the boundary of the Restricted Area, you need to operate outside of the area's active hours.

Ensure to check NAIPS and the En Route Supplement Australia - PRD areas to confirm active hours.

TRAs associated with military exercises can be found in the AIP SUP.



## More information

More pilot safety information is available on the Airservices Australia website at [bit.ly/pilotsafety](https://bit.ly/pilotsafety).



If you have any feedback or questions about this publication please email, [safetypromotions@airservicesaustralia.com](mailto:safetypromotions@airservicesaustralia.com).



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