



Border Force

Border Force's expectations of airfield operators in relation to General Aviation flights

June 2014

Interpretation: -

Operator: Refers to airfield, fixed based and port operators.

Airfield: Refers to airfields, airports, heliports and aerodromes.

This document only refers to Border Force's and the police's expectations of operators and not those of the Department for Transport (DfT) or other government departments or agencies.

Types and use of airfields

A flight's origin or destination affects the type of UK airfield it can use.

Airfields designated as customs & excise airports: May handle flights to and from **any** location under section 21 of the Customs & Excise Management Act 1979.

Airfields holding a Certificate of Agreement (CoA): For customs purposes certain non designated customs & excise airports operate under a CoA managed by Border Force. The agreement sets out what flights the airfield may handle and, where applicable, any permitted customs operations that may take place e.g. the permanent importation of an aircraft.

Airfields which are neither designated as customs & excise airports nor holding a CoA: May only handle flights flying within the UK and to/from destinations within the European Union (EU) (the Channel Islands are considered outside the EU for these purposes). If such an airfield wishes to handle flights to and from the Channel Islands and/or outside the EU they must enter into a CoA with Border Force.

The above restrictions do not prevent an airfield handling any aircraft making an emergency landing or emergency diversion.

The GAR completion and submission [instructions](#) list the airfields designated as customs & excise airports and airfields holding a Certificate of Agreement.

Pre-arrival

Pilots and carriers are requested and encouraged to submit a General Aviation Report (GAR) via the Collaborative Business Portal (CBP). GARs can be submitted online via a Home Office approved GAR CBP submission portal.

When a GAR is submitted via the CBP a notification is sent by email to the operator indicating how many people are onboard the flight and the registration of the aircraft.

The official Border Force/police GAR, the GAR completion and submission instructions, and details of all web-based GAR CBP submission portals are available at: -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-aviation-operators-and-pilots-notification-of-flights>

If online submission is not possible pilots and carriers should send the GAR by email to the HMRC National Co-ordination Unit (NCU). Pilots and carriers should use the official Border Force/police version of the GAR.

Border Force does not require pilots and carriers to submit a GAR to an operator nor requires an operator to obtain a GAR from a pilot or carrier (this includes operators of Certificate of Agreement airfields).

Pilots and carriers are requested to submit the GAR in line with the notification periods set out in the GAR completion and submission instructions unless there are exceptional circumstances.

On-arrival

Border Force and the police do not legally require operators to check the details of the passports of arriving passengers and crew against information provided on a GAR. Border Force also does not legally require operators to ask passengers or crew if they have goods to declare for customs purposes. Similarly the police do not legally require operators to question passengers or crew for police purposes. If an operator carries out such action they do so on a voluntary basis.

Where a flight has submitted a GAR via CBP, Border Force asks operators to inform them if they identify that the number of people onboard the flight is less or more than that stated in the CBP email notification they received.

Where Border Force has indicated to an operator they will be attending the arrival of a flight, the operator should ask the passengers to wait until Border Force officers arrive. If a passenger refuses to wait, operators **are not required by Border Force to physically detain the person pending the arrival of its officers**. If the passenger leaves the airfield prior to Border Force officers arriving, operators should contact Border Force immediately.

Where Border Force has indicated to an operator they need to speak to a particular passenger over the telephone, operators should inform the passenger accordingly. If the operator is unable to relay the message or has relayed the message and the passenger refuses to speak to Border Force, they should contact Border Force immediately. **Operators are not required by Border Force to physically detain the passenger.**

If an operator is not contacted by Border Force about a flight they can assume the flight has been cleared by Border Force remotely and do not need to carry out any further action in relation to Border Force. If anything at all makes the operator suspicious about a particular arrival or individual they should contact their local police on 101, Crimestoppers 0800 555 111 or by reporting it to Border Force on 0800 595 000 and quote 'Project Pegasus'.

Immigration clearance to enter the UK form

Border Force officers may periodically fax or email documents relating to passengers and crew to operators and ask operators to pass them on to those concerned. Such documents may include an 'Immigration clearance to enter the UK' form. This form enables passengers and where necessary crew to make an immigration Leave to Enter application remotely. British Citizens and nationals of member states of the European Economic Area are not required to complete this form.

Border Force officers will advise operators which passengers or crew should complete this form and will then ask operators to return the completed form to their office by fax or email. The passenger or crew member should complete the form themselves because it is their immigration application for Leave to Enter the UK. They are not legally obliged to sign the form. Operators may submit completed forms prior to a flight arriving in the UK. Use of the form is entirely at Border Force discretion.

Border Force officers, on receipt of the completed form will consider the person's application for Leave to Enter. Border Force officers where appropriate will make an endorsement on the form, return it to the operator and ask that they issue it to the passenger or member of crew concerned. Alternatively Border Force officers may ask to speak with the passenger or crew member over the telephone or decide to clear the flight in person.

If an operator is not contacted by Border Force about a flight they can assume the flight has been cleared by Border Force remotely and do not need to carry out any further action in relation to Border Force.

Suspicious Activity

If an operator sees something suspicious or has concerns about a flight, passenger or crew member they should contact their local police on 101, Crimestoppers 0800 555 111 or by report it to Border Force on 0800 595 000 and quote 'Project Pegasus'. If an operator suspects smuggling is taking place they should report it on the Customs Hotline on 0800 595 000

In no circumstances should operators investigate suspicious activity or smuggling on behalf of Border Force or the police, instead they should report it immediately. If an operator has any doubt about whether something should be reported, they should report it.