

Ground Handling

Policy and guidance for providers of Ground Handling at Certified Aerodromes in the Isle of Man



CP8

[Date]



Isle of Man
CIVIL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

Isle of Man Civil Aviation Administration

Viscount House, Isle of Man Airport, Ballasalla, Isle of Man, IM9 2AS

Email: caa@gov.im Phone: +44 (0)1624 682 358

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Revision history

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Foreword

The Isle of Man Civil Aviation Administration ('IOM CAA') is the division of the Isle of Man Government's Department for Enterprise that is responsible for regulating aviation safety in the Isle of Man.

IOM CAA is responsible for ensuring aviation legislation in the Isle of Man meets International Civil Aviation Organisation Standards and Recommended Practices.

Ground Handling is a fundamental part of modern aviation and makes up a significant degree of activity at a certified aerodrome. As a critical part of aviation infrastructure, and considering the increasing complexity of ground handling operations, the IOM CAA formally acknowledges the impact of ground handling on aviation safety and ground handling service providers (GHSP) as aviation safety stakeholders.

This publication:

- identifies IOM CAA policy requirements for the operations of ground handling at certified aerodromes in the Isle of Man;
- clarifies the relationship to aerodrome operation requirements and the role of IOM CAA;
- establishes criteria for the safety oversight of ground handling in the Isle of Man.

1. Definitions

Term	Interpretation
Aerodrome Operator	Any legal or natural person, operating or proposing to operate one or more aerodromes.
Aircraft Anti-icing	In the case of ground procedures, means a procedure that provides protection against the formation of frost or ice and accumulation of snow or slush on treated surfaces of the aircraft for a limited period of time (holdover time).
Aircraft De-icing	In the case of ground procedures, means a procedure by which frost, ice, snow or slush is removed from an aircraft in order to provide uncontaminated surfaces. The process can combine de-icing and anti-icing performed in two steps.
Aircraft Turnaround	Activities upon aircraft arrival, from the time of the aircraft leaving the centre of the taxiway until the aircraft moves under its own power.
Towing	The forward movement of an aircraft, usually with the engines off, by using external power of specialised ground support equipment that supports or is attached usually to the aircraft's nose landing gear, sometimes to the main landing gear. The operation may involve a towbar. Depending on the towing vehicle type, the operation may involve direct steering from the flight crew compartment by authorised personnel who are in the flight crew compartment at the time of taxiing. The definition applies both to aircraft in service and out of service. See also 'pushback'.
Pushback	<p>Moving an aircraft from a nose-in parking position by using external power of specialised ground support equipment. The operation may involve a towbar.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Nose gear-controlled pushback includes either the towbar method, where the rearward movement and steering of the aircraft are controlled by a vehicle and towbar attached to the nose gear, or the towbarless method, where a vehicle is attached directly to the nose gear.2. Main gear-controlled pushback uses a vehicle that grasps the aircraft main gear tyres to provide rearward movement, and directional control is provided from the flight deck by using the nose-wheel steering system. <p>See also 'towing'.</p>
Air Operator Certificate	A certificate authorising an operator to carry out commercial air transport operations.

Term	Interpretation
Baggage	The personal property, or other articles, of a passenger or crew member carried on a flight.
Baggage Handling	The process consisting of a series of activities related to baggage which includes handling baggage in the sorting area, sorting it, preparing it for departure, preparing baggage for transfer flights, loading it onto and unloading it from the devices designed to move it from the aircraft to the sorting area and vice versa, loading it onto and unloading it from the aircraft, as well as transporting baggage from the sorting area to the reclaim area.
Boarding	(of passengers) means entering an aircraft; equivalent term: 'embarkation'.
Cargo	Goods or property that are carried on an aircraft, other than baggage, mail, company material, company mail, and in-flight supplies, which are not consumed or used during flight.
Certified Aerodrome	An aerodrome that has been certified by IOM CAA pursuant to the Civil Aviation (Aerodromes) Order 2022 .
Commercial Air Transport	An aircraft operation involving the transport of passengers, cargo or mail for hire, remuneration or other valuable consideration.
Disembarkation	Passengers getting off the aircraft upon arrival.
Ground Handling	Services necessary for an aircraft's arrival at, and departure from, an airport, other than air traffic services.
Ground Handling Service	<p>The safety-related activities of any of the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) ground supervision; (b) passenger handling; (c) baggage acceptance, handling, movement on the apron, and loading/unloading of the aircraft; (d) cargo and mail handling, movement on the apron, and loading/unloading of the aircraft; (e) apron handling of aircraft including marshalling; aircraft securing, towing and pushback; (f) aircraft turnaround covering the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. refuelling and defueling; 2. oil replenishment and servicing; 3. toilet and potable water servicing;

Term	Interpretation
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. aircraft exterior and interior cleaning; 5. aircraft de-icing and aircraft anti-icing; 6. loading and unloading of aircraft including supplies and catering; 7. provision and operation of GSE.
Ground Handling Service Provider (GHSP)	A provider of one or more ground handling services.
Ground Supervision	A ground handling service consisting of activities related to the supervision of all ground handling services to an aircraft operator at an aerodrome.
Ground Support Equipment (GSE)	A mobile vehicle, apparatus or piece of equipment, motorised or non-motorised, that is designed, built and used for ground handling services to the aircraft on the movement area at an aerodrome.
Load Control	A process under the responsibility of the aircraft operator, to ensure that the aircraft is safely and efficiently loaded before each flight.
Mail	Dispatches of correspondence and other items, other than the aircraft operator's mail, tendered by and intended for delivery to postal services in accordance with the rules of the Universal Postal Union.
Passenger Handling	Activities related to any kind of assistance to arriving, departing, transfer or transit passengers, including, where applicable, passenger and baggage acceptance, travel documents and flight tickets check, boarding pass issuance, gate activities, passenger boarding and disembarkation.
Private Flight	An aircraft operation that is not a commercial air transport flight, and for the purposes of this document includes military flights.
Remuneration	Money or other financial compensation.
Safety Management System	A systematic approach to managing safety, including the necessary organisational structures, accountabilities, responsibilities, policies and procedures.
Safety Partnership	A voluntary programme offered by IOM CAA to engage service providers on matters arising on safety to achieve continuous improvement with the aim of raising standards.
Valuable Consideration	A right, interest, profit or benefit, forbearance, detriment, loss or responsibility accruing, given, suffered or undertaken under an agreement that is of more than a nominal nature.

2. Legislative and regulatory requirements

Aviation Safety

- 2.1 This CP establishes the IOM CAA expectations for the provision of ground handling services and organisations providing them at certified aerodromes in the Isle of Man and the oversight arrangements that will be applied.
- 2.2 Consistent with current ICAO provisions, the Isle of Man does not legislate ground handling. However, ICAO is in the process of drafting ground handling standards and recommended practices; consequently, the Isle of Man anticipates legislating the standards for ground handling services in due course and will consult with stakeholders as part of developing the legislation. The Isle of Man is also monitoring and considering UK and EASA developments in this area.
- 2.3 It is incumbent upon operators of aircraft conducting commercial air transport to demonstrate to the state of issuance of their Air Operator Certificate that their ground handling arrangements are adequately organised, controlled, and supervised¹. The arrangements and procedures are to be specified in the aircraft operator's operations manual².
- 2.4 The Isle of Man does not issue Air Operator Certificates. However, the Island is required to establish a programme for the surveillance of operations in its territory by foreign operators³ (i.e. the operators of aircraft registered elsewhere) and take appropriate action when necessary to preserve safety, by adopting a risk-based approach to address areas of greater safety concern or need as part of its State Safety Programme⁴.
- 2.5 The Civil Aviation (Aerodromes) Order 2022⁵ ('the Aerodromes Order') provides legislation pertaining to the operation of aerodromes in the Isle of Man. The Accountable Manager of an aerodrome certified pursuant to the Aerodromes Order is responsible for the safe operation of the aerodrome and is required to analyse, assess, and mitigate safety risks in aerodrome operations to maintain certification. The Aerodromes Order includes specific obligations on the aerodrome operator with regard to:
- control of pedestrians on the apron⁶;
 - aircraft departure from stand⁷;
 - jet blast precautions⁸; and
 - aircraft refuelling⁹.

¹ ICAO Annex 6 Part 1, 4.2.1.3

² ICAO Annex 6 Part 1, Appendix 2, 2.1.9

³ ICAO Annex 6 Part 1, 4.2.2.2

⁴ [CP10](#)

⁵ SD No. 2022/0074

⁶ ADR.OPS.B.033 (a)(3)

⁷ ADR.OPS.D.040

⁸ ADR.OPS.D.055

⁹ ADR.OPS.D.060

Health and Safety

- 2.6 The Health and Safety at Work Inspectorate (HSWI) is a part of the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture (DEFA) responsible for the work activities covered by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974¹⁰ and its relevant statutory provisions.
- 2.7 The jurisdiction of HSWI and the IOM CAA can overlap. In accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding between the IOM CAA and DEFA¹¹, IOM CAA will lead on those issues which primarily concern the safety of aircraft at aerodromes. DEFA will lead on those issues which affect:
- the occupational health, safety and welfare of ground-based workers (including self-employed persons) working airside;
 - the health and safety of other persons who may be affected by ground-based activities.
- 2.8 Where an issue is likely to involve both Departments, there will be appropriate co-operation between them.

3. Scope of Ground Handling

- 3.1 ICAO defines 'ground handling' as the services necessary for an aircraft's arrival at, and departure from, an airport, other than air traffic services. The IOM CAA further amplifies the scope of ground handling by the definition of 'ground handling service'.
- 3.2 "Ground handling service" means the safety-related activities of any of the following services:
- (a) ground supervision;
 - (b) passenger handling;
 - (c) baggage acceptance, handling, movement on the apron, and loading/unloading of the aircraft;
 - (d) cargo and mail handling, movement on the apron, and loading/unloading of the aircraft;
 - (e) apron handling of aircraft including marshalling; aircraft securing, towing and pushback;
 - (f) aircraft turnaround covering the following:
 1. refuelling and defueling;
 2. oil replenishment and servicing;
 3. toilet and potable water servicing;
 4. aircraft exterior and interior cleaning;
 5. aircraft de-icing and aircraft anti-icing;

¹⁰ Provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (of Parliament) are applied to the Isle of Man, with modifications and adaptations, by the Health and Safety at Work Order 2024 [SD 2024/0073]

¹¹ Signed 1 December 2021

6. loading and unloading of aircraft including supplies and catering;
7. provision and operation of GSE;
8. charging or deliberate discharging of an aircraft battery without removing it from the aircraft.

3.3 “Ground handling service provider (GHSP)” means a provider of one or more ground handling services. This includes any person, organisation or entity that provides such services either as a standalone service or in addition to other activities. Therefore, it includes:

- (a) a standalone ground handling organisation or business grouping;
- (b) an aircraft operator providing ground handling services to itself;
- (c) an aerodrome operator providing ground handling services.

3.4 Subject to the exceptions stated in paragraph 3.5, this CP applies only to GHSP while providing a ground handling service to the following categories of aircraft at certified aerodromes:

- (a) aircraft that have just completed, or are being prepared for, a flight for the purpose of commercial air transport, regardless of whether remuneration or valuable consideration is given to the GHSP for the service;
- (b) aircraft that have just completed or are being prepared for a private flight where remuneration or valuable consideration is given to the GHSP for the service.

3.5 This CP does not apply to:

- (a) handling of passengers with reduced mobility by an Aerodrome Operator using its own personnel, when this is the only ground handling service provided by that Aerodrome Operator;
- (b) aircraft line maintenance or other maintenance activities performed by maintenance organisations;
- (c) flight dispatch tasks performed by flight dispatchers;
- (d) load control tasks related to load planning, mass and balance calculations, load control messages and communications, and issuance of load control document.

4. General Requirements

Responsibilities of the GHSP

4.1 Ground handling service providers are responsible for the safe operation of its activities at the aerodrome. The GHSP should:

- (a) implement and maintain a safety management system in accordance with the framework specified at [Annex A](#) appropriate for the type of activity undertaken and the size of the organisation. Such system should be coordinated with the safety management system of the aerodrome operator;

- (b) develop and operate in accordance with a ground handling service manual¹² (see [Annex B](#)) which should contain all necessary instructions, information and procedures for the ground handling service, and for service personnel to perform their duties;
 - (c) have all the means necessary to ensure safe provision of the ground handling services it provides; including, but are not limited to, facilities, personnel, equipment and material;
 - (d) comply with the procedures contained in the aerodrome manual, including those in relation to movements of its vehicles, equipment and personnel and the risk related to aerodrome operations in winter, at night and in adverse weather conditions;
 - (e) provide the ground handling services in accordance with the procedures and instructions of the aircraft operator it serves;
 - (f) ensure that manuals for the operation and maintenance of ground handling equipment are available, applied in practice and cover operation, maintenance and repair instructions, servicing information, troubleshooting and inspection procedures;
 - (g) use only adequately trained and qualified personnel, and implement and maintain training and checking programmes to ensure the continuing competence of all relevant personnel;
 - (h) ensure that its personnel are physically and mentally fit to execute their functions satisfactorily, taking into account the type of activity and in particular its safety-related impact.
- 4.2 Where the GHSP is the aerodrome or aircraft operator, the GHSP requirements above may be integrated into the management system for their aerodrome/aircraft operation activities.
- 4.3 GHSP should ensure that the ground handling service manual is made available to IOM CAA and the aerodrome operator within a reasonable timescale upon request.

Responsibilities of the Aerodrome Operator

- 4.4 Aerodrome Operators have obligations to identify hazards and mitigate safety risks in the aerodrome operation. Therefore, Aerodrome Operators should take account of the applicability of this CP to particular flights and the regulated/unregulated status of the GHSP when establishing and allocating apron and stand utilisation and managing apron safety risks.

Use of Industry Standards

- 4.5 The GHSP may use the draft EASA ground handling regulation¹³ or other industry standards to establish its means of compliance with this CP.
- 4.6 IOM CAA recognises the draft EASA Implementing Rule, Acceptable Means of Compliance (AMC), and Guidance Material (GM) relating to the Ground Handling Regulation, as published in the EASA Opinion 01/2024, as a suitable means to demonstrate compliance.

¹² The Manual may incorporate the SMS required by (a)

¹³ [EASA Opinion No 01/2024](#)

- 4.7 The IOM CAA is aware of the following industry standards which the GHSP may also wish to consider:
- (a) IATA:
 - (i) IATA Ground Operations Manual (IGOM);
 - (ii) IATA Airport Handling Manual (AHM);
 - (iii) IATA Cargo Handling Manual (ICHM);
 - (iv) IATA Dangerous Goods Regulations (DGR);
 - (b) IBAC: International Standard for Business Aircraft Handling (IS-BAH);
 - (c) Joint Inspection Group (JIG) standards related to fuelling;
 - (d) Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) standards related to de-icing and anti-icing;
 - (e) EN standards for ground support equipment (EN 12312-1 to 20 and EN 1915-1 to 4).
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5. Reporting of Safety-related Occurrences

- 5.1 Effective reporting of hazards by operational personnel is an important element in the management of safety. An operational environment in which personnel are trained and encouraged to submit reports is a prerequisite of effective safety reporting.
- 5.2 A safety reporting system has been established by IOM CAA to collect safety data and safety information as detailed in [CP 7 - Occurrence, Serious Incident and Accident Reporting](#). GHSPs should¹⁴ report occurrences through this system.
- 5.3 Examples of occurrences that should be reported can be found in [CP7 - Annex A 'ground handling of an aircraft'](#).
- 5.4 The GHSP should ensure that the reporting process includes an investigation which meets the requirements of [CP7 - Annex B](#).
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6. Regulatory Oversight

- 6.1 The IOM CAA is the competent authority for the oversight of certified aerodromes in the Island and is responsible for monitoring and measuring the safety performance of the Island's aviation system¹⁵.
- 6.2 The IOM CAA will undertake risk and performance-based safety oversight of GHSP to verify performance against the expectations specified in this CP.

¹⁴ At the time of publication, reporting of occurrences by GHSPs is encouraged but not mandatory. IOM CAA intends to amend the legislation to mandate occurrence reporting by persons involved in ground handling during 2025.

¹⁵ [State Safety Programme for the Isle of Man CP10](#)

6.3 IOM CAA will:

- utilise all forms of safety intelligence to inform the ongoing safety surveillance and oversight of ground handling at certified aerodromes in the Isle of Man;
- conduct a programme of turnaround observations of GHSPs which may be conducted without notice;
- undertake pre-notified safety review meetings with GHSPs as considered to be necessary to discuss any immediate safety concerns;
- hold a pre-arranged routine annual safety review meeting with GHSPs to discuss safety, risks, mitigations, and occurrences and how the GHSP is meeting the expectations set out in this CP.

6.4 IOM CAA will provide day-to-day aviation safety advice and guidance for GHSPs operating at certified aerodromes in the Island.

6.5 In the interest of assuring aviation safety, the IOM CAA may direct (by means of a safety directive¹⁶) that an activity is prohibited or must be limited or is subject to specified conditions.

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¹⁶ [Article 8 of the Civil Aviation \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) Order 2020](#)

Part 1 - Safety policy and objectives

A.1 Management commitment

(1) A safety policy which -

- (a) reflects the organisational commitment regarding safety, including the promotion of a positive safety culture;
- (b) includes a clear statement about the provision of the necessary resources for the implementation of the safety policy;
- (c) includes safety reporting procedures;
- (d) clearly indicates which types of behaviours are unacceptable related to the GHSPs aviation activities and include the circumstances under which disciplinary action would not apply;
- (e) is signed by the accountable executive of the organisation;
- (f) is communicated, with visible endorsement, throughout the organisation; and
- (g) is periodically reviewed to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate to the person in charge of the GHSP.

(2) Defined safety objectives which -

- (a) form the basis for safety performance monitoring and measurement;
- (b) reflect the organisation's commitment to maintain or continuously improve the overall effectiveness of the safety management system;
- (c) are communicated throughout the organisation; and
- (d) are periodically reviewed to ensure they remain relevant and appropriate to the service provider.

A.2 Safety accountability and responsibilities

Defined safety accountabilities and responsibilities which -

- (a) identify the accountable executive who, irrespective of other functions, is accountable on behalf of the organisation for the implementation and maintenance of an effective safety management system;
- (b) clearly define the lines of safety accountability throughout the organisation, including a direct accountability for safety on the part of senior management;
- (c) identify the responsibilities of all members of management, irrespective of other functions, as well as of employees, with respect to the safety performance of the organisation;

- (d) document and communicate safety accountability, responsibilities and authorities throughout the organisation; and
- (e) define the levels of management with authority to make decisions regarding safety risk tolerability.

A.3 Appointment of key safety personnel

The nomination of a safety manager who is responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the safety management system.

A.4 Coordination of emergency response planning

An emergency response plan for accidents, incidents and aviation emergencies.

A.5 Safety Management System Documentation

- (1) A safety management system manual that describes the -
 - (a) safety policy and objectives;
 - (b) safety management system requirements;
 - (c) safety management system processes and procedures; and
 - (d) accountability, responsibilities and authorities for safety management system processes and procedures.
- (2) Operational records as part of the documentation of the delivery of the safety management system.

Part 2 - Safety risk management

A.6 Hazard identification

A process to identify hazards associated with the operation of aircraft. Hazard identification shall be based on a combination of reactive and proactive methods.

A.7 Safety risk assessment and mitigation

A process that ensures analysis, assessment and control of the safety risks associated with identified hazards.

Part 3 - Safety assurance

A.8 Safety performance monitoring and measurement

- (1) The means to verify safety performance and to validate the effectiveness of safety risk controls.

- (2) The safety performance shall be verified in reference to the safety performance indicators and safety performance targets of the safety management system in support of the organisation's safety objectives.

A.9 The management of change

A process to identify changes which may affect the level of safety risk associated with the aircraft operation and to identify and manage the safety risks that may arise from those changes.

A.10 Continuous improvement of the safety management system

Monitoring and assessment of the safety management system processes to maintain or continuously improve its overall effectiveness.

Part 4 - Safety promotion

A.11 Training and education

A safety training programme that ensures that personnel are trained and competent to perform their safety management system duties.

A.12 Safety communication

A formal means for safety communication that -

- (a) ensures personnel are aware of the safety management system to a degree commensurate with their positions;
- (b) conveys safety-critical information;
- (c) explains why particular actions are taken to improve safety; and
- (d) explains why safety procedures are introduced or changed.

Annex B - Ground Handling Manual

The following is suggested content for the ground handling manual but should be added to and adapted as considered necessary and appropriate.

Subject	Content	Guidance
Introduction	Administration and document control	Purpose and scope
		Applicability Document control and revisions
Management system	Organisation structure	Accountability and responsibilities
	Personnel	Nomination of key personnel
	Description of management system	Safety management system
		Emergency response procedures (aircraft operator and aerodrome)
		Management of change
		Compliance monitoring including audit programme and procedure for continuous improvement.
		Procedures for reporting to IOM CAA including notifying and reporting of accidents and incidents, occurrences, and sharing of safety data.
		Procedures on consumption of alcohols, psychoactive substances and medicines
		Documentation system
	Contracted services	Safety assurance of contracted services
	Training programme	Required qualification/competencies for GH functions
		Process for training needs analysis
		Training and assessment process programme per GH role
Conditions for trainers/continuous assessors		
Standard operating procedures (SOP)	Procedures and instructions of the GH organisation	

		Procedures and instructions of the aerodrome operator*
		Procedures and instructions of the aircraft operator*
		Airside safety
		<i>*note this may be signposting to operators SMS with access instructions.</i>
	Ground support equipment (GSE)	Operation of GSE including safety elements
		Maintenance programme
		Maintenance and repair instructions
		Servicing information, troubleshooting and inspection procedures
	Dangerous goods instructions	Procedures on dangerous goods instruction. Regulatory requirements for dangerous goods can be found in CP13-Dangerous Goods .
	Security procedures	Regulatory requirements for security can be found in CP14-ASQCP . Procedures and instruction must ensure the GHSP maintains compliance with the Island's security legislation and the certified aerodrome's security procedures.

The standard operating procedures of the Ground Handling manual should cover the following operations, as applicable, depending on services provided*:

Passenger handling	Dangerous Goods Boarding
Baggage handling	Safe baggage handling Special baggage handling and dangerous goods
Aircraft servicing	Safety on apron
	Hand signals for GSE
	Aircraft refuelling and defueling

	Aircraft toilet services
	Potable water services
	Aircraft cleaning
	Aircraft de-icing and anti-icing
	Safe operations in adverse weather
Turnaround activities	Aircraft arrival
	Chocking
	Coning
	Access/Doors
	Loading and unloading
	Departure
	Pushback
	Towing
	Long term parking
Load control process	Principles
	Tasks
	Responsibilities
	Load control process, operational procedures including mass and balance calculations and load planning
	Messages and communications procedures
	Documentation
Ground supervision functions	Turnaround coordinator
Cargo operations	Cargo handling process
	Special category air cargo and dangerous goods
<i>*interfaces with the aerodrome operator and the aircraft operator should be highlighted in each section where they are developed.</i>	

