



**OPERATIONAL SAFETY INSTRUCTION**

Version A Issued 01/09/2020

**Manoeuvring Area Free-Ranging**

Issued By Airside Operations and Safety Manager Ref BRS-OSI-DVO-010

It is the responsibility of all employers to ensure that relevant OSIs are brought to the attention of their staff. However, individuals remain responsible for their own actions and those who are in any doubt should consult their Supervisor or Manager.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The concept of free-ranging involves specifically trained and competent drivers being able to operate a vehicle on the manoeuvring area and other operational areas of Bristol Airport on their own lookout, without the need to obtain individual clearances from Air Traffic Control (ATC) before each journey.

The benefits of this are greater flexibility and efficiency for the vehicle operator in completing their task, and a reduced workload for the Duty Air Traffic Control Officer (Duty ATCO), with fewer radio transmissions between ATC and the vehicle operator.

**2. SCOPE**

For the purposes of this instruction “free-range” means authority to enter and operate on specified parts of the manoeuvring area and associated grassed areas (not including the runway) during operational hours without the requirement to obtain prior ATC clearance.

For the purposes of the ‘Rules of the Air Regulations, Rule 13’, it is deemed that vehicles and personnel operating under “free-range” have ATC permission to enter defined areas of the manoeuvring area (see Appendix A). This only applies to drivers in a vehicle.

Free-range only applies during airport operating hours when Low Visibility Operations (LVOs) are not in force and must be in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 6.

Free-range is only authorised for individual vehicles. If a vehicle operating under free-range is required to perform escort duties, then free-range is automatically suspended for that vehicle. ATC permission must then be obtained via radio, prior to entering the manoeuvring area.

**3. QUALIFICATION AND RESPONSIBILITY**

The authority to free-range is limited to those persons who have:

- a) A current Airside Driving Permit (ADP) endorsed for the manoeuvring area or runway

- b) Successfully completed the theory training module for free-ranging
- c) Successfully completed a competency assessment for free-ranging
- d) An operational requirement to do so

In addition, the authorisation to free-range will only be available to the following personnel:

- Airside Operations
- Rescue and Fire-Fighting Service (RFFS)
- NATS Air Traffic Engineers
- Bristol Airport Engineers
- Other individuals authorised by the Airside Operations and Safety Manager

#### 4. APPLICABLE AREAS

Free-range is permitted on the taxiways and defined grassed areas north and south of runway 09-27, whilst not crossing any runway holding points, the cleared and graded area (CGA) or ILS critical or sensitive areas. The CGA and critical areas collectively form the runway restricted area. See the airfield free-ranging map at Appendix A.

Free-ranging vehicle drivers operating south of runway 09-27 are responsible for remaining clear of helicopters operating to or from the south-side aprons.

##### 4.1. Runway Restricted Area

The runway restricted area must never be entered without ATC permission. This area is marked on grass areas by a 'burn line' approximately 1m in width. It runs the full length of the airfield both north and south of the runway and incorporates the CGA and critical areas. Where the restricted area line meets a taxiway, if it intersects on the live (runway) side of the holding point, drivers must ensure they change course to pass on the dead side of the holding point, as shown at Appendix A.

#### 5. COMMUNICATIONS

All drivers (except Airside Operations, who are automatically permitted to free range in non-low visibility conditions), shall establish two-way communication with ATC on Channel 1 to inform that they are free-ranging. It is not a requirement to inform ATC of vehicle movements that are restricted to the perimeter track.

If free-ranging privileges are to be suspended due to low visibility or other operational reason, ATC will issue an 'all stations' broadcast on UHF Channel 1 to advise free-ranging is suspended and will request any free-ranging vehicles to report their call-sign and current position.

#### 6. OPERATING PROCEDURES

The following procedures apply to vehicles and personnel free-ranging:

- a) All personnel and vehicles must carry a UHF radio capable of transmitting and receiving on UHF Ch.1 (cross-coupled with tower frequency) whilst operating on the manoeuvring area.
- b) As part of the vehicle daily inspection, the driver shall request a radio check from ATC for UHF Ch.1. This will advise the driver if the readability is less than the required standard. If the readability is less than 'four', the driver shall not free-range or enter the manoeuvring area.
- c) Unless operationally required to complete a specific task, vehicles shall be driven keeping on the left of taxiways. Vehicles shall keep to the left when passing another vehicle which is approaching head-on.
- d) Drivers operating vehicles under free-range conditions must comply with the 'Standardised European Rules of the Air Regulations, Section 3, Chapter 2, SERA.3210 Right-of-way (d) (4)', pertaining to vehicles. In summary:
  - a. Emergency vehicles proceeding to an emergency shall be afforded priority over all other surface movement traffic;
  - b. Vehicles and vehicles towing aircraft shall give way to aircraft which are landing, taking-off or taxiing;
  - c. Vehicles shall give way to other vehicles towing aircraft;
  - d. Vehicles shall give way to other vehicles in accordance with ATC instructions.
- e) Vehicles must be equipped with an amber beacon which must be illuminated at all times.
- f) If required to stop on the manoeuvring area, the driver shall assess the level of traffic and whether it is safe to stop on the chosen area or whether the vehicle needs to position outside of the taxiway strip. A listening watch must always be maintained on the tower frequency.
- g) Drivers shall request permission to enter or cross the runway, to enter the Clear and Graded Area (CGA) or any ILS critical area, collectively known as the runway restricted area (see Appendix A).
- h) Once the runway has been vacated, the status of the vehicle free-ranging is considered implied and therefore no further calls are required.
- i) In an emergency, drivers may exit the manoeuvring area onto a grass area or suitable hard standing in a place of safety that will not interfere with the airport emergency response, any aeronautical ground lighting or aircraft navigational aids.

- j) Free-ranging drivers shall avoid driving on grass areas wherever possible. Exceptions apply to engineering vehicles accessing airfield equipment or Airside Operations for the purpose of habitat management, inspections or wildlife control. Where possible the well-defined and compacted grass tracks should be used.
- k) Free-ranging will be suspended in the event of an aircraft or other airside emergency situation in progress.

## 7. VARIATIONS

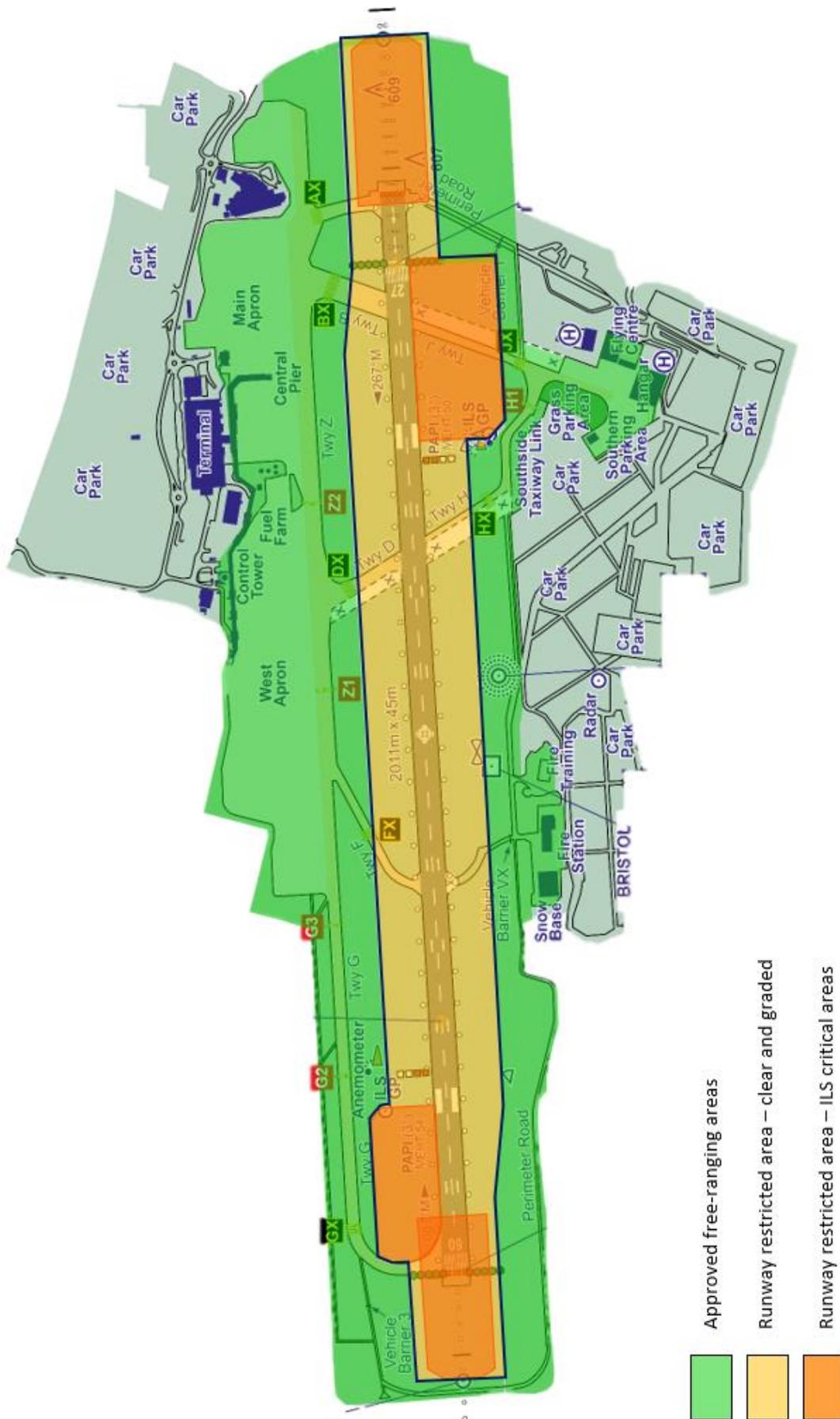
Any temporary variations to permitted free-ranging areas, for example due to work in progress, will be promulgated by Airside Operations by way of a Temporary Airside Instruction.

## 8. GENERAL ENQUIRIES

Any enquiries should be addressed to Airside Operations on **01275 473705** or **07712 792235**.

APPENDIX A

APPROVED FREE-RANGING AREAS



- Approved free-ranging areas
- Runway restricted area – clear and graded
- Runway restricted area – ILS critical areas