



OPERATIONAL SAFETY INSTRUCTION

Version A

Issued 31/01/2020

Low Visibility Operations

Issued By Airside Operations and Safety Manager

Ref BRS-OSI-WX-002

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

Aircraft operations at aerodromes during reduced visibility conditions presents additional hazards to aircraft and other aerodrome users. As visibility reduces, the ability of Air Traffic Control (ATC) staff, pilots, vehicle drivers and other airside personnel to identify hazards and to take remedial action in a timely manner, becomes limited. Bristol Airport will implement procedures in low visibility and low cloud conditions to enable continued safe aircraft, vehicle and pedestrian operations on the aerodrome, and in particular during conditions that require aircraft to use the Instrument Landing System (ILS) to approach the runway and land.

All airside companies must ensure that staff who drive airside understand the meaning of the term 'Low Visibility Operations'. Staff must understand the safety implications and any special procedures or precautions that must be adopted when low visibility safeguarding or low visibility procedures are in force.

2. TERMINOLOGY

Term	Definition
Low Visibility Operations (LVO)	The general term used for airside operations in conditions of reduced visibility, where ATC cannot maintain a visual control of the whole airfield from the ATC tower. The term incorporates Low Visibility Safeguarding and Low Visibility Procedures.
Low Visibility Safeguarding	The process carried out by Bristol Airport in preparation for Low Visibility Procedures. Low Visibility Safeguarding will come into force when the IRVR (Instrument Runway Visual Range – visibility measured by instruments along the runway) is less than 1500 metres .
Low Visibility Procedures (LVP)	The actions carried out by ATC in respect of aircraft operations. It follows on from Low Visibility Safeguarding. It results in further restrictions on access to the manoeuvring area, protection of aircraft navigation aids, and a reduced aircraft flow rate. Low Visibility Procedures will come into force when the IRVR is less than 1200 metres .

3. LOW VISIBILITY OPERATIONS

3.1. Activation of Low Visibility Safeguarding

ATC are responsible for the activation and cancellation of low visibility operations. ATC will inform the following departments when low visibility safeguarding is required:

- Airside operations
- Airport Control Centre (ACC)
- Rescue and Fire-fighting Service (RFFS)

Airside operations will then complete the measures necessary to 'safeguard' the airfield. When low visibility safeguarding is complete, airside operations will inform ATC.

Airside operations will display low visibility warning signs at vehicle or pedestrian control posts that give direct access to the airfield.



3.2. Activation of Low Visibility Procedures

Low visibility procedures are introduced by ATC when the weather conditions fall below the criteria described in section 2 of this Instruction. When declaring Low Visibility Procedures, ATC will again inform those referred to in section 3.1

The ACC will inform all airside stakeholders via e-mail and the airport community app.

3.3. Cancellation of Low Visibility Operations

ATC will cancel low visibility procedures when visibility conditions improve on those in section 2 of this Instruction, and advise those referred to in section 3.1. Airside operations will remove the safeguarding measures put in place.

The airfield may revert to low visibility safeguarding if low visibility procedures are suspended but weather conditions remain poor. ATC will inform airside operations that safeguarding is to remain in force.

4. RESTRICTIONS IN LOW VISIBILITY CONDITIONS

4.1. Low Visibility Safeguarding

- Work in progress on the manoeuvring area may be suspended, subject to the terms stated on the airfield permit to work.
- Cranes infringing the obstacle limitation surfaces must be lowered to an acceptable height.

4.2. Low Visibility Procedures

- All vehicle free-ranging on the manoeuvring area is suspended.
- All non-essential vehicles and personnel must vacate the manoeuvring area. Essential vehicles include:
 - Airside operations vehicles carrying out safety-critical tasks such as manoeuvring area/runway inspections, follow-me duties and wildlife control.
 - Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting vehicles responding to an emergency.
 - Engineers responding to a critical fault.
 - Aircraft push-back tugs pushing back aircraft for departure (only where the pushback cannot successfully be completed in an apron cul-de-sac/taxi-lane).
- Routine maintenance on visual and non-visual aids is suspended.
- Perimeter track movements are restricted to authorised vehicles only, which is limited to airside operations, RFFS, airport engineers and NATS air traffic engineers.

5. RAMP SAFETY IN LOW VISIBILITY

Vehicle drivers on aircraft stands and the apron road system shall ensure their vehicle has a serviceable amber beacon and headlights, both of which must be switched on.

Drivers using the rear-of-stand road system must drive with caution and be aware of the sudden presence of aircraft entering stands.

5.1. Aircraft Follow-me

When the visibility is less than 300m, airside operations will provide a 'follow-me' service for aircraft, to ensure aircraft are able to safely reach their intended stand on arrival, and safely taxi off of self-manoevring stands to the taxiway on departure. It also assists in protecting personnel and vehicles operating on the ramp from an aircraft arriving onto stand in heavily restricted visibility.

The follow-me vehicle will proceed to the back-of-stand road or the cul-de-sac that serves that stand, positioning the vehicle on the edge of the manoeuvring area (double white lines) shortly before the aircraft's arrival.

Departing aircraft that are pushed back off-stand, either directly onto the taxiway or to a tug-release point in a cul-de-sac, will not require a follow-me. However, a follow-me service will be provided to aircraft taxiing from a self-manoevring stand.

Drivers operating on the rear of stand road system must drive slowly and be aware of the sudden presence of aircraft entering a stand.

5.2. South-side Vehicle Operations

Airside operations will contact Centreline Aerospace to request that they display low visibility warning signage on the main south-side vehicle and pedestrian access gate. If low visibility operations commence outside of Centreline operating hours, the sign will not initially be displayed; Centreline duty staff will check the status of LVP when they arrive on shift and display the sign if LVPs are in force.

The vehicle gate that provides access and egress to the south apron is no longer required to be locked with an additional padlock in low visibility. There are a restricted number of persons with access to the standard gate key. Persons providing access to visiting vehicles (e.g. caterers, engineers) via this gate shall ensure that the driver is given an airside safety briefing, to include:

- The requirement to be escorted at all times
- The apron speed limit
- Use of dipped headlights and amber beacon if fitted
- Permitted routing and limits of access
- Actions to take in an emergency

6. RESPONSIBILITIES OF AIRSIDE BUSINESS PARTNERS

All airside partners (including Bristol Airport departments) are to ensure that airside staff are trained to understand the requirements of low visibility operations and that appropriate information is contained within company instructions/manuals.

All operators or departments are responsible for ensuring that all staff on duty that hold an authorisation to drive on the manoeuvring area are informed of the airfield status with respect to low visibility.

7. GENERAL ENQUIRIES

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