Australian Government
Civil Aviation Safety Authority

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGE

Proposed MOS and CAO changes for Class D CTA around Bankstown

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our offices are located and their continuing connection to land, water and community, and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

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Introduction

Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport is opening in the second half of 2026.

From 9 July 2026, to support the opening of this airport, major changes are being made to the airspace in the Sydney basin, the VFR routes enabling aircraft access to and from Bankstown aerodrome (YSBK), and the operational procedures for the use of these VFR routes. The airspace relevant to this consultation are the new Class D control areas (CTA) surrounding the amended YSBK control zone (CTR).

The safety of the new airspace and VFR route structure requires the introduction of new aircraft transponder requirements for VFR flights within these new Class D CTAs.

This consultation requests feedback on the clarity of the necessary amendments to the Part 91, 131, 133 and 135 Manuals of Standards (MOSs), and Civil Aviation Orders (CAO) 95.4, 95.10, 95.12, 95.12.1, 95.32 and 95.55, which implement these VFR aircraft transponder requirements.

Contents

1 Reference material

1.1 Acronyms

The acronyms and abbreviations used in this SPC are listed in the table below.

Table 1: Acronyms

Acronym	Description
AC	advisory circular
AIP	Aeronautical Information Publication
AMC/GM	Acceptable Means of Compliance/Guidance Material
AMSL	above mean sea level
ATC	air traffic control
CAO	*Civil Aviation Orders*
CAR	*Civil Aviation Regulations 1988*
CASA	Civil Aviation Safety Authority
CASR	*Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1998*
CTA	control area
CTR	control zone
ERSA	En Route Supplement Australia
FL	flight level
LSA	light sport aircraft
MOS	Manual of Standards
VFR	visual flight rules
VTC	visual terminal chart

1.2 Definitions

Terms that have specific meaning within this SPC are defined in the table below. Where definitions from the civil aviation legislation have been reproduced for ease of reference, these are identified by 'grey shading'. Should there be a discrepancy between a definition given in this SPC and the civil aviation legislation, the definition in the legislation prevails.

Table 2: Definitions

Term	Definition
approved Mode A/C transponder	has the meaning given by section 26.67 of the Part 91 Manual of Standards
approved Mode S transponder	has the meaning given by section 26.67 of the Part 91 Manual of Standards
approved transponder	an approved Mode A/C transponder or an approved Mode S transponder.
control area	a controlled airspace extending upwards from a specified limit above the earth.
control zone	a controlled airspace extending upwards from the surface of the earth to a specified upper limit.
transponder	an aircraft's SSR transponder

1.3 References

Legislation

Legislation is available on the Federal Register of Legislation website https://www.legislation.gov.au/

Table 3: Legislation references

Document	Title
Division 26.16 of Part 91 MOS	Surveillance equipment
Section 26.68 of the Part 91 MOS	Required surveillance equipment
Section 26.21 of the Part 131 MOS	Required surveillance equipment
Section 11.53 of the Part 133 MOS	Carriage of surveillance equipment
Section 11.60 of the Part 135 MOS	Carriage of surveillance equipment
CAO 95.4	Civil Aviation Order 95.4 (Exemptions from CAR and CASR — Sailplanes and Towing Aircraft) Instrument 2024
CAO 95.10	Civil Aviation Order 95.10 (Exemptions from CAR and CASR — Microlight Aeroplanes) Instrument 2024
CAO 95.12	Civil Aviation Order 95.12 (Exemptions from CAR and CASR — Gyroplanes Not Exceeding 250 kg) Instrument 2024

Document	Title
CAO 95.12.1	Civil Aviation Order 95.12.1 (Exemptions from CAR and CASR — LSA Gyroplanes and ASRA-compliant Gyroplanes) Instrument 2024
CAO 95.32	Civil Aviation Order 95.32 (Exemptions from CAR and CASR — Powered Parachutes and Weight-shift-controlled Aeroplanes) Instrument 2024
CAO 95.55	Civil Aviation Order 95.55 (Exemptions from CAR and CASR — Certain Light Sport Aircraft, Lightweight Aeroplanes and Ultralight Aeroplanes) Instrument 2024
CASA EX74/24	Part 121 – Single Pilot Aeroplane (MOPSC 10-13) Operations – Exemptions and Directions Instrument 2024

Other reference material

Table 4: Other reference material

Document	Title
Chart	Sydney VTC chart - dated 9 July 2026
AIP Australia	AIP Australia FAC YSBK - Sydney/Bankstown - dated 9 July 2026

2 What airspace and procedures are changing?

2.1 Summary

There are major changes to the airspace and VFR route structure within the Sydney Basin, and the operational procedures associated with flying in and out of YSBK, to support the opening of Western Sydney International Airport.

These airspace, route and operational procedure changes take effect from 9 July 2026.

To ensure aviation safety is maintained within the new airspace and on the new VFR routes, new aircraft transponder requirements for VFR flights in the new Class D CTA are being introduced by amending the Part 91, 131, 133 and 135 MOS's, as well as CAOs 95.4, 95.10, 95.12, 95.12.1, 95.32 and 95.55.

2.2 Airspace changes

The airspace related changes include:

- new VFR routes to and from YSBK
- new Class D CTA above and surrounding a changed YSBK Class D CTR, which contains the majority of the new VFR routes.

The AIP Designated Airspace Handbook (DAH) dated 9 July 2026 specifies the boundaries of these new Class D CTA and the new YSBK Class D CTR, with the Sydney VTC chart dated 9 July 2026 pictorially displaying the new airspace and VFR routes.

Descriptively, the new Class D CTA are as follows:

- Bankstown CTA D1 - being the Class D CTA above YSBK Class D CTR
- Western Sydney CTA D1 - contains VFR routes to and from the YSBK Class D CTR
- Western Sydney CTA D2 - define the Class D CTA to the north of YSBK above 1 500ft AMSL
- Western Sydney CTA D3 - define the Class D CTA to the south of YSBK above 1 500 ft AMSL
- Sydney CTA D1 - contains the one-way (outbound only) Woronora VFR route from the YSBK Class D CTR (still under separate consultation by CASA, with future details to be notified by AIP SUP depending on the consultation outcome).

2.3 Procedure changes

The new Class D CTA procedures require:

1. the submission of a flight plan (flight notification requirements)
2. the use of predefined clearances (known as 'coded clearances') which are referred to by name only and reflect the new VFR routes, to minimise radio congestion.

The YSBK ERSA FAC dated 9 July 2026, as amended by relevant AIP Supplements (AIP SUP), specifies the operational procedures for operations in the new YSBK Class D CTR and surrounding Class D CTA.

3 What are the rule changes to support the airspace and procedure changes?

3.1 Transponder requirements

3.1.1 Background

From 9 July 2026, Class D CTA will be created above and surrounding the YSBK Class D CTR which is in very close proximity to surrounding and overlying Class C airspace. Aircraft in these Class D CTA will be operating on VFR routes in relatively close proximity.

3.1.2 Issue

Ensuring aviation safety in the new Class D CTA requires all aircraft to be fitted with a transponder but current rules only require aircraft operating under the IFR to have a transponder in Class D airspace.

3.1.3 Proposal

Require all relevant aircraft which could theoretically operate under the VFR, in the new Class D CTA and on the new VFR routes, to have and operate an appropriate transponder.

This requirement will not apply to the YSBK Class D CTR which will not require VFR aircraft transponder fitment or use (the existing IFR requirements will remain unchanged).

Due to the regulation structure where different MOS's and CAO's apply to different kinds of operations, it is proposed to implement the new VFR transponder requirement for the relevant new Class D CTA by amending relevant MOS's and CAO's to add appropriate definitions, make minor amendments to headings and titles, with the key amendments being to the specific surveillance equipment tables.

The specific key transponder amendments are described below:

- Part 91 MOS (for all aircraft other than those listed in further entries below):
  - add a new item 3A to the table of surveillance equipment requirements in section 26.68 specifying the new Class D CTA transponder requirement by reference to the named airspace areas
  - the technical transponder requirements are the same as those currently listed for VFR in Class C airspace below flight level (FL) 290
- Part 131 MOS (for balloons and hot air airships):
  - add a new item 2A to the table of surveillance equipment requirements in section 26.21 specifying the new Class D CTA transponder requirement by reference to the named airspace areas
  - the technical transponder requirements are the same as those currently listed for VFR in Class C airspace below flight level (FL) 290
- Part 133 MOS (for rotorcraft conducting Australian air transport operations):
  - add a new item 3A to the table of surveillance equipment requirements in section 11.53 specifying the new Class D CTA transponder requirement by reference to the named airspace areas
  - the technical transponder requirements are the same as those currently listed for VFR in Class C airspace
- Part 135 MOS (for smaller aeroplanes conducting Australian air transport operations, including aeroplanes operating under exemption CASA EX74/24):

  - add a new item 3A to the table of surveillance equipment requirements in section 11.60 specifying the new Class D CTA transponder requirement by reference to the named airspace areas
  - the technical transponder requirements are the same as those currently listed for VFR in Class C airspace

- CAO 95.4 (sailplanes under ASAO administration):
  - add reference to item 3A of table 26.68 (2) of Part 91 MOS to require operable transponder as per item 3A of table, also allowing the fitment of Mode A/C transponders to meet the requirement to fit Mode S transponders to aircraft manufactured on or after 6 February 2014, or aircraft modified by having their transponder installation replaced on or after 6 February 2014
- CAO 95.10 (microlight aeroplanes under ASAO administration):
  - add reference to item 3A of table 26.68 (2) of Part 91 MOS to allow the fitment of Mode A/C transponders to meet the requirement to fit Mode S transponders to aircraft manufactured on or after 6 February 2014, or aircraft modified by having their transponder installation replaced on or after 6 February 2014
- CAO 95.12 (gyroplanes not exceeding 250 kg under ASAO administration):
  - add reference to item 3A of table 26.68 (2) of Part 91 MOS to require operable transponder as per item 3A of table
- CAO 95.12.1 (LSA gyroplanes and ASRA-compliant gyroplanes under ASAO administration):
  - add reference to item 3A of table 26.68 (2) of Part 91 MOS to require operable transponder as per item 3A of table
- CAO 95.32 (powered parachutes and weight-shift-controlled aeroplanes under ASAO administration):
  - add reference to item 3A of table 26.68 (2) of Part 91 MOS to allow the fitment of Mode A/C transponders to meet the requirement to fit Mode S transponders to aircraft manufactured on or after 6 February 2014, or aircraft modified by having their transponder installation replaced on or after 6 February 2014
- CAO 95.55 (certain light sport aircraft, lightweight aeroplanes and ultralight aeroplanes under ASAO administration):
  - add reference to item 3A of table 26.68 (2) of Part 91 MOS to allow the fitment of Mode A/C transponders to meet the requirement to fit Mode S transponders to aircraft manufactured on or after 6 February 2014, or aircraft modified by having their transponder installation replaced on or after 6 February 2014.

4 Previous consultations

CASA and Airservices Australia have extensively engaged with Sydney Basin local aviation operators and stakeholders during the development of airspace change proposals associated with the opening of Western Sydney International Airport.

5 Impact on industry

5.1 Safety risk analysis

Previous safety risk analysis has been conducted and consulted with industry during the design of the airspace and route changes necessary to ensure safe operations following the opening of Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport.

This analysis identified that transponders were required in the new Class D CTA to ensure aviation safety.

5.2 Impact analysis

These changes will require some aircraft to fit a transponder, and maintain its serviceability, where this was not previously required.

The new Class D CTA around Bankstown aerodrome will be the only Class D airspace in Australia where a transponder is mandatory aircraft equipment for VFR flights. It is not proposed to require transponders for VFR flights in other Class D airspace.

CASA has submitted a Preliminary Assessment to the Office of Impact Analysis and will prepare an Impact Analysis document if required.

6 Submitting your view and what next

We would like to hear your views on whether the amendments clearly specify the new requirements. Please review the proposal and provide your feedback and any additional concerns related to this SPC.

CASA will consider all comments received as part of this consultation process and incorporate changes as appropriate. Comments on this consultation should be submitted through the online response (CASA Consultation Hub) form by close of business 17 June 2026.