

# **Aviation Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFFS) Regulatory Policy Review**

## **Agreed Recommendations**

Following a regulatory policy review it is agreed that amendments be made to the Civil Aviation Safety Regulations (CASR) Subpart 139.H and the associated Manual of Standards to implement the following approach:

1. ARFFS be required to be established at a location where a relevant trigger event occurs and where the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) decides, following its conduct of a risk review, that ARFFS is required at that location.
2. Two measures constitute a trigger event for the conduct of a risk review relating to the establishment of an ARFFS - the receipt of scheduled international passenger air services, or 500,000 passengers on scheduled commercial air services passing through the airport during a rolling twelve-month period.
3. ARFFS be required to be disestablished at a location where a relevant trigger event occurs and where CASA decides, following the conduct of a risk review by the ARFFS provider and the receipt of advice from the ARFFS provider, that ARFFS should not be required at that location.
4. Two measures constitute a trigger event for the conduct of a risk review relating to the disestablishment of an ARFFS - withdrawal of scheduled international passenger air services or passenger numbers on scheduled commercial air services falling below 400,000 and remaining below this level for a twelve-month period.
5. CASA and the ARFFS provider, consult as appropriate, with industry, the public and relevant government agencies during the conduct of risk reviews.
6. CASA must complete a risk review relating to the possible establishment of an ARFFS within six months of receiving advice from the Department that scheduled international passenger air services have been approved to commence at an airport which currently does not have an ARFFS, or data becomes available from the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE) confirming the passenger number trigger of 500,000 passengers has been met at an airport.
7. The ARFFS provider must complete a risk review relating to the possible disestablishment of an ARFFS within six months of the withdrawal of scheduled international passenger air services or the BITRE confirming that passenger numbers have remained below 400,000 for a twelve-month period.
8. Australia adopts the ICAO classification/terminology of scheduled commercial air transport services, which would include regular public transport and charter operations, noting this would require a change in the current BITRE ARFFS reporting.

9. Where the outcome of an establishment risk review is a decision that ARFFS is not required at a location, CASA is required to monitor activities at the location to determine whether a further risk assessment is required. If after twelve months passenger numbers continue to be above 500,000 or the airport continues to receive scheduled international passenger air services, a further risk review is to be undertaken. However, a risk review should be undertaken earlier if there are significant changes in other safety risk factors.
10. Where the outcome of the risk review is a decision that ARFFS is required at a location, CASA is to determine, in consultation with the ARFFS provider, the timeframe in which the ARFFS should be established. CASA may permit some kind of graduated service arrangements to be in place prior to the establishment of full operations.

A graduated service could include the initial provision of ARFFS at a category lower than the final ARFFS category of services required. Alternatively, other measures to enhance safety could be adopted in the first 12-18 months including the training of the local fire brigade, and the provision of some personnel and firefighting equipment at the airport.

11. Where the outcome of a disestablishment risk review indicates that the ARFFS should remain at the location, and if twelve months after CASA's decision, passenger numbers remain below the disestablishment trigger or the airport does not receive a scheduled international passenger air service, a further risk review should be undertaken by the ARFFS provider, for consideration and decision by CASA.
12. In transitioning to the new arrangements, it would not be necessary to undertake a disestablishment risk review relating to an existing ARFFS unless the total number of passengers falls below the existing disestablishment threshold of 300,000 in a twelve-month period.
13. A "fire-fighting related service" provided at an airport that is not required to have an ARFFS under the CASR is not an "ARFFS" within the meaning of the CASR. A "fire-fighting related service" could still be provided at an airport but would not be subject to the regulatory framework or regulation by CASA.
14. The provision of ARFFS is aligned to areas or facilities at an airport which are used or intended to be used for aviation activities and/or for activities closely connected with aviation activities. Such aviation-related infrastructure would include:
  - taxiways, runways, aprons, airside roads, airside grounds and aircraft parking areas;
  - airside freight handling and staging areas;
  - air traffic control towers;
  - airport terminals; and
  - aircraft hangars, on-airport maintenance facilities and aviation fuel storage/refueling facilities.
15. That aviation-related infrastructure may also include infrastructure that is identified as such in an agreement (Memorandum of Agreement) between an ARFFS provider and a state and territory fire authority, in relation to the provision of rescue and fire services at a particular airport. Such agreements should be developed in consultation with the airport owner/operator.

16. State and territory fire authorities are not required to hold separate CASA approval to assist an ARFFS provider in the provision of ARFFS where they are providing the service under an agreement with the ARFFS provider.
17. The responsibilities of the airport operator in facilitating the provision of ARFFS are clarified, such that the airport operator should be required to facilitate the provision of:
  - access for the ARFFS provider to on airport utilities to meet service delivery requirements;
  - adequate facilities for rapidly replenishing water supply for fire vehicles;
  - appropriate emergency roads, including sealed roads capable of supporting immediate response of ARFFS vehicles that provide direct access from the fire station to the movement area;
  - crash gates for off airside that enable immediate response by ARFFS vehicles;
  - suitable arrangements for regular communication with the ARFFS provider about the provision of services at the airport, and
  - access for the ARFFS provider to a reasonable area on the airport for storage, training and other ARFFS related uses.
18. Where possible, prescriptive requirements relating to training and equipment provisions be replaced with a more systems and outcomes-based approach supported by the regulatory requirement for the ARFFS provider to establish a safety management system which is approved and audited by CASA.