Australian Government
Civil Aviation Safety Authority

PROTOCOL

(OPS.12) Aircraft low visibility operations

April 2025

Acknowledgement of Country

The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our offices are located and the places to which we travel for work. We also acknowledge the Traditional Custodians' continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present.

Inside front cover artwork: James Baban.

1. Purpose

This protocol is for the assessment of an application for an approval to conduct take-off and landing in low visibility under regulation 91.315 of the CASR. This protocol covers the assessment of an operator or an individual for the conduct of low visibility operations (LVO).

In addition, this protocol can be used as guidance for a high-level LVO assessment for Foreign Air Transport Air Operators Certificate (FATAOC) holders.

> Note: Foreign operators applying for a FATAOC, with LVO to be included on the FATAOC Ops Spec, must be approved for LVO by the State of Registry. CASA may accept foreign LVO approvals as issued by the State of Registry, in compliance with the State issued AOC and Ops Spec, with or without further limitation.

2. Concept and philosophy

LVO involves the take-off and landing of an aircraft below the standard instrument flight rules (IFR) take-off and landing minima specified in Chapter 15 of the Part 91 MOS.

The aircraft must be certified and have specific equipment for the requested LVO. There are no Part 61 qualifications to authorise flight crew to conduct LVO, but rather, flight crew must be trained and certified as competent to conduct LVO and must meet certain recency requirements. For an operator, this will be managed by their training and checking system.

LVO approval, permitting the operator to take advantage of lower than standard minima, will improve air navigation capacity, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve overall efficiency, which the International Civil Aviation Organization considers as a high priority for all States to achieve.

This protocol provides CASA with a level of assurance that an operator is competent and capable of demonstrating that the aircraft, equipment and flight crew meet CASA and international performance standards for LVO.

3. Process

All administration tasks should follow standard regulatory service administration procedures (as applicable), in addition to the following:

a. For an initial approval or significant change to an approval, operators will submit the Part 91 Approval – Low Visibility form (CASA-04-5691) for an approval under regulation 91.045.

b. Regservices will create a case in EAP to be assigned to both an airworthiness inspector (AWI) and flying operations inspector (FOI).

c. Regservices and the inspector(s) should confirm that an EAP stop alert is not active.

d. All associated CASA staff must be knowledgeable of, and competent with, Principle (OPS.12), which provides details for the assessment of low visibility operations.

e. The relevant sections of Worksheet (OPS.12) must be completed by the CASA inspector(s) and saved as a PDF document in RMS, including:

   i. the assessment summary

   ii. the approval data sheet.

f. If the application is a significant change, the inspector(s) must complete the relevant section on the approval data sheet and provide the revision details for the exposition.

g. The inspector(s) must complete EAP in accordance with the EAP OAS Case Management - Regulatory Oversight Division (ROD) handbook (CASA-03-550).

The assessment must be endorsed by an independent person, see section 3.1 of this Protocol.

3.1 Recommendation endorsement

All recommendations must be endorsed by a separate person, normally a Manager Regulatory Services, prior to the delegate issuing the authorisation.

The Manager Regulatory Services may assign the endorsement to another inspector.

The role of the endorser is to:

- ensure all sections of the worksheets been completed
- the assessment summary page has been completed
- the approval data sheet has been completed
- all worksheets and relevant documents have been filed in RMS
- the "Assessment" section of EAP has been fulfilled
- the "Create recommendation" section of EAP has been fulfilled

If satisfied the endorser will complete the "Endorse recommendation" section of EAP and forward the task to the delegate.

If the assessing inspector holds the delegation for the authorisation, they can issue the authorisation.

4. List of supplements

Only the following supplements may be used in support of this protocol. The most recently approved versions will be found on the CASA intranet website. Approved forms are located on CASA's external website.

- Principle (OPS.12) Aircraft low visibility operations
- Worksheet (OPS.12) Aircraft low visibility operations

5. Scope

This protocol covers the assessment of Australian operators and individuals intending to conduct LVO approved under Division 91.D.4 of CASR. This protocol does not cover the task of CASA conducting specific aircraft or specific aircraft system certification assessments. Questions relating to aircraft and/or aircraft system certification must be referred to the Airworthiness and Engineering Branch (AEB).

The specific LVO approvals supported by this protocol are as follows:

- Low-visibility take-off (LVTO)
- Precision approach – Special Authorisation Category I (SA CAT I)
- Precision approach - Category II (CAT II)
- Precision approach - Special Authorisation Category II (SA CAT II)
- Precision approach – Category III (CAT III).

6. Competency requirements

To conduct the assessment, inspectors must have successfully completed the foundation training and advanced regulatory assessment training programs.

Inspectors must also complete the following practical training:

a. flying operations inspectors must have operational experience in the conduct of LVO

b. conduct an LVO assessment under the observation of a qualified inspector

c. if an inflight assessment is required, meet the competency requirements of the Flying Qualification & Training Handbook (FQTH) and be approved on the National Operations Register.

7. Associated legislation

Table 1. Legislation associated with this protocol

Document	Title
Part 91 of CASR	General operating and flight rules
Part 119 of CASR	Australian air transport operators—certification and management
Part 121 of CASR	Australian air transport operations—larger aeroplanes
Part 133 of CASR	Australian air transport operations—rotorcraft
Part 135 of CASR	Australian air transport operations—smaller aeroplanes
Part 138 of CASR	Aerial work operations
Part 91 MOS	Part 91 (General operating and flight rules) Manual of Standards 2020

8. Guidance references

Table 2. Guidance material relevant to this protocol

Document	Title
AC 1-01	Understanding the legislative framework
AC 1-02	Guide to the preparation of expositions and operations manuals
AC 11-04	Approvals under CASR Parts 91,103,119,121,129,131,132,133,135,138 and 149 (including MOS)
AC 60-02	Flight simulator approvals
AC 91-22	Aircraft checklists
AC 91-12	Conduct of practice autolands
AC 119-11	Training and checking systems
AC 91-11	Aeroplane low visibility operations – conduct and approval

Document	Title
Part 91 AMC/GM	Acceptable means of compliance and guidance material - General operating and flight rules
EASA Part-SPA	European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Acceptable Means of Compliance
FAA AC 120-28D	Criteria for approval of Category III Weather Minima for Takeoff Landing and Rollout
FAA AC 120-118	Criteria for Approval/Authorization of All Weather Operations (AWO) for Takeoff, Landing, Rollout

9. ICAO references

Table 3. ICAO references applicable to this protocol

Document	Title
ICAO Doc 9365-AN/910	Manual of All-Weather Operations
ICAO Annex 10 Volume 1	Radio Navigation Aids
ICAO Annex 14 Volume 1	Aerodrome Design and Operations

10. Revision history

Amendments/revisions of this protocol are recorded below in order of most recent first.

Table 4. Revision history table

Version No.	Date	Parts/Sections	Details
1.2	April 2025	3.1	New section
1.1	May 2024	All	Reformat to latest template
1.0	May 2023	All	First release