

 **Ground Operations**

**Operational Safety Instruction**  
**Aircraft Remote Holding Procedure at Heathrow**

14<sup>th</sup> May 2021

ASGrOps\_OSI\_037

v2.0

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**

- 1.1** This Instruction is to advise all operators of the procedure for using Remote Holding Points at Heathrow. Remote holding is a procedure adopted by approved aircraft operators for use when ATC have advised of an excess delay to a departure, the purpose of this procedure is to allow the aircraft operator to vacate an aircraft stand for re-allocation.
- 1.2** Red bars have been added at the side of the document to draw the reader’s attention to where changes have been made.
- 1.3** This OSI replaces AsGrOps\_OSI\_037 v1.0, which is hereby cancelled.

**2. Definitions**

Abbreviation	Description
AOP	Airport Operations Plan (formerly known as A-CDM)
APOC	AirPort Operations Centre
ATC	Air Traffic Control
CTOT	Calculated Take Off Time
EFPS	Electronic Flight Progress Strip
GMC	Ground Movement Control
HOEC	Heathrow Operational Efficiency Cell (NATS based in APOC)
LVPs	Low Visibility Procedures
NATS	National Air Traffic Service
OTP	On Time Performance
RHP	Remote Holding Points
TOBT	Target Off Block Time
TSAT	Target Start-up Approval Time



### 3. Purpose

- 3.1** The purpose of an RHP is to enable approved airline operators to request remote holding for an aircraft to release its stand for re-use, to release pushback crews and contribute to OTP. An aircraft that has been issued a CTOT, which results in more than 30 minutes between its TOBT and TSAT, is eligible for an RHP.
- 3.2** For periods of less than 30 minutes, aircraft should be permitted to absorb the delay at the Runway Holding Area if traffic and space permits. These aircraft will be treated as normal outbound aircraft and should follow standard procedures.
- 3.3** Approved operating companies may decide if they wish to use RHPs, thus freeing stands for other inbound aircraft and taking advantage of possible re-allocated departure slots.

### 4. Remote Holding Points

- 4.1** Air traffic controllers use their discretion when selecting RHPs based on the departing runway and taking into account the operational performance on the day.
- 4.2** Remote holding is not permitted during Low Visibility Procedures for safety reasons.

### 5. Requirements

- 5.1** Before any airline operator is permitted to request the use of an RHP facility, they must previously have submitted and agreed with NATS Heathrow ATC their company procedures. Applications should be made to:

Head of ATC Operations  
NATS Ltd  
Heathrow Air Traffic Control Tower  
Pier 7, Terminal 3  
Heathrow Airport  
Hounslow,  
Middlesex  
TW6 2GW  
Telephone: 0208 750 2621

- 5.2** The airline makes the request to the HOEC for the remote hold. Provided it is within the agreed parameters (these include but are not limited to: aircraft subject to CTOTs, TSAT delays greater than 10 minutes or with an arriving aircraft holding for the stand) and are able to accommodate it (assuming no other mitigating issues such as an upcoming runway change), then the request will be approved.
- 5.3** The remote hold functionality is tracked using EFPS strips by the ATC Tower Supervisor. The remote hold function is activated in AOP by the HOEC which brings



the TSAT forward, allowing the aircraft to be given start approval. The location of the remote hold area varies depending on the runway configuration and traffic flow.

- 5.4** Operators must be aware that their aircraft may be subject to delay on stand prior to remote holding, or may be refused remote holding even when space is available, due to traffic or GMC workload.
- 5.5** Aircraft should self-manoevre into position within the RHP following ATC instructions. The aircraft commander is responsible for maintaining safe clearances at all times. If required, marshalling assistance may be requested through GMC.

## 6. General

- 6.1** Any enquires regarding this instruction should be made to:  
[airfield.duty.manager@heathrow.com](mailto:airfield.duty.manager@heathrow.com)

