

FARNBOROUGH AIR SHOW PILOTS TO FACE TOUGHER RESTRICTIONS

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Air display pilots performing at this year's Farnborough air show are set to face tougher restrictions on aerobatic performances as a result of new regulations imposed following the crash at the Shoreham air show last August.

The show's airspace has had to be radically re-designed, reducing the amount of airspace available to perform high-energy maneuvers. Two aerobatic flying areas have been established, one over the airfield itself, and another larger area to the west of the airfield over nearby land used by the military. Populated areas can still be overflown, but within the rules of the air with no high-energy maneuvering.

Farnborough is a unique venue in the U.K. in part because the show is the U.K.'s only trade air show attracting new and experimental aircraft, but also because it is one of the most urban venues as the town of Farnborough has grown around the airfield.

The rules imposed by the U.K. Civil Aviation Authority place "increased emphasis on third parties," said Farnborough Flying Display Director John Turner, speaking at the show's media day on May 11. The new rules prevent any kind of aerobatics being performed over populated areas. However, the rapid growth of the town of Farnborough means that the emphasis of the show's air display activity is likely to move further to the northwest and west of the show site, particularly for fast jet aircraft displays. Information on the restrictions has now been forwarded to pilots, who now have to work up displays that take the restrictions into account. Once at Farnborough those displays will

be validated by the Flying Control Committee and monitored using an electro-optical camera system, so the committee can see where the aircraft are in relation to the ground. Displays will be modified in consultation with the committee.

In March, show organizers released details of the show safety enhancements, which are planned to include road closures at the western end of the airfield while the air display is taking place. Turner says there also will be screening of areas where people gather outside the airfield to watch the show.

There will also be subtle changes to the crowd line, which will be moved several meters back to meet the new safety requirements. This will result in changes to how some aircraft are parked. Before the flying display starts, some aircraft will be parked inside the crowd line, but once the display starts, these aircraft will no longer be accessible to visitors.

Show organizers are still confident the show will still be a spectacle. Turner told journalists, “we have the problem of trying to squeeze all the aircraft into the display, but that’s a nice problem to have.”

One of the highlights of the display is likely to be the daily flyby of Hybrid Air Vehicles’ (HAV) Airlander hybrid airship, currently undergoing ground tests at the company’s facility in Cardington. HAV officials say its appearance is dependent on the progress of ground and flight tests. Ground tests are currently underway and the aircraft could emerge from its hangar in the coming weeks.

Turner revealed that Bombardier’s CSeries CS100 airliner will participate in the flying display, making its Farnborough debut. It should have appeared in 2014, but an uncontained engine failure prevented the aircraft from making the trans-Atlantic crossing. Also performing in the flying will be Antonov’s An-178 twin-engine airlifter. They will be joined by the Airbus A350 and Boeing’s P-8 Poseidon maritime patroller. The F-35 Lightning II also will perform daily along with Boeing’s Super Hornet, the Eurofighter Typhoon and the V-22 Osprey.

As part of Boeing’s centenary celebrations, T2 Aviation will perform a display using one of two Boeing 727s used for oil spill dispersant spraying. Embraer’s KC-390 airlifter also is expected to make its international debut at the show.

Amanda Stainer, commercial director of the show, said 94% of exhibition space had been sold or reserved and that several companies were making last minute requests to participate. Some 67% of the exhibitors are from outside the U.K. and five new international pavilions have been established for Austria, Brazil, China, the Republic of Ireland and South Korea.

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