

CHAPTER 3

3. VISUAL FLIGHT RULES

3.1 APPLICABILITY

All aircraft operating under visual flight rules shall comply with this Chapter.

3.2 CLOUD CLEARANCE

3.2.1 Except when operating as a Special VFR flight, VFR flights shall be conducted so that the aircraft is flown in conditions of visibility and distance from clouds equal to or greater than those specified in the Cloud Clearance Table listed below:

Class *	Type of Flight	Separation Provided	Service Provided	VMC visibility and distance from Cloud Minima
A	IFR only	All aircraft	Air traffic control service	Not applicable
C	IFR	IFR from IFR IFR from VFR	Air traffic control service	Not applicable
	VFR	VFR from IFR	1) Air traffic control service for separation from IFR 2) VFR/VFR traffic information (and traffic avoidance on request)	8km at and above 3050m (10000ft) AMSL. 5km below 3050m (10000ft) AMSL. 1500m horizontal: 300m vertical distance from cloud
D	IFR	IFR from IFR	Air traffic control service including traffic information about VFR flights (and traffic avoidance advice on request)	Not applicable
	VFR	Nil	Traffic information between VFR and IFR flights (and traffic avoidance advice on request)	8km at and above 3050m (10000ft) AMSL. 5km below 3050m (10000ft) AMSL. 1500m horizontal: 300m vertical distance from cloud
E	IFR	IFR from IFR	Air traffic control service and traffic information about VFR flights as far as practical	Not applicable
	VFR	Nil	Traffic information as far as practical	8km at and above 3050m (10000ft) AMSL. 5km **below 3050m (10000ft) AMSL. 1500m horizontal: 300m vertical distance from cloud
G	IFR	Nil	Flight information service	Not applicable
	VFR	Nil	Flight information service	8km at and above 3050m (10000ft) AMSL 5km below 3050m (10000ft) AMSL Above 900 m ASL 1500m horizontal & 300m vertical distance from cloud. At and below 900m AMSL or 300m above terrain whichever is higher - 5km**, clear of cloud and in sight of ground or water.

* Class B and F airspace are not currently in use in the Emirates FIR.

** When so prescribed by the GCAA, UAE.

(a) lower flight visibility to 1500 metres may be permitted for flights operating:

- (1) at speeds that will give adequate opportunity to observe other traffic or any obstacles in time to avoid collision; or

CAR PART III

(2) in circumstances in which the probability of encounters with other traffic would normally be low, e.g. in areas of low traffic volume and for aerial work at low levels;

(b) helicopters may be permitted to operate in less than 1500 meters flight visibility if manoeuvred at a speed that will give adequate opportunity to observe other traffic or any obstacles in time to avoid collision.

3.2.2 In all cases such flight shall be conducted at or below 3000 feet AMSL, or 1000 feet above terrain whichever is higher, clear of cloud and in sight of the surface.

3.2.3 Except when a clearance is obtained, under paragraph 3.3 below, from an ATS unit, VFR flights shall not take off or land at an aerodrome within a control zone, or enter the aeronautical traffic zone or traffic pattern;

(a) when the ceiling is less than 1500 ft; or

(b) when the ground visibility is less than 5 km.

3.3 SPECIAL VFR WEATHER MINIMUMS

(See CAR-OPS 1.465)

(See CAR-OPS 3.465)

When conditions for flight under VFR cannot be met, a pilot may be cleared by ATC to operate under Special VFR in a control zone, subject to the conditions of CAR-OPS 1.465 (Aeroplane) and CAR-OPS 3.465 (Helicopter).

3.4 VFR FLIGHT AT NIGHT

No person shall operate an aircraft under VFR at night unless:

(a) the pilot-in-command receives clearance from ATC to operate VFR in controlled airspace under the jurisdiction of the ATC unit issuing the clearance; or

(b) the operation involves a bona fide casualty evacuation and the flight crew is instrument rated and current; or

(c) for night currency training conducted within controlled airspace or within a designated training area approved by the GCAA.

3.5 VFR CRUISING ALTITUDES

3.5.1 Unless specifically authorized by ATC, no aircraft shall plan to operate an aircraft under VFR at or above 12500 feet AMSL. An aircraft operating under VFR in level cruising flight more than 3000 feet above the surface shall maintain the appropriate level as specified in the Table of Cruising Levels in the UAE AIP, unless otherwise authorized by ATC.

3.5.2 Authorization for VFR flights to operate above FL 290 shall not be granted in areas where a vertical separation minimum of 1000 ft is applied above FL 290.

3.5.3 Except where otherwise indicated in ATC clearances or specified by the appropriate ATS unit, VFR flights in level cruising flight shall be conducted at an altitude or flight level appropriate to the track as specified in the AIP

3.6 MINIMUM SAFE HEIGHTS

Except when necessary for take-off or landing, or when/as authorized by the GCAA, no person shall operate an aircraft under VFR below the following heights:

- (a) ANYWHERE. A height allowing, if an engine fails, an emergency landing without hazard to persons or property on the surface.
- (b) OVER CONGESTED AREAS. Over any congested area of a city, town, or settlement, or over any open air assembly of persons, a height of 1000 feet above the highest obstacle within a horizontal radius of 600 metres (2000 feet) of the aircraft.
- (c) OVER OTHER THAN CONGESTED AREAS. A height of 500 feet above the surface.

3.7 SPECIFIC ATC REQUIREMENTS

3.7.1 VFR flights shall comply with the provisions of Chapter 2, Section 2.23:

- (a) when operated within Classes B, C and D airspace;
- (b) when forming part of aerodrome traffic at controlled aerodromes; or
- (c) when operating as special VFR flights.

3.7.2 A VFR flight operating within or into areas, or along routes, designated by the appropriate ATS authority as designated areas or routes, shall maintain continuous air-ground voice communication watch on the appropriate communication channel of, and report its position as necessary to, the ATS unit providing flight information service.

3.8 CHANGE FROM VFR TO IFR FLIGHT PLAN

An aircraft operated in accordance with the visual flight rules, which wishes to change to compliance with the instrument flight rules shall;

- (a) if a flight plan was submitted, communicate the necessary changes to be effected to its current flight plan, or
- (b) if in controlled airspace, submit a flight plan to the appropriate ATS unit and obtain a clearance prior to proceeding IFR.

3.9 HELICOPTER SURFACE REFERENCE REQUIREMENTS

No person shall operate a helicopter under VFR unless that person has visual surface reference or, at night, visual surface light reference, sufficient to safely control the helicopter.

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