



How to fly across the English Channel - Safely

THE SOUTH COAST DANGER AREAS



So, you're planning a flight across the English Channel, maybe on business into Guernsey or for lunch in Cherbourg or Paris. On inspection of your chart however, you notice that there is a vast swathe of Danger Areas spanning your track. What are they there for? What goes on inside them? and most importantly, how do you get across them safely?

Well, this document is to help explain and answer these questions for you and most of all, tell you what services are available to help you on your flight.

First of all, what are the Danger Areas there for? Danger Areas are established to protect you, the "other user" of the airspace from activity that is occurring inside the Danger Area. This activity can often be extremely hazardous to the safety of flight.

The Danger Areas on the South Coast of the UK, extend from Cornwall in the West, across to Selsey Bill in the East. They are run by the Royal Navy and in the case of EGD026 (Lulworth), the Army. The Areas are used for the operational training of Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen.

Typical activity that occurs within these areas can be as benign as helicopter flying, right across the complete spectrum to the firing of large calibre guns, missiles and the towing of targets.

TARGET TOWING

As mentioned above, there is a wide spectrum of activity within the South Coast Danger Areas, in the case of Target Towing, the target is often the size of a telegraph pole and being towed by an aircraft with up to 6 miles, yes that's not a typo, 6 MILES OF STEEL WIRE ROPE! It is obviously important to keep this sort of activity segregated from other airspace users. This is why transit is sometimes refused, for the period of activity.



SO, HOW DO YOU GET ACROSS?

Don't worry; it is not all bad news. As part of the UK's long-standing policy of having a joint and integrated ATC system, there are well-established methods of getting across these areas.

DACS or Danger Area Crossing Service. This is provided on the South Coast by Plymouth Military Radar during its' hours of operation (Mon-Thurs 0800-1700 Fri 0800-1400) on frequency 124.15 East of Berry Head and 121.25 to the west of Berry Head. This service can give you up to date information on the status of the areas and advise you on the best possible route, avoiding any hazardous activity along with providing an ATC service. Outside the above hours of operation, the DACS is handed to the military at the London ACC, Swanwick and can be accessed through London FIR on 124.75 or Swanwick Military on 135.15. **Note. Even though Plymouth Military may be closed, the Danger Areas remain active in accordance with the times published in the UKAIP and any NOTAMs.**

DAAIS or Danger Area Activity Information Service. Information on planned activity can be obtained 24 hours a day from FOST Operations on 01752 557550.

VFR Route In the vicinity of the Isle of Wight is EGD036. The Royal Navy will, where possible not plan to use this area, when an alternative exists. Therefore, it is quite likely that transit across this particular area will normally be available. It is designated the VFR Route but, importantly, this does not imply that you can transit this area without first talking to the DACS. (see above).

The aim of the MOD is not to exclude other airspace users from it's training areas but to share this airspace in accordance with European policy but also ensuring that activity hazardous to flight is safely segregated as well. I hope this pamphlet has been of use to you. For more information, please use the contact details above.

