



Message from the Tower – 29th March 2021 COVID 19 Update

Hi All,

As most of you are aware, the resumption of flying has been sanctioned within the Government timetable out of the current lockdown. That first date is Monday 29th March 2021, with the government guidance being as follows:

Step 1 - from 29 March

People will no longer be required to stay at home.

This will allow the safe restart of GA flying for non-professional purposes for solo pilots, or individuals flying with a member of their household or bubble.

Training for professional pilots, or those in training to be professional pilots, will be able to continue.

Training for leisure or recreational purposes should not take place where rules around [social distancing](#) cannot be followed.

GA activities should take place in line with the wider restrictions. Travel should be minimised as far as possible.

One aspect of this guidance is that it does not stipulate whether or not current rules that allow only for flights from 'A to A' are to be maintained. I have been in discussions with Martin Robinson of AOPA in regard to being able to interpret this lack of direction from the DfT/CAA as being tacit approval to be able to undertake flights from 'A to B and back to A' from 29th March. I am happy to report that AOPA have been in contact with the DfT on this matter and the outcome is positive. The DfT have advised the following;

From 29 March Solo / bubble flights are allowed both A-A and A-B but the advice is to fly only reasonable distances.

Naturally, for those pilots who have not flown for some months, and who may feel that individually they would prefer, on the grounds of safety and common sense, that they would like a currency check ride with an instructor before flying solo, will have to wait just a little while longer, until Monday 12th April, as this is when the DfT will allow Solo pilots to fly with an instructor, and not before. The government guidance in this respect being as follows:

Step 2 – no earlier than 12 April

Flight training for all pilots, and flights with an instructor, can resume.

GA businesses will be able to open following COVID-secure guidance, for example commercial balloon operators. The rules on social contact will apply in these settings. Outdoor gatherings must still be limited to 6 people or 2 households, and no indoor mixing will be allowed.

GA activities should take place in line with the wider restrictions. Travel should be minimised as far as possible.

More advice from the Club Chief Flying Instructor will be issued in the coming week, in regard to members requesting a refresher check ride with a club instructor.

From 29th March onwards, the airfield will be open for normal business on a 7 day a week basis, from 0900 to 1800 and a Duty Manager will be available on 01208 821419 between those times. Good flying, be safe and take care.

Kind regards,

JAY