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**Proposed Military Operating Area.**  
**Ohakea**  
**Airspace User Consultation**

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## Introduction

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) has submitted an application for an additional Military Operating Area (MOA) located coincident with the existing NZM311 area, from 2500ft to 7000ft above mean sea level (AMSL) and active daylight hours only; NZM311 is active 1500ft to 2500ft AMSL, H24. This proposed additional MOA is planned to facilitate aerobatic flying and Emergency Landing Procedures (ELP).

## Civil Aviation Rules context

Civil Aviation Rule Part 71 provides the regulatory context to designate Military Operating Areas, as special use airspace. Specifically, 71.151 prescribes the criteria that the Director must consider in designating special use airspace below:

### 71.151 General

*(a) The Director may designate special use airspace under this Subpart if the Director considers such airspace is necessary—*

- (1) in the interests of safety or security within the civil aviation system; or*
- (2) in the interests of national security; or*
- (3) for any other reason in the public interest.*

*(b) The Director must ensure that each portion of airspace designated under this Subpart is as small as practicable consistent with the activities for which the area is required.*

Further, **71.153** prescribes the criteria for designating military operating areas, detailing the Director and administering agency responsibilities:

### 71.155 Military operating areas

*(a) The Director may—*

- (1) designate a portion of airspace as a military operating area to segregate military activities from other traffic; and*
- (2) impose conditions under which—*
  - (i) aircraft may be permitted to fly within that military operating area; and*
  - (ii) an administering authority specified under paragraph (b)(2) must operate.*

*(b) The Director must—*

- (1) specify the type of activity for which each military operating area is designated; and*
- (2) specify the administering authority responsible for each military operating area; and*
- (3) identify each military operating area by the ICAO nationality letters of the applicable State followed by the letter “M” followed by a number.*

(c) *The administering authority responsible for a military operating area—*

*(1) must manage—*

- (i) the entry of aircraft into the military operating area; and*
- (ii) the operation of aircraft within the military operating area; and*
- (iii) the exit of aircraft from the military operating area; and*

*(2) if the military operating area is designated as being made active by NOTAM, must at least 24 hours before the military operating area is to become active, give to the New Zealand NOTAM Office notice of that military operating area becoming active, except that in the case of emergencies less than 24 hour's notice may be given; and*

*(3) may, within any conditions imposed by the Director under paragraph (a)(2)(ii), impose conditions under which an aircraft may be operated within the military operating area*

### **Proposed area**

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) has provided the following background rationale to petition for the establishment of this MOA:

1. The primary purpose is to allow NZDF to dictate the flight rules applicable to military aircraft within that airspace to manage their challenges encountered with the separation from cloud requirements when Texan aircraft are conducting aerobatics and Emergency Landing Patterns (ELP).

CAA Note:

Within the territorial limits of NZ, the NZDF does not have to comply with rules 91.301 and 91.303 – VFR met minima and SVFR met minima – refer 91.1(c). The RNZAF may set its own operational criteria to meet military needs.

Further, upper limits of special use airspace are set as that which may be used at zero risk for an aircraft operating outside the SUA, i.e. any buffer from the activity the area is established for is contained within. ATC applies vertical separation of either 500 ft or 1000 ft depending on the activity within – AIP ENR Table 1.1-1.

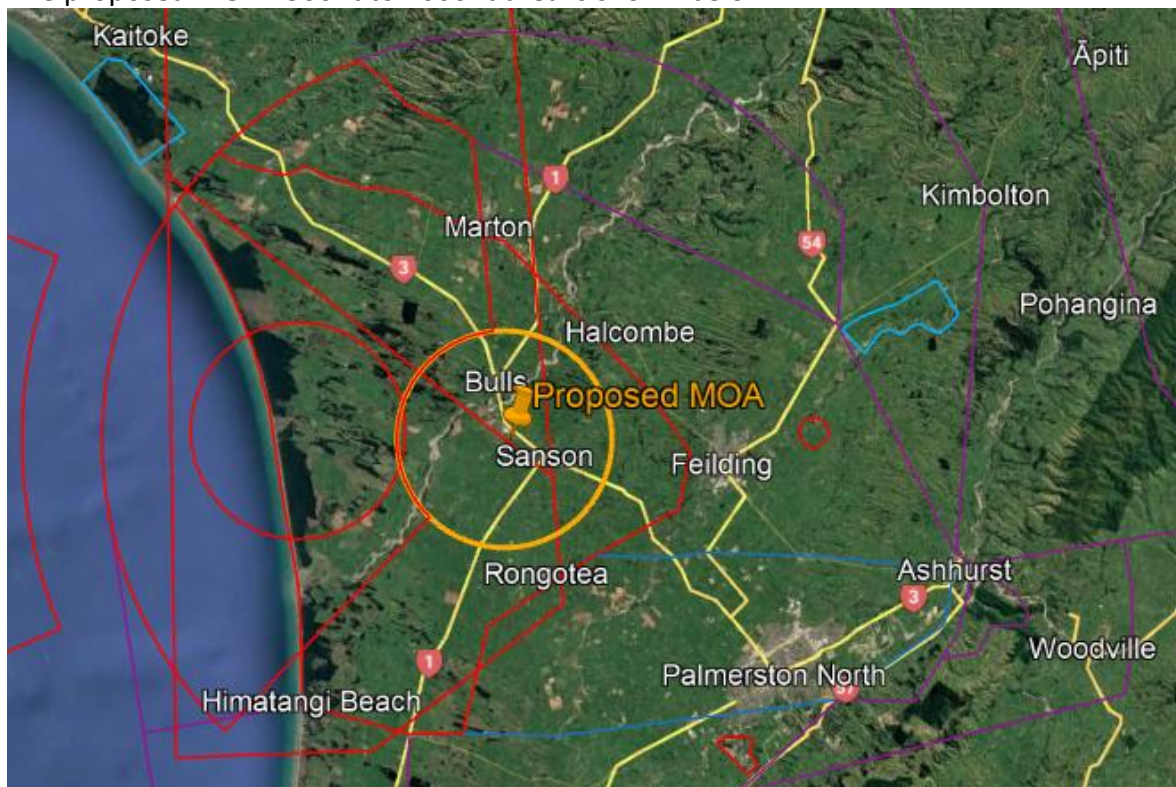
2. During consultation with stakeholders prior to submitting their petition NZDF further advised that although the MOA is requested as up to 7,000 ft, the actual airspace delegated by Ohakea Radar controllers to Ohakea Tower controllers will be dependent on the exercise being carried out; typically, this could be up from 2500ft to 3500 ft for ELP training, 2500ft to 5000 ft for a Falcons display practise, and only from 2500ft to 7,000 ft on odd occasions for full IFR ELP exercises.

CAA Note:

Notwithstanding NZDF and Airways NZ operational management of the airspace, if designated this MOA would remain active from 2500ft to 7000ft during daylight hours.

3. Airways NZ Ohakea Terminal Radar and Ohakea Tower staffs supported the application and commented the proposed area would simplify the air traffic separation requirements.
4. Air New Zealand indicated their conditional endorsement for the proposed area and requested that direct routing remained available whenever possible.

The proposed MOA 2500 ft to 7000 ft area is shown below:



**Possible effect to IFR aircraft**

The areas remain within controlled (Class C) airspace, therefore, there may be an impact on some IFR aircraft.

**Possible effect to VFR aircraft**

NZDF stated it was not the intention to cause any significant restriction to civil aircraft operations and requests to enter controlled airspace and transit this area would be operationally managed to cause minimal disruption to VFR traffic.

## **Consultation**

Prior to designating airspace, Civil Aviation Rule 71.9 requires the Director to consult with affected persons, organisations, and representative groups within the aviation industry before making a designation or classification of airspace.

The Director invites feedback regarding the proposed airspace change.

This document will be sent directly to the organisations listed below. It would be appreciated if you would kindly forward the document to your members and stakeholders, for consideration and comment as appropriate.

### **Operators, Organisations and User Groups**

- Airways New Zealand
- Aeropath
- Air New Zealand
- New Zealand Helicopter Association
- CAA Aviation Safety Advisor – North Island
- New Zealand Army
- Massey School of Aviation
- Phillips Trust Helicopters
- Palmerston North Aerodrome
- Feilding Aerodrome

Notification that this document has been posted online will be sent to CAA email notification subscribers to Airspace Notifications – Briefing Area 3, 5, and 6.

This document is also available on the CAA website at the following link:

[Airspace review | aviation.govt.nz](#)

## **Submissions**

This document forms part of the consultation process. Submissions are sought from any interested person, organisation, or representative group.

Submissions are accepted either electronically or via mail, addressed to:

Team Coordinator  
Aviation Security and Infrastructure  
Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand  
PO Box 3555  
Wellington 6140

Email: [aeronautical.services@caa.govt.nz](mailto:aeronautical.services@caa.govt.nz)

### **Reference: 2024-00309 Proposed MOA - Ohakea**

Closing date for submissions to this proposal is **28 February 2025**

For questions regarding this application, in the first instance you may wish to contact:

Jim Rankin  
Staff Officer Aviation Services  
Royal New Zealand Air Force  
Email: [James.Rankin2@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:James.Rankin2@nzdf.mil.nz)

For other enquiries contact:

Julia Fitness  
Technical Specialist - Aeronautical Services Unit  
Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand  
P O Box 3555  
Wellington 6140  
Email: [Julia.fitness@caa.govt.nz](mailto:Julia.fitness@caa.govt.nz)