

Civil Aviation Rules



Part 105

Parachuting - Operating Rules

5 April 2025

CAA Consolidation

Rule Objective

The objective of Part 105 is to maintain a safe operating environment for parachuting.

Part 105 prescribes rules relating to parachute equipment and maintenance, excluding emergency parachute descents and parachute descents that are not executed from an aircraft.

This document is the current consolidated version of Part 105 produced by the Civil Aviation Authority, and serves as a reference only. It is compiled from the rules that have been signed into law by the Minister of Transport. Copies of the rules as signed by the Minister of Transport may be obtained from the Civil Aviation Authority or may be downloaded from the official web site at: www.caa.govt.nz

Bulletin

This Part first came into force on 5 April 2025.

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Subpart A — General

105.1 Applicability

This Part prescribes rules governing—

- (1) parachute operations other than—
 - (i) emergency parachute descents; and
 - (ii) parachute descents that are not from aircraft; and
- (2) parachute equipment; and
- (3) parachute maintenance.

105.3 Definitions and abbreviations

In this Part—

Altimeter means a visually read instrument for measuring height throughout descent:

Automatic activation device means an automatic altitude and descent-rate sensor designed to self activate a parachute:

Certificate, in relation to a personnel qualification required by this Part, means a certificate issued by the holder of a delegation from the Director for that purpose:

Student parachutist means a person who is defined as a student in the operating rules of their parachute organisation:

AAD means automatic activation device.

105.5 Persons making parachute descents

(a) Except as provided in paragraphs (b) and (c), a person making a parachute descent must—

- (1) hold a parachutist certificate; and
- (2) comply with the privileges and limitations of the certificate and any ratings; and

- (3) comply with the operational standards and procedures contained in the parachute organisation's exposition.
- (b) A student parachutist is not required to comply with paragraph (a) if the student is under the supervision of an instructor who holds an instructor rating issued by a parachute organisation.
- (c) A tandem rider is not required to comply with paragraph (a) if the tandem rider is under the control of a tandem master who—
- (1) holds a tandem master rating issued by a parachute organisation; and
 - (2) is at least 18 years old; and
 - (3) holds a current Class 2 medical certificate issued by the Director under the Act.

105.7 Hazard

A person making a parachute descent must not unnecessarily hazard—

- (1) the parachute-drop aircraft or its occupants; or
- (2) other parachutists or other air traffic; or
- (3) persons or property on the ground.

105.9 Exit of aircraft

A person must not exit an aircraft to make a parachute descent unless authorised to exit by—

- (1) the pilot-in-command; or
- (2) a person nominated by the pilot-in-command for that purpose.

105.11 Minimum parachute activation altitude

(a) Except as provided in paragraphs (b) and (c), a person making a parachute descent must activate the main parachute at a height of not less than 2000 feet.

(b) A student parachutist must activate the main parachute at a height of not less than 3000 feet.

(c) A tandem master must activate the main parachute at a height of not less than 5000 feet.

105.13 Parachute descents

A person must not make a parachute descent unless the descent is—

- (1) within controlled airspace classified as C or D airspace under Part 71; or
- (2) within an area authorised by a parachute organisation provided that area is depicted on a current aeronautical chart or the details of the parachuting activity have been promulgated by means of an AIP Supplement or NOTAM.

105.15 Parachute landing area

(a) A person making a parachute descent must—

- (1) land within a PLA that is designated by a parachute organisation; or
- (2) for a tandem parachute operation conducted under the authority of an adventure aviation operator certificate issued by the Director under the Act and Part 115, land within a PLA that is listed in the certificate holder's exposition and accepted by the Director.

(b) Simultaneous parachute and aircraft movements may only be conducted at aerodromes when the PLA is located clear of—

- (1) any part of the movement area that is in use; and
- (2) any runway that is in use; and
- (3) any taxiway which is in use; and
- (4) the approach and departure areas of any runway and heliport in use.

(c) A person making a parachute descent into a water PLA must ensure that—

- (1) the PLA has a clearly defined perimeter; and
- (2) adequate arrangements have been made to retrieve all parachutists.

105.17 Ground signal

If a ground signal is used to indicate that parachute descents are taking place, that signal must consist of a white circle with an attached cone pointing into the wind.

105.19 Controlled airspace

(a) A person must not carry out a parachute operation in controlled airspace except in accordance with an agreement between the local parachute operators and the ATC unit responsible for the airspace.

(b) A person must not make a parachute descent in or into controlled airspace unless —

- (1) an ATC clearance has been issued for the parachute descent before the person exits from the parachute-drop aircraft; and
- (2) the person descends in accordance with the ATC clearance.

105.21 Descents onto aerodromes

A person making a parachute descent onto an aerodrome must—

- (1) have the prior agreement of the aerodrome operator; and
- (2) if ATS is not in attendance, avoid the pattern of traffic formed by aircraft operating within the aerodrome traffic circuit at the aerodrome.

105.23 Descents within military operating areas and restricted areas

A person must not make a parachute descent within a military operating area or a restricted area designated under Part 71 unless they have the

approval of the administering authority responsible for the military operating area or the restricted area, as the case may be.

105.25 Clearance from cloud

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b), a person making a parachute descent must remain clear of cloud.

(b) A person may descend through cloud in airspace designated under Part 71 as controlled airspace, and classified as class C or D, if the person has an ATC clearance to do so.

105.27 Descents from higher altitudes

(a) A person making a parachute descent from an unpressurised aircraft must—

- (1) when between altitudes of 10 000 and 13 000 feet for longer than 30 minutes, use supplementary oxygen until immediately prior to exiting the aircraft; and
- (2) when between altitudes of 13 000 and 20 000 feet, use supplementary oxygen until immediately prior to exiting the aircraft.

(b) A person making a parachute descent from a pressurised aircraft must, when between altitudes of 13 000 and 20 000 feet, use supplementary oxygen during the period from immediately prior to depressurisation to immediately prior to exiting the aircraft.

(c) A person making a parachute descent from altitudes above 13 000 feet must have satisfactorily completed a training course, for high altitude descents, conducted by a parachute organisation.

(d) A person making a parachute descent from altitudes above 20 000 feet must use individual supplementary oxygen from immediately prior to depressurisation, or from immediately after disconnection from any aircraft mounted supplementary oxygen system, until descent below an altitude of 13 000 feet.

Subpart B — Parachute Equipment

105.51 Parachutes

(a) A person or tandem pair making a parachute descent must be equipped with a main parachute that complies with the technical standards of a parachute organisation.

(b) A person or tandem pair making a parachute descent must be equipped with a reserve parachute assembly which—

- (1) complies with the technical standards of a parachute organisation; and
- (2) has been inspected, re-packed and certified as airworthy within the previous 7 months by a parachute technician in accordance with the technical standards of a parachute organisation.

(c) Each tandem rider making a tandem descent must wear a harness which—

- (1) complies with the technical standards of a parachute organisation; and
- (2) is properly secured to a matching tandem-master harness.

105.53 Altimeter

A person, or tandem pair, making a free-fall descent of more than 10 seconds must—

- (1) be equipped with a serviceable altimeter of a type suitable for parachuting; and
- (2) be equipped with an illuminated altimeter at night; and
- (3) prior to take-off, zero the altimeter to the PLA

105.55 Automatic activation devices

A student parachutist or tandem pair making a parachute descent must be equipped with an AAD on the reserve parachute that has been—

- (1) certified as compatible with the parachute assembly on the parachute assembly packing-record, required by rule 105.111, by a parachute technician; and
- (2) maintained and calibrated in accordance with the manufacturer's operating instructions; and
- (3) set to operate the reserve parachute at a minimum height above the PLA of—
 - (i) for a student parachute descent, 1000 feet; or
 - (ii) for a tandem parachute descent, 2000 feet; or
 - (iii) such height as predetermined and set within the AAD by the AAD manufacturer for the category of use and zeroed to the PLA; and
- (4) inspected by the parachute technician in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

105.57 Safety equipment

- (a) A person making an intentional parachute descent into water must wear suitable flotation equipment capable of supporting that person's head clear of the water.
- (b) A student parachutist making an intentional parachute descent within 1 nautical mile of a water hazard must wear suitable flotation equipment capable of supporting that person's head clear of the water.
- (c) A student parachutist making a parachute descent must wear a serviceable, rigid, protective helmet of a type approved by a parachute organisation.
- (d) A tandem pair making a parachute descent must wear protective headgear approved by a parachute organisation.

Subpart C — Parachute Maintenance

105.101 Parachute technician

A parachute technician must—

- (1) be at least 18 years old; and
- (2) hold a parachute technician certificate issued by a parachute organisation; and
- (3) comply with the privileges and limitations of their certificate; and
- (4) comply with the operational standards and procedures of the parachute organisation; or
- (5) for a tandem parachute operated under the authority of an adventure aviation operator certificate issued by the Director under the Act and Part 115, perform the maintenance of a tandem parachute in accordance with the maintenance programme approved under rule 115.61.

105.103 Airworthiness and safety directives

A person must not make a parachute descent unless the parachute assembly complies with—

- (1) any applicable airworthiness directive issued by the Director and in accordance with Part 39; and
- (2) any applicable safety directive issued by a parachute organisation; and
- (3) any applicable mandatory modification or instruction issued by the manufacturer unless—
 - (i) the modification or instruction is the subject of a safety directive issued by a parachute organisation; or
 - (ii) a variation to the modification or instruction is approved by a parachute organisation.

105.105 Parachute serviceability

(a) A person who finds a parachute assembly to be unserviceable or unairworthy must ensure that the assembly is clearly marked as unserviceable.

(b) A person must not return to service a parachute assembly that has been marked as unserviceable until it has been re-inspected and returned to a serviceable and airworthy state.

105.107 Modification and repair

A person must not use a parachute, or harness and container system, that has been modified or repaired in a manner that may affect the airworthiness of the parachute assembly, unless it is re-inspected and re-assessed by a parachute technician in accordance with the technical standards of a parachute organisation.

105.109 Parachute assembly check

(a) Except as provided in paragraphs (b) and (c), a person must not make a parachute descent unless they have checked the state of serviceability of their parachute assembly by—

- (1) reference to the assembly packing record for the parachute assembly; and
- (2) a comprehensive external check; and
- (3) checking that all equipment is properly set to operate; and
- (4) ensuring that no item being carried will interfere with the proper functioning of the parachute assembly.

(b) For student parachutists, the person authorised by the parachute organisation to directly supervise the descent of the student must inspect the equipment being worn by the student, in accordance with paragraph (a).

(c) For tandem riders, the tandem master must inspect the equipment being worn by the tandem rider, in accordance with paragraph (a).

105.111 Parachute records

- (a) An owner of an emergency or reserve parachute assembly must maintain an assembly packing record card that records the current state of serviceability of that assembly. The packing record must remain with the assembly at all times.
- (b) An owner of a student parachutist parachute assembly, or a tandem parachute assembly that is not operated under the authority of an adventure aviation operator certificate issued by the Director under the Act and Part 115, must maintain a permanent record of the assembly in a format approved by a parachute organisation.
- (c) An owner of a tandem parachute assembly that is operated under the authority of an adventure aviation operator certificate by the Director under the Act and 115, must maintain a record of the assembly in accordance with the requirements of rule 115.67.
- (d) An owner or user of an emergency or reserve parachute assembly, and the owner of a parachute assembly referred to in paragraph (b), must make the record available for inspection when required by the Director, or in accordance with the procedures of their parachute organisation.