Official Journal
of the European Union

EN
L series

2025/24

7.3.2025

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING REGULATION (EU) 2025/24

of 19 December 2024

amending Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 as regards requirements for aircraft operators related to ground handling activities

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2018 on common rules in the field of civil aviation and establishing a European Union Aviation Safety Agency, and amending Regulations (EC) No 2111/2005, (EC) No 1008/2008, (EU) No 996/2010, (EU) No 376/2014 and Directives 2014/30/EU and 2014/53/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Regulations (EC) No 552/2004 and (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (EEC) No 3922/91 ([1]), and in particular Article 31(1)(a) thereof,

Whereas:

(1) Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 establishes the essential requirements for the safe provision of ground handling services by organisations providing ground handling services and aircraft operators performing self-handling.

(2) Commission Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 ([2]) lays down technical requirements and administrative procedures related to air operations, and among others, to instructions and procedures for personnel involved in ground operations, duties, responsibilities, and training of personnel involved in ground operations, and contracted activities of aircraft operators. Such technical requirements and administrative procedures should be updated, clarified, and aligned with the requirements on ground handling services and organisations providing them as laid down in Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/20 ([3]).

(3) To ensure a high level of civil aviation safety in the Union, this Regulation should reflect the state of the art and best practices in the field of ground handling; take into account the applicable International Civil Aviation Organization Standards and Recommended Practices; and worldwide ground handling operation experience, as well as scientific and technical progress in the ground handling domain; be proportionate to the size and complexity of the ground handling activities; and provide for the necessary flexibility for customised compliance.

(4) Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 should therefore be amended to accommodate the changes brought about by the provisions on ground handling laid down in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/20, both when these services are contracted to a third-party ground handling service provider and when they are performed as self-handling by aircraft operators of commercial air transport with complex motor-powered aircraft.

(5) The ground handling requirements applicable to aircraft operators introduce new terms to define ground handling tasks and processes, and therefore new definitions should be added for these terms.

([1]) OJ L 212, 22.8.2018, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1139/oj.

([2]) Commission Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 of 5 October 2012 laying down technical requirements and administrative procedures related to air operations pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 216/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 296, 25.10.2012, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2012/965/oj).

([3]) Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/20 of 19 December 2024 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council by laying down requirements for the safe provision of ground handling services and for organisations providing them (OJ L, 2025/20, 7.3.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2025/20/oj).

(6) All organisations in the scope of Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 are responsible for managing the safety risks and aim at to continuous improvement of safety, including mutual sharing of safety relevant information. The purpose is to ensure a common approach when addressing the safety risks of the interfaces in GH operations, beyond the occurrence reporting obligations. This approach would complete the occurrence reporting obligations to competent authorities and would ensure a more direct flow of safety information among the stakeholders concerned. Therefore, the rules should be amended to enable aircraft operators to share relevant safety information resulting from occurrence reports or oversight inspections and audits with other organisations to support them in maintaining safety of their own operations.

(7) The essential requirements of Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 mandate that organisations provide ground handling services in accordance with the operational instructions and procedures of the aircraft operators. The operational procedures for the same ground handling service applied to the same type of aircraft may differ significantly between aircraft operators, and this increases the risk of human error as it could lead to aircraft damage and endanger flight safety. Therefore, harmonisation of various operational procedures is essential for safe and efficient provision of ground handling services. This Regulation should enable the reduction as much as possible of the many different operational procedures for the same ground handling service applied to the same type of aircraft and ensure the harmonisation of those procedures. Since ground handling organisations are required to develop their own operational procedures for the provision of ground handling services, giving priority to safety and maintain a balance between safety and commercial pressure, the air operations rules should be amended to allow aircraft operators to agree that the ground handling organisation declaring its activity in accordance with Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/20 applies its own operational procedures for the provision of the ground handling services.

(8) To ensure proportionality of scope and alignment with Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/20, only operators of aeroplanes performing commercial air transport operations with complex motor-powered aircraft when performing self-handling will be affected by the new responsibilities related to ground handling. The air operations rules should contain the necessary link to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/20, thus avoiding any duplications. At the same time, the requirements should provide a safety baseline for the provision of ground handling services that are excluded from Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/20 and remain under the full responsibility and control of the aircraft operator.

(9) Aircraft operators are responsible for the performance of certain ground handling activities that remain under their full control and are not covered by Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/20. Such is the case of ground supervision when this activity is performed as a self-handling by any operator, with its own personnel, as well as certain phases of the load control process, namely mass and balance calculations, load planning, issuance of mass and balance documents, and related communications, regardless of whether these activities are performed as a self-handling or outsourced as contracted services. The air operations rules should be amended to clarify the operator's responsibilities concerning these ground handling activities.

(10) The training programme for ground handling personnel of the aircraft operators performing self-handling should also be included in their operations manual without any approval by the competent authority. However, in order to ensure equal treatment for all organisations providing ground handling services, the training programme included in the operations manual should only be subject to verification during the regular oversight activities. The relevant air operations requirement should be amended accordingly to reflect this equal treatment.

(11) Load control is a ground handling process that is both safety-critical and complex. The load control process consists of several phases and implies clear allocation of tasks and responsibilities among persons involved in their performance. Mass and balance calculations, load planning, issuance of mass and balance documents and related communications are parts of the load control process that remain in full control and responsibility of the aircraft operator, as being entirely based on data provided by the aircraft manufacturer and aircraft operator. Although this process is already known to aircraft operators and applied as part of their operational control system, the current

rules do not clearly define the load control process and do not identify the various tasks and responsibilities of the persons performing these activities. Since the phases of the load control process identified above may be performed either by the aircraft operator as self-handling or contracted to a third-party ground handling organisation, it is important that the rules provide clarity and legal certainty in this respect, as well as a level playing field for all organisations performing these activities. The air operations requirements should be amended to ensure that the load control functions and responsibilities of the persons involved are identified and described in the operations manual of the aircraft operator.

(12) The requirements laid down in this Regulation are based on Opinion No 01/2024 ([4]) issued by the European Union Aviation Safety Agency ('the Agency') in accordance with Article 75(2) points (b) and (c) and Article 76(1) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1139.

(13) It is necessary to provide sufficient time for the ground handling industry and competent authorities to implement the new regulatory framework after the entry into force of this Regulation, therefore a transition period of 3 years should be provided in this Regulation.

(14) The requirements laid down in this Regulation are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee for the application of common safety rules in the field of civil aviation established by Article 127 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1139,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Annexes I, III and IV to Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 are amended in accordance with the Annex to this Regulation.

Article 2

Entry into force and application

1. This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

2. It shall apply from 27 March 2028.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels, 19 December 2024.

For the Commission
The President
Ursula VON DER LEYEN

([4]) https://www.easa.europa.eu/en/document-library/opinions/opinion-no-012024.

ANNEX

Annexes to Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 are amended as follows:

(1) in Annex I the following points 130 and 131 are added:

'(130) "ground supervision" means a ground handling service consisting of activities related to the supervision of all ground handling services to an operator at an aerodrome. This service may be contracted to a ground handling organisation or performed by the aircraft operator itself, as self-handling;

(131) "load control" means a process under the responsibility of the aircraft operator, to ensure that the aircraft is safely and efficiently loaded before each flight;';

(2) Annex III is amended as follows:

(1) in point ORO.GEN.150, the following point (d) is added:

'(d) inform any contracted ground handling organisations of the actions taken to address the non-compliance if that non-compliance directly affects the safety risk within, or the responsibilities of, that ground handling organisation.';

(2) the following point ORO.GEN.315 is added in Subpart GEN, Section III 'Additional organisational requirements':

'**ORO.GEN.315 Operational procedures for ground handling**

(a) The operator shall ensure that the ground handling services for its aircraft, passengers, mail and cargo are provided either as self-handling performed by its own personnel or as contracted services to a third-party ground handling organisation, or a combination of both.

(b) The operator shall ensure that the third-party ground handling organisation provides services in accordance with the operator's instructions and procedures.

(c) When contracting ground handling services listed in Article 2(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/20 to an organisation operating under the terms of a declaration in accordance with that Regulation, the operator may use the operational procedures of the contracted organisation in any of the following cases:

(1) the operator agrees that the ground handling organisation applies its own operational procedures for the provision of ground handling services, in accordance with point GH.OPS.005(b) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/20. This shall be documented;

(2) the ground handling organisation providing the services has declared its capability to discharge the responsibilities associated with the services provided and that declaration is valid;

(3) the operator cannot provide its own procedures and instructions to the ground handling organisation.

(d) When the operator ensures ground supervision with its own personnel as self-handling or contracts this activity to a third-party service provider, it shall ensure that the ground supervision function complies with point ORO.GEN.110 and that the operator includes the following elements in its operations manual:

(1) a description of the activities included within the scope of ground supervision and any necessary procedures;

(2) the responsibilities associated with this function;

(3) the training programme for this function, with an emphasis on safety training when this function has safety-related tasks.';

(3) Annex IV is amended as follows:

(1) the following point CAT.GEN.MPA.220 is added in Subpart GEN, Section 1 'Motor-powered aircraft':

'**CAT.GEN.MPA.220 Additional responsibilities for CAT operators of complex motor-powered aeroplanes performing self-handling**

(a) The operator providing any of the ground handling activities listed in Article 2(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/20 to itself or within a single air carrier business grouping (self-handling) shall comply with the applicable requirements of Annex I and Annex II to that Regulation, except for the requirements applicable to the ground supervision function, which shall comply with point ORO.GEN.315.

(b) The operator shall submit the training programme for its ground handling personnel in accordance with point ORGH.GEN.145 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/20 to the competent authority responsible for the oversight of ground handling activities. The dangerous goods training programme is subject to approval in accordance with ORO.GEN.110(j).';

(2) point (b)(1) of CAT.POL.MAB.105 is replaced by the following:

'(1) verify the integrity of the output data to ensure that the data is within the AFM limitations or the operations manual limitations if more restrictive; and';

(3) the following point CAT.POL.MAB.110 is added:

'**CAT.POL.MAB.110 Load control process**

The operator shall establish and implement a load control process and associated procedures, which shall be included in the operations manual.'.