

"How to" Handle a MATZ

Military Air Traffic Zones for Civvies

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Extract from CAA 1:500,000 VFR Chart, Southern England & Wales. These are available from numerous outlets like flying clubs, Flightstore.co.uk and Afeonline.com for around £15 each (3 charts cover whole of the UK)

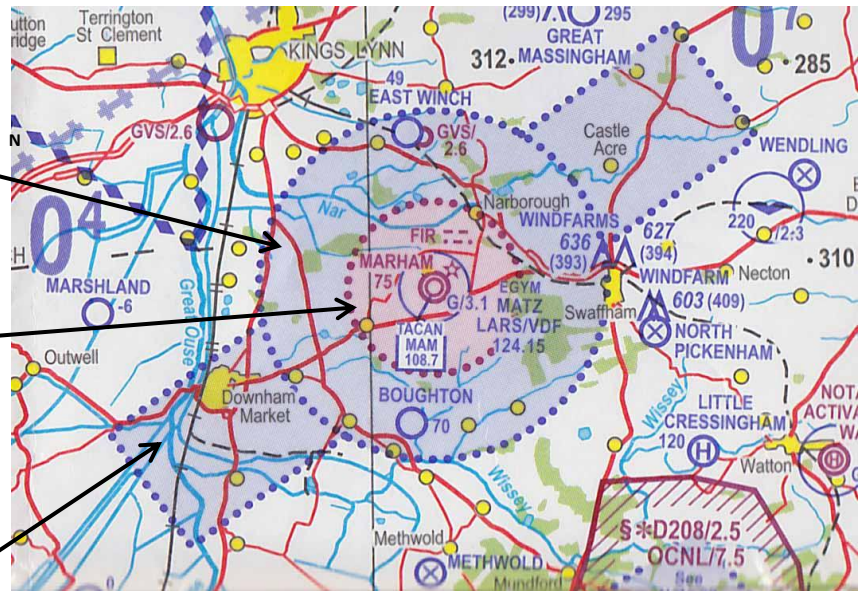
Military Air Traffic Zones (pron. 'mats') are not scary places and you don't have to avoid them. This sheet explains them from the point of view of civvie pilots, VFR in light aircraft. How the rules apply on Vatsim are explained at the bottom.

Typically 5nm radius from the mid-point of the longest runway. This does vary. Extends from surface to 3000ft AAL. i.e. You can fly over them if the airspace above allows it.

The ATZ. Radius 2.5nm from midpoint of longest runway. You cannot enter this without permission to do so.

A "Stub". Typically 4nm in width and extends a further 5nm on the centreline of longest runway. Extends from 1000ft to 3000ft AAL.

A MATZ on a CAA VFR chart



Real world v. Vatsim.

Vatsim military control is very sparse, in the absence of it you can fly through the outer ring and stub on Unicom, you shouldn't cross the ATZ. If military control is online (top down applies) then follow 'The Rules' box. Don't however believe that a MATZ is a barrier to civvie pilots, in some areas you'd have huge detours if you flew around them all!

The Rules:

Contrary to popular opinion, as a VFR pilot you CAN fly through the outer ring and the stub of a MATZ and *legally* don't have to contact anyone. You would, however, be very silly to do so since MATZ's can be full of fast pointy things flown by gung-ho moustaches (or, worse, Alec Walker).

You cannot enter the central ATZ without permission.

Sensible people will contact military control c. 5 mins/15nm from the boundary with callsign and request a "MATZ Penetration".

On request you give the normal "who I am, what I am, where I am and what I want to do" transmission. Military control will then provide any instructions required when crossing the MATZ. E.g. you may be given a height to fly at, military *usually* use the aerodrome QFE not the QNH. IT IS NOT A CLEARANCE! It is advisory only (but very good advice nevertheless). They will, where possible, provide a radar service with separation.

They will then simply ask you to call entering and leaving the MATZ and that's it! Surprisingly simples.



Fly through 'em man, just FLY!!

