

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

AIR PUBLICATION 1480A

AIR COMBAT GROUP

FIELD BOOK

AIR MINISTRY

Table of Content

1	Structure	4
1.1	Leadership	4
1.2	Administration	4
1.3	Operations	4
1.4	Technical Office	5
2	Campaign Units	5
2.1	Ranks	6
2.2	Aircraft Assignments	7
3	Campaign	7
3.1	Campaign Overview	7
3.2	Rules	8
3.2.1	Participation	8
3.2.2	Recruitment & Guests	8
3.2.3	Attitude	8
3.2.4	Scoring	8
3.2.5	Lives	9
3.2.6	Rules of Engagement (ROE)	9
	Target Types	9
	Rule	9
	Claims	9
	Interpretation of effects	9
	Explanation / Amplification	9
3.3	Procedures	10
3.3.1	Game crash	10
3.3.2	TACGRAB	10
3.3.3	Pilot status after mission	11
3.3.4	Scheduling	11
3.3.5	In-game name and tags	12
4	After Action Reports (AARs)	12
4.1	Instructions	12
4.1.1	Report Writing	12
4.2	Claims	13
4.2.1	RAF claims	13
4.2.2	LW claims	14

4.2.3	VVS claims	14
4.3	Pilot survival	15
4.4	Synopsis	15
4.5	Technical difficulties	16
4.6	Approval of AARs	16
4.7	Awards	16
5	Revision history	17

1 Structure

1.1 Leadership

ACG is run by its members. There is no strict hierarchical command structure per se, but a Board of Directors-type structure with supporting staff and members assigned to different management stations.

The Board of Directors consists of five members: one Chairman and four faction members, (two representatives for each side, who make up the High Command for each faction.

Staff Office Leaders oversee and coordinate all activity in their area of responsibility. Staff Office Leaders have delegated authority to recruit members for sub-projects as needed, and to make decisions within their area of responsibility. This delegation relieves the workload of High Command, spreads out responsibility and streamlines the decision-making processes.

All ACG activity outside of flying the Campaign and writing AAR's is done voluntarily. Everybody, regardless of experience or length of membership in ACG is encouraged to contribute in whatever way possible.

1.2 Administration

The administration office deals mostly with membership matters. Admin staff consist of all unit adjutants and commanders, plus two Chief Adjutants, one for each faction, who oversee the administrative process. Their jobs include:

- Signing up and dismissing members.
- Providing information on ACG Operations (campaign rules, AAR format and regulations etc.).
- Transferring and promoting members, awarding decorations.
- Registering leaves.
- Providing stats to staff and members.
- Managing the Pilot and Mission Database.

1.3 Operations

This office deals with all flying activity and Campaigns. Their jobs include:

- Producing and running the ACG campaign from a server and mission perspective (research, mission planning, mission building, briefings etc.)
- Campaign management (Ground Control and Mission Control etc.)
- Administration of ACG public server missions and operations.
- Administration of ACG operations on non-ACG servers and events.

- Administration of training events and standards (instructors, server-missions, documents in collaboration with Technical Office).

1.4 Technical Office

This office deals with technical support for ACG activity, their jobs include:

- Coordination of skins production, storage and distribution.
- Creation of ACG assets, emblems, medals etc.

Creation and maintenance of ACG software (GC, TACGRAB, Check your Fate etc.)

1.5 Public Relations Office

This office deals with artwork and outreach. Their jobs include:

- Coordination of ACG presentation in the flight simulator community (announcements of ACG activity on other boards, press releases, communication with other groups, etc.)
- Coordination of screenshots production and distribution (technical help, storage, Facebook, Twitter, Discord etc.)
- Coordination of video production and distribution (technical help, storage, YouTube, other forums, etc.)
- Merchandising (Flyer, DVD's, Cake, Whiskey-glasses, t-shirts)

2 Campaign Units

The Group consists of allied and axis combat units. These units are based on the ACG units used during the Group's first campaigns in Cliffs of Dover, so their names reflect that fact. Depending on the campaign these units may differ depending on the actual unit deployment in the area of operations at the time the campaign is taking place.

Unit commanders manage and direct day-to-day operations of their respective units. They are responsible for welcoming, training, developing, promoting and supporting their unit members as well as directing and leading operations during campaign missions. Each Unit Commander is supported by an Adjutant to assist in these duties.

ACG is predominantly English speaking, but there are currently two German speaking units. Their internal campaign communication is done primarily in German.

ACG has instituted Holding Units and HQ Units to assist in the administrative process of dealing with members who go on leave or contribute to ACG in other ways other than flying.

Holding Units are designed to take on long-standing ACG members who go on leave for an extended period of time. A leave period of less than 2 months will be handled by unit commanders as usual (temporary leave). For a leave period of equal to or more than 2 months unit commanders are required to request a transfer of the member to a holding squadron for a specific time frame. The standard holding period is 2 to 6 months. The limit of 6 months is a soft limit and can be requested by unit commanders after communication with the member in question.

Holding Units will not take on members who go MIA, i.e. members who leave without giving notice. If a Holding Unit's member becomes MIA after his extended leave of absence period is up (more than 6 months) the member must be dismissed. It is up to the individual pilot to stay in contact with AGC. The leaders of his previous unit may try to reach out as well and inform the respective Chief Adjutant if successful. After his leave of absence, a pilot may re-join his former unit if recruitment needs allow for that.

HQ Units are designed to hold long standing ACG members who contribute to ACG but do not have the time to fly on a regular basis. Members are assigned here with Board approval only. Length of stay, possible dismissal and re-assignment to a flying unit is decided by the Board and executed by the Chief Adjutants.

2.1 Ranks

ACG is not hung up on ranks or calling each other "Sir". The ranking system provides a framework for leadership and management and only has relevance in providing members with a guide to who should be in charge of any group at any given time. The system is based on what somebody brings to the group and demotion occurs as easily as promotion.

All new pilots come in at the lowest grade and all ranks are decided and approved by their unit commander. They will stay at the lowest grade until they show that they are active with the group and all this involves is getting involved and being a regular participant.

Officers' ranks are reserved for members that contribute to the group apart from flying. ACG is an historical group and tries to maintain an historical balance in the ranking system. The importance of the rank structure should not be over-stated, it simply forms part of the group immersion and should give an indication of the member's ability and responsibility and contribution.

Promotion is based on:

Squadron involvement.

Campaign participation and attendance.

Flying experience.

Flight leadership.

Communication.

Skill (take-off, landings, navigation & formation).

Combat tactics & situational awareness.

Contribution other than just attending campaigns.

Training (provision & instruction).

2.2 Aircraft Assignments

ACG squadrons with open slots will have a variety of squadron skins available to them, from which a new member may choose his preferred tail number and aircraft.

He will keep this tail number for as long as he is with that squadron.

The list of active squadron members can be viewed via the current PAM.

3 Campaign

3.1 Campaign Overview

Participation in the ACG Campaign Missions represents the core ACG experience. These missions are flown every Sunday, usually at 1900 Local UK time on the ACG server, using TS3 for communications. The focus of ACG Campaign Missions is **realism, authenticity, enjoyment and immersion.**

The ACG Campaign is open to interested people who would like to try it out before considering membership. New pilots are very welcome and no experience is necessary, however it is recommended that they make contact on the forum or in TS and join in a training night to help them be prepared and set up for the full Campaign Mission experience.

3.2 Rules

3.2.1 Participation

The Campaign Missions take place every Sunday. Members are expected to attend "most" of the missions with prior notice of absences being notified to unit commanders / adjutants. Any difficulties in regular attendance can usually be negotiated with a member of staff.

Members not attending the Campaign Missions, without informing their unit commander/adjutant, will be contacted via pm or e-mail about their status.

3.2.2 Recruitment & Guests

Campaign Missions are open to all virtual pilots to try out and can bring in one or two friends. ACG wants potential new members but does not want to steal from other groups. Other virtual squadrons are not invited to the campaign unless there is a specific event organised for that purpose. Members should offer every assistance to potential new recruits and encourage attendance, usually through initially joining in on training nights where possible.

3.2.3 Attitude

This is an immersion campaign not a competitive campaign. Pilots will be assigned a task to do as a squadron and will be expected to carry this out as best they can. There will be no winners or losers, events and outcomes are recorded, as happened historically, through the After Action Reports. The character system and 'single life' rules are there to promote immersion and encourage realistic behaviour in self-preservation during missions.

3.2.4 Scoring

There is no scoring per se; events, results and claims are to be recorded in the After Action Reports. Submission of After Action Reports is compulsory - see Section 4 for details

3.2.5 Lives

Refly is allowed only if specifically briefed for an individual mission and may be subject to certain conditions (ie landing undamaged / unharmed, availability of turn around facilities etc). See the Mission Briefing for details.

3.2.6 Rules of Engagement (ROE)

Target Types	Rule	Claims	Interpretation of effects
Aircraft on the ground at airfields	Allowed if the airfield is on the Vulnerable Airfield List for that mission	Aircraft Lost or Damaged status for affected targets that have landed, ditched, or crash landed do count. Claims may be submitted in all cases, but as a Ground Target claim.	Pilot deaths/wounds do not count against any affected targets. Aircraft Lost or Damaged status for affected targets between spawning in and take off do not count, and the pilot may spawn in again
Aircraft on the ground away from airfields (i.e. landed, ditched, crash landed etc.)	Allowed	Aircraft Lost or Damaged status for affected targets do count. Claims may be submitted in all cases, but as a Ground Target claim.	Pilot deaths/wounds do not count against any affected targets
Aircraft airborne, having just taken off from or on landing approach to an airfield	Allowed if the airfield is on the Vulnerable Airfield List for that mission	Normal rules apply	Normal rules apply
Parachutes	NOT allowed No shooting at parachutes at any time.	-	Pilot deaths/wounds do not count against any affected targets.

Explanation / Amplification

- The Vulnerable Airfield List for any given mission will typically include most airfields, with specific exceptions for those active

bases which are either far enough away from the front line or sufficiently well defended as to be considered immune from attack.

- If on the ground, a pilot character is not affected by death and wounds inflicted by air attack. Taking off from a Vulnerable Airfield immediately puts a pilot/character at risk.
- If attacking a Vulnerable Airfield, the only restriction is that claims against aircraft on the ground should be submitted as Ground Targets. Making pilots submit Ground Target claims for attacking aircraft on the ground, at or away from airfields, should remove much of the incentive for doing so.
- The Mission Planner (and Mission Control if in operation) should, where possible, avoid situations where airfields come under attack just as units are taking off on their first sortie of the mission.
- Mission Control can, if necessary, intervene to prevent or stop an airfield attack.
- Individual scenarios may allow the replacement of damaged aircraft, or aircraft destroyed during or after landing at their starting base in order for the pilot to continue the mission.
- No attack should be made if any doubt exists on its validity (i.e. unsure of position and or the status of an airfield).
- Pilots are free to impose their own 'code of honour' on what targets they engage, these rules just provide an official, common baseline.

Any transgressions of these rules should be reported through the chain of command or to Mission / Ground Control (if in operation) and will be dealt with by the ACG Board of Directors as required.

3.3 Procedures

3.3.1 Game crash

In the event of an individual game crash pilots should consult their unit commander for advice on how to proceed - normally this will be a simple restart and re-join. This should not be abused - server stats will show where pilots have re-joined and these will be monitored.

3.3.2 TACGRAB

TacGRAB is an internally developed application that facilitates campaign and mission management when using the Il-2 Great Battles series as the game platform. All Campaign Mission participants should download and run TACGRAB prior to mission start.

3.3.2.1 Skins

TacGRAB automatically downloads all ACG skins and installs them into the correct folders. So any time a skin pack is updated, altered, deleted

or newly uploaded, TacGRAB will detect this and download the skins that it is missing.

TacGRAB currently only supports campaigns that use the Great Battles simulator. Cliffs of Dover Blitz uses a different system for distributing skins. In these campaigns individual pilots are only required to download and install their own skin in the appropriate folder.

Skin alterations, as for example the addition of nose art, need to be approved by the squadron commanders or high command.

3.3.2.2 Mission File Handling

TacGRAB allows for the automatic download and unpacking of IL2_BoX mission files pre-connection to the server and speeds up the server joining process. TacGRAB can download mission files in compressed format and un-compress and install them to the correct directory pre-join, saving an appreciable amount of time.

3.3.3 Pilot status after mission

A "pilot survival system" has been implemented on the ACG server. This means that if a (human) pilot lands, crash lands or bails out, there will be a message generated in the PAM Check your FATE tab of each mission, stating if he is in friendly, neutral or enemy territory and what his status is (returned to friendly lines, rescued, captured by the enemy). This will be used to exactly know (without guessing) the pilot's status at the end of the mission.

Players should not leave their aircraft or disconnect from the server until their pilot is safely on the ground when bailing out, or the aircraft has come to a stop, hit the ground etc. in order to allow the message to be written into the server log. If in any doubt pilots should contact their adjutant who will read the information from the server log. *More information on this in section 5.3 (final reference needs checking).*

3.3.4 Scheduling

A mission will be flown most Sundays. Every six missions there is usually a two-week break; additional breaks may occur due to holidays or external events. The Mission Schedule is [here](#). Briefings are published to provide sufficient lead and planning time before a mission, typically on the Wednesday or Thursday of the mission week. Start time is normally 1900 UK local time. Spawn and briefing times will normally be published by the operations team in advance of the mission and will be displayed in the PAM, as outlined above.

3.3.5 In-game name and tags

ACG requires all members to set their in-game and Steam name to ACG_Adam (for example). On TeamSpeak and Discord they are to set their tags to HistoricalSquadron_Adam (for No. 615 Squadron, No.615_Adam). The correct names in-game (ACG_Name) are required in order to not risk problems with Mission Controlling Software and for proper logging of attendance.

4 After Action Reports (AARs)

After action reports for ACG missions are compulsory. Failure to submit a flight report following taking part in a campaign mission means being unable, you won't be able to attend a mission until the report is submitted and has been accepted.

Attendance = Flying the mission + writing the report

Note that reports are part of the expectation and attendance is checked by reports. This means that pilots who fail to write their report did not attend the mission.

The reports and claims will be checked by adjutants and commanders. Comments and feedback will be provided if something is missing or not according to regulations. Pilots will be advised to alter their report and/or claims in such cases, the adjutants or commanders will provide assistance as required. Reports should be submitted in good time; failure to do so will result in the rejection of the report or claim. A rejected report is equal to no report, which means attendance of the mission will not be recorded.

4.1 Instructions

Follow these instructions to submit or edit an After Action Report.

- From the Forums board index, choose '[ACG Mission and Pilot Database](#)'
- Select 'Campaigns', select the relevant Campaign and the mission for your report.
- Select "Add new report".

4.1.1 Report Writing

For both sides additional details may be required, including but not limited to;

- Overall report of what happened on the sortie.
- The starting airfield, aircraft type and number, any claims, the pilot and aircraft status at the end of the sortie.

4.2 Claims

Claims are based on what pilots remembered at the time, under no circumstances are pilots to use video recordings; it should be based on memory after the fact and any witnesses to claims. They are for historical immersion. Writing an After Action Report was part of the life as a fighter pilot.

Apart from the pilot status described below, pilots should write their report and claim what they think is correct. If this results in inaccurate claims, so be it. Pilots should be ready to receive feedback and comments on claims from the adjutants or commanders.

If filing a victory claim, pilots should ideally add further information about it in the Synopsis field.

4.2.1 RAF claims

The RAF uses three classifications:

1. **Destroyed:** (Dest.) Where an aircraft was seen to crash, to be on fire or where the pilot/crew was seen to parachute from the aircraft. Server messages are not good enough.
2. **Probable Destroyed:** (Prob.) Where the aircraft was not seen to crash but was so badly damaged that, in the opinion of the claiming pilot, it could not have reached safety.
3. **Damaged:** Self-explanatory. Cannot be shared.

RAF pilots do not necessarily need to have a witness.

All RAF pilots are demanded to give a brief description for each victory claim. This description should include time, place, damage and fate of the e/a. The claim description is the bare minimum each RAF pilot has to write, pilots writing a full synopsis can include the description in their synopsis and do not have to write them separately.

4.2.2 LW claims

The Luftwaffe uses two classifications:

1. **Confirmed:** (Conf.) Where an aircraft was seen by the claiming pilot and one witness to crash, to be on fire or where the pilot/crew was seen to parachute from the aircraft.
2. **Unconfirmed:** (Unconf.) Where an aircraft was seen to crash, to be on fire, where the pilot/crew was seen to parachute from the aircraft.

The Luftwaffe did not have shared victories. LW Pilots that work together shooting down an e/a have to decide on who gets the claim. If this is not included, the victory is given to the highest ranked pilot. Only the pilot credited for the victory puts it into the claims-table of his report. The others may write it into the synopsis.

Victories in the LW are either confirmed or unconfirmed, the difference between both lies in confirmed victories need to have a witness. In both cases the pilot has to witness the e/a being destroyed or forced to land in enemy territory. Upon submission, the claims are submitted as unconfirmed. The witness, should the claiming pilot have named one, will be notified about the appeal. After the witness confirmed the claim, it will be registered as confirmed in the database.

Unconfirmed claims might be confirmed by ground units in very close proximity, supposed sufficient information about the incident is provided. Ground confirmations are accepted or rejected based on the exclusive judgement by the Luftwaffe Chief Adjutant.

4.2.3 VVS claims

The VVS uses two classifications:

1. **Confirmed:** (Conf.) Where an aircraft was seen by the claiming pilot and one witness to crash, to be on fire or where the pilot/crew was seen to parachute from the aircraft.
2. **Unconfirmed:** (Unconf.) Where an aircraft was seen to crash, to be on fire, where the pilot/crew was seen to parachute from the aircraft.
 - A. **Personal Claims:** Where the aircraft was destroyed by a single pilot. The victory is attributed to the claiming pilot only.
 - B. **Group Claims:** Where the aircraft is destroyed by several pilots. The victory is attributed to all the pilots who took part in that mission.

The VVS did not have shared victories in the sense that the LW had them. VVS pilots who work together to shoot down an e/a put this claim down as a Group Victory. This means that the entire squadron (pilots who flew

in that mission) is credited with a Group Victory. The pilots can decide amongst themselves who will file the Group Claim. The others may write it into the synopsis.

Victories in the VVS, like in the LW, are either confirmed or unconfirmed, the difference between both is that *confirmed victories need to have a witness*. In both cases the pilot has to witness the e/a being destroyed or forced to land in enemy territory. Upon submission, the claims are submitted as unconfirmed. The witness, should the claiming pilot have named one, will be notified about the appeal. After the witness confirmed the claim, it will be registered as confirmed in the database.

Unconfirmed claims might be confirmed by ground units in very close proximity, if sufficient information about the incident is provided. Ground confirmations are accepted or rejected based on the judgement by the VVS Chief Adjutant.

4.3 Pilot survival

A pilot that crash-lands or parachutes into enemy territory will try to walk home to friendly lines on the shortest distance. He will walk a distance of approx. 5 km per hour. About every 12 minutes a check is performed that determines if the pilot died or was captured. The probability to make it to friendly lines is approx. 50/50 for a distance of 30 km. Injury and cold weather decrease the chances.

Capture is determined on how close the pilot is to enemy troops. The closer enemy troops, the higher the chances for capture. A distance of 2 km to enemy troops will result in a 50/50 chance. Night hours increase the chances for escape.

VVS troops that escape enemy territory have an additional risk of being sent to the Gulag being suspected a German spy. Although the pilot fate is calculated instantaneously, the results will be displayed with a real-life delay. A pilot still trying to escape will show "Alive and walking". For example: Should a pilot need to walk 5 hours to reach friendly lines, his status will show "Alive and walking" for those 5 hours, unless he dies or is captured along the way.

4.4 Synopsis

The written synopsis of the action is optional. Pilots in German speaking units may also write this report in German if they choose to - translation is not required.

4.5 Technical difficulties

It is important to file a report as well should you discover technical difficulties during the mission that make it impossible for you to fly (for example launcher crashes, network disconnects, hardware jinxes etc.). This is the only way the effort to participate can be verified. Otherwise attendance will be recorded as "did not participate" or "did not file report", both of which are not good.

4.6 Approval of AARs

The reports will be listed under the corresponding Squadron/Staffel on the mission page. Upon submission the report status is set to Pending, this means that the report waits for acceptance by an adjutant or unit commander.

The status will be changed from Pending to Approved as soon as an adjutant or unit commander has accepted the report. The name of the adjutant or unit commander will be shown in the list as well as on the report itself. The report and its information are cleared for further use in the database once the report has been accepted.

4.7 Awards

All ACG pilots, who take part in the weekly Sunday campaign, can be awarded historical decorations in line with historical context of the campaign.

Every character's statistics (as per the PAM database) have been assessed, and the real-life criteria have been tweaked in order to achieve approximate historical distribution of awards throughout the whole pool of pilots, or to achieve approximate historical criteria. (E.g. if 10% of Luftwaffe fighter pilots received an Iron Cross 2nd Class, also approximately 10% of ACG pilots would get this decoration and the criteria would be tweaked to achieve this ratio).

5 Revision history

2016-3-4: Added section 3.2.8 Steam name
2016-4-7: Edited 1.1 Structure
2016-4-7: Edited 1.1.1 ACG-command
2016-4-7: Edited 3.2.6 Scheduling and Dispersal
2016-4-20: Edited 4. After action reports. Best practises of report submission.
2019-3-27: Edited entire document to fit post-move ACG.
2019-4-17: Added 2.8 Aircraft Assignments
2019-5-3: Added info on GARS rotation
2019-5-31: Added ROE
2019-6-17: Edited Tags and added Nose-art Guide
2019-7-16: Added rank Junior Lieutenant VVS, Tags changes and Holding/HQ units
2019-7-23: Reworded Joining
2019-11-06: Changes to Joining, Offices, Claims
2019-12-09: Changes to Synopsis
2020-04-01: Major revisions to text including section deletions; others moved to online content