

The Display of Nationality and Registration Marks on Aircraft

1. Display information

Article 10 of the Air Navigation (Isle of Man) Order 2015 requires Isle of Man registered aircraft regardless of size and classification to bear nationality and registration marks in accordance with the regulations set out in Part 3 of Schedule 2 to the Order. It is an offence not to comply with these regulations unless an exemption has been granted by the Registry.

The purpose of displaying the registration mark is to allow ready identification of the aircraft. The requirements are specific but the following items are a number of point's aircraft owners and operators may fail to appreciate.

- a) Paragraph 1 of Part 3 to the Schedule requires the letters to be in Roman characters and to be without ornamentation. Thus embellished letters are not permitted. For the side lettering a slope of not more than 30 degrees is acceptable as illustrated on page 3 of this Registry Publication (RP). Please note that no other letter or number may be inserted between the nationality mark 'M' and the hyphen, nor between the hyphen and the particular registration letters, nor adjacent to the nationality and registration marks.
- b) Paragraph 1(5) of the Schedule says that the nationality and registration marks must be displayed to the best advantage taking into consideration the constructional features of the aircraft; and must always be kept clean and visible. The 'best' advantage is that of an external viewer either on the ground or in another aircraft.
- c) The size of the letters must not be less than the dimensions stated in paragraph 2 of Part 3 to the Schedule and, in particular, the height of the letters for underwing markings must be a minimum of 500mm.

The standard side markings required to be displayed on the fuselage or tail of an aircraft should normally be not less than 300mm (except that if a height of 300mm is not reasonably practicable owing to the structure of the aircraft, the height must be the largest reasonably practicable). Any authorised surface capable of carrying side markings at least 300mm high may be used for their display, but if only one such surface exists, then that surface must be used in preference to any smaller surface which can accommodate only markings less than 300mm high.

If none of the authorised surfaces can accommodate 300mm high markings, then the authorised surface capable of carrying the largest reasonably practicable markings must be used. If on an aircraft having no fixed wing surface the largest reasonably practicable height of the side markings is less than 300mm, marks must also be carried on the lower surface of the aircraft. The height of marks which may be required on the lower surface of an aircraft with no fixed wing surface should normally be not less than 500mm but if this is not reasonably practicable owing to the structure of the aircraft, the height should be the largest reasonably practicable.

- d) Nationality and registration marks have to be of the same single colour and distinct from the background on which the letters are placed, and must be given adequate separation from any other marks. Letters should contrast markedly with the background colour of that part of the aircraft. Simply outlining the letters in a contrasting colour is unlikely to provide the necessary legibility. The following notes give guidance on suitable colour schemes:
- i) Dark lettering against a light background is preferred but light lettering on a dark background is acceptable.
 - ii) Ideally the background should be of uniform colour and have a gloss finish, and lettering should be matt. However, if light lettering is used, this should be gloss while the background should be matt.
 - iii) Recommended colours for registration letters include: black, dark blue, dark green, dark red and dark purple.
 - iv) Recommended background colours include: white, yellow, light blue (but not with dark blue letters), light green (not with dark green) and pink (not with red).
 - v) Intermediate colours such as orange, brown and grey should be avoided for either lettering or background.
 - vi) Shading is acceptable to a maximum of 10% of the brush stroke width of the letter.

There are, of course, other colour combinations available but those mentioned above give an idea of the general principles involved.

Owners of aircraft should be aware that it is an offence for the aircraft to bear any marks which purport to indicate that it is registered in a country in which it is not registered. Please note flags are acceptable and are not considered as a mark which indicates registration in another country. Exemptions may be granted in certain circumstances against the need to carry Isle of Man nationality and registration marks but this will not include permission to bear foreign civil nationality and registration marks.

The proper display of registration marks is in the interests of the owner and the commander of the aircraft. Non-compliance with the provisions of Article 10 of the Air Navigation (Isle of Man) Order 2015 may lead to prosecution.

Identification fireproof plate

There is a requirement for the provision of a fireproof metal plate bearing the nationality (M-) and registration marks (XXXX) of the aircraft. This plate has to be affixed to the aircraft in a prominent position in accordance with the requirements stated in paragraph 1(7) of Part 3 to the Schedule. If the registration subsequently changes a revised metal plate will be required. The same registration marks must be shown on the airframe structure as on the fireproof metal plate.

External and interior placards

All placards must be in English, as the national language of the State of Register. Bi-lingual placards are also acceptable.

2. Display specifications

The Air Navigation (Isle of Man) Order 2015 Schedule 2 details the specifications of the lettering to be used for the display of aircraft nationality and registration marks. This lettering is required to conform to the English alphabet and is defined in the international standard ICAO Annex 7 as capital letters in Roman characters (as distinct from for example Cyrillic or Arabic characters). Examples of lettering styles accepted as meeting the requirements of the Order are as follows:

(a) Upright lettering:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

(b) Lettering with a slope of not more than 30 degrees:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

(c) Upright lettering with shading:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

(d) Lettering with a slope of not more than 30 degrees with shading:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

(e) Positioning of the lettering on a vertical surface as exemplified below is acceptable; but must comply with the criteria detailed within this document.



The lettering is required to be without ornamentation.

If a particular difficulty arises in locating the marks, or there is doubt about the acceptability in terms of size or colour, please contact the Isle of Man Aircraft Registry.

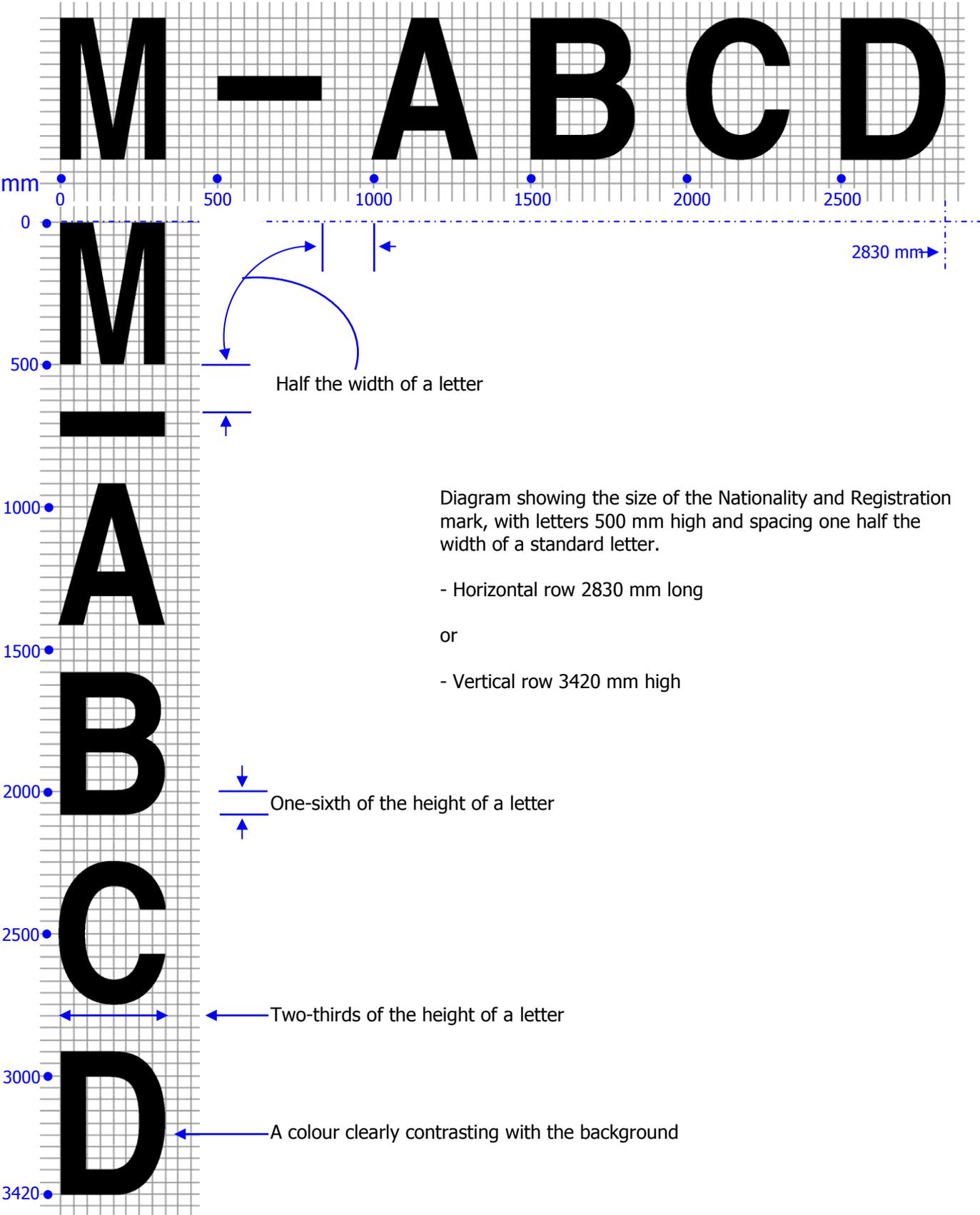


Diagram showing the size of the Nationality and Registration mark, with letters 500 mm high and spacing one half the width of a standard letter.

- Horizontal row 2830 mm long
- or
- Vertical row 3420 mm high

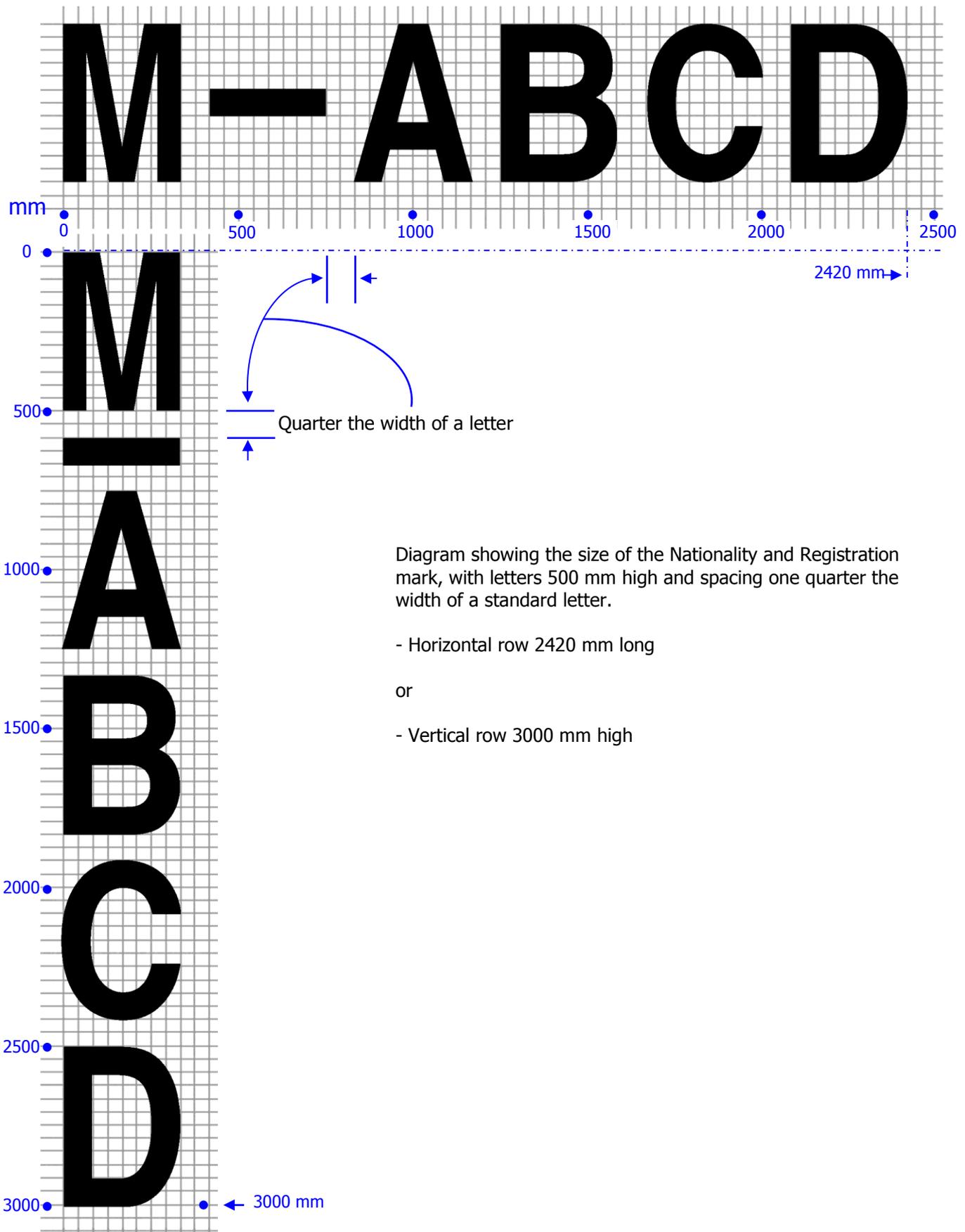


Diagram showing the size of the Nationality and Registration mark, with letters 500 mm high and spacing one quarter the width of a standard letter.

- Horizontal row 2420 mm long
- or
- Vertical row 3000 mm high

Frequently Asked Questions

Question 1

Are decals considered as temporary measure or a permanent measure to comply with the intent of The Air Navigation (Isle of Man) Order 2015?

IOMAR response:

The Air Navigation (Isle of Man) Order 2015, Schedule 2 Part 3, paragraph 1(8) refers to *"The nationality and registration marks must be painted on the aircraft, or affixed to the aircraft by any other means ensuring a similar degree of permanence, in the manner specified in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of this Part"*.

Therefore, decals are considered an acceptable means of compliance and are considered as a permanent measure.

Question 2

Can foreign flags be applied to an Isle of Man registered aircraft?

IOMAR response:

The Air Navigation (Isle of Man) Order 2015, Part 1, Article 10 (3) *refers to "An aircraft must not bear a mark that would indicate-*

(a) that the aircraft is registered in a country in which it is not in fact registered;"

The IOMAR does not consider a flag as a mark which indicates registration in another country. Therefore it is acceptable for a foreign country flag (decal or painted) to be applied on an external surface, such as adjacent to the front door entrance.

Should the NATR require further clarity or have additional questions, contact the IOMAR on the details contained on the top of page 1.