

**Airspace and Noise Engagement Group – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2017 – Minutes**

<b>Attendees:</b>	
Sarah Bishop - DfT (Chair)	Amanda Francis – Express Industry
Tim May - DfT	Keith Bushell – Manufacturers
Sally Stolworthy - DfT (Secretariat)	Jeremy Pine – Local Authorities
Charles Lloyd – Community Groups	Andy Jefferson – Sustainable Aviation
John Stewart – Community Groups	Rebecca Roberts-Hughes - CAA
Martin Peachey – Community Groups	Rachel Thomas - Airports
Ben Fenech – Public Health England	Neil Robinson – Airports
Tim Johnson – AEF	Geoff Clark – Airlines
Ian Jopson – ANSP’s	Frank Evans – UKACCs
<b>Observers:</b>	<b>Apologies:</b>
None	None

**Welcome and Introduction**

Introductions were made and Sarah Bishop explained her role as new Deputy Director and Chair. Minutes and terms of reference were agreed and would be circulated with the next papers.

**Agenda Items - Airspace consultation**

**Changes to airspace - Tier 3 (Chapter 4):**

Overall the group welcomed the proposals on the airspace change process (ACP) and tier 3 (T3), however recognised that there are challenges and accepted more work was needed, particularly around whether the policy would be retrospective or not. Most agreed that T3 was around airspace usage and outside the decision framework with suggestions for; a name change, clearer guidance and trigger points/criteria (to ensure T3 changes weren't mistaken for T2 changes). Whilst there was recognition that T3 changes and publishing data was burdensome, all agreed the need to understand the rationale for changes was important. Rebecca Roberts-Hughes advised the CAA were working on a framework, that included what data to release and when. Many were of the opinion that data should be published regularly with concurrence that whilst regular publishing of information was good practice, clarity or a mechanism was needed (once the information is published) on how to manage communities' expectations if a T3 change can't be reversed.

**Compensation in airspace change (Chapter 4):**

Broadly the group accepted the proposals but with criticism from some that they did not go far enough and in particular that compensation levels should not be linked to the economic benefits of an airspace change. Most felt compensation was for T1&2 changes, rather than airport expansion where different considerations applied. There were requests for; more research (including how other countries compensate) to inform levels of compensation, and a request that it should be principles-based. It was agreed that this was an area an Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise (ICCAN) could take on.

**Making transparent airspace change decisions (Chapter 5):**

Community groups would like noise impacts between 4-7,000ft to be given priority as they felt that complaints up to 7,000ft suggested that there was still a significant issue of noise over 4,000ft. Across the group, the change in use of metrics and webTAG was very welcome, however some would like to see the addition of metrics that cover single mode operations and the use of respite. All agreed more information and detail on the use of webTAG would be helpful.

Some highlighted the positive benefits from the use of performance based navigation (PBN) however others felt that the impacts should be assessed at greater heights when looking at options. Martin Peachy suggested he could present a proposal for further research on the effects of PBN operations up to 7,000ft.

There were concerns on the proposal for options analysis. While some felt the conclusion was only as reliable as the information provided, others felt that there was a lack of framework around what the Government wanted to achieve on noise reduction and some felt that the process was burdensome to industry and lengthened the process. The group were reminded that there was still a role for Government as the Secretary of State could “call-in” a decision where appropriate.

Rachel Thomas advised the group of the Heathrow research on respite. This could be used at all airports (not Heathrow specific) and could help with the design of flight paths. This research was welcomed by the group and the results were due later in May.

- **Action for DFT:** produce an accessible guide on how WebTAG is used.
- **Action for Martin Peachy:** conduct the study on “The effects of concentration on Communities living under performance based navigation flight path up to 7,000ft”

#### **Assessing aviation noise - Noise objective and balance (Chapter 5):**

The noise objective was seen by some as unclear and ambiguous; communities felt that the overall objective should be to seek a “progressive and material” reduction in noise. There was a call for “balance” to be interpreted as where there is growth there should be a proportionate reduction in noise. It was recognised that it was not always within the gift of industry to reduce noise, for example planning of local housing can increase growth in numbers of people affected even if operations don’t change.

#### **ICCAN (Chapter 6):**

Whilst there was support for the Independent noise body (ICCAN) with suggestions of an ombudsman type role, assisting in unresolved change requests, there were also many comments that it should have enforcement or regulatory functions. It was accepted as solely a noise body, seen as having a similar role to the Environment Agency, who have statutory guidance and a trigger for involvement along with quality assurance processes. Post Implementation Review and approval of noise action plans could be within the remit. Some felt ICCAN should bridge the gap for the public as there is currently no legal recourse for noise nuisance. Concern was also raised on the tools and advice available such as supporting local authorities (LAs) in planning etc. and that ICCAN should not replace existing roles. Questions were also raised on when it should become involved. Most agreed a 5 year sunset review was too long and felt a midway 2-3 year review was suitable. There was a discussion about the qualities which would be important in a chair, with some suggesting expertise was crucial, whilst others thought someone with no prior involvement would be more independent.

#### **Ongoing Noise Management - Noise regulation and Responsibility for controls (Chapter 7):**

There was some support for the ongoing noise management objectives. There was a concern from industry that they would need to know when the SofS could intervene before the process was started. It was recognised that there was a role for ICCAN to advise on noise frameworks and regimes such as night flights. Concerns were raised about a single LA acting as decision maker where airport impacts cover many boroughs and that LAs may be too small in skills/resource to be the competent authority, with requests for the Government to be the regulator. Others highlighted the fact Luton and City airports had been able to agree restrictions in this way as evidence it could work. It was agreed that strong guidance was required on the call-in function within the planning system.

#### **Events feedback:**

The group were very supportive and grateful for the opportunity to attend the events. They acknowledged it appeared SE focused but that was largely because interest was higher than in other regions. Some concerns were raised as to whether the regions were aware of possible future impacts of airspace changes. Some of the group also felt that there was a missed opportunity for a Q&A session in a round table format at the regional events.

#### **Future meetings:**

The next meeting date was suggested for around late September or early October. The group agreed it would be helpful to have a standing item of updates from round the table, giving people the chance to share relevant experience or research from their organisations. It was requested that HAL present their research on respite at the next meeting.