

Airspace Strategy Board Minute - 25th October 2018

Attendees:	
Baroness Sugg – DfT Aviation Minister (Chair)	Phil Maher - Virgin Atlantic
Dan Micklethwaite – DfT	John Holland-Kaye - Heathrow Airport
Sarah Bishop - DfT	Byron Davies – General Aviation Champion
Caroline Low - DfT	Tim Norwood- Gatwick Airport
Tony Poulter –DfT Non-Executive Director	Nick Barton - Luton Airport
Gary Cox – Scottish Government	Gordon Robertson - Edinburgh Airport
Air Vice-Marshal Gerry Mayhew CBE- MOD	Keith Artus - SASIG
Richard Moriarty - CAA	Colin Flack - UKACC
Andrew Farrimond - IPA	Neil Robinson - Sustainable Aviation/MAG
Martin Rolfe - NATS	Tim Johnson - Aviation Environment Federation
Charles Lloyd - Aviation Communities Forum	Apologies:
John Stewart - HACAN	NI Government
Karen Dee - AOA	Welsh Government
Alex Cruz - British Airways	ICCAN (Not attending till appointed)

Agenda item 1- Introduction and terms of reference**Welcome and introduction**

Baroness Sugg introduced attendees and welcomed them to the first meeting of the Airspace Strategy Board (ASB).

She set out that:

- Airspace modernisation is a priority for the DfT;
- That DfT and the CAA are co-sponsors of airspace modernisation and will provide the joint leadership required for the programme; and
- That engagement with the aviation industry is very important as they are responsible for delivering airspace modernisation.

DfT set out that, whilst airspace modernisation is intended to deliver significant benefits for communities affected by aviation, the Government's policies on issues such as noise and the environment must be considered in the wider context. Baroness Sugg explained that the department would soon be hosting roundtables to discuss sustainable growth and noise policy in the context of the upcoming Aviation Strategy, and that therefore these issues would not be covered in detail at this meeting.

Terms of Reference

DfT explained that the department has worked with the Infrastructure and Projects Authority, NATS and the CAA to create the governance structure, which will be headed by the ASB. This structure had not yet been finalised at all levels, but the meeting agreed it was important to get the ASB up and running.

DfT set out the key functions of the ASB:

- To discuss key strategic issues;
- To provide advice to DfT on potential changes to the overarching policy, legal and funding framework; and
- To receive delivery updates.

DfT also set out that the ASB is not a decision making board, and that the focus of the Board is national. DfT will set the agenda for meetings, working with the CAA as co-sponsors, and minutes will be made available publically. It was also noted that there had been considerable demand for attendance from interested stakeholders, but that unfortunately it was not practical to accommodate everyone. It was suggested that, in order to ensure fairness in future, some seats would need to rotate between different interested stakeholders.

The following points were made in discussion:

- The meeting supported the need to create the ASB and the ToR presented.
- There was some challenge over whether the Board should have a broader scope which extended to wider noise policy.
- DfT reiterated that the focus of the board should be on airspace modernisation. However, DfT proposed that at the next ASB there should be a discussion of how the environmental policies within the Aviation Strategy Green Paper fit with our policies on airspace modernisation. DfT also reiterated that there are other forums to discuss environmental policies, and that noise would be discussed in more detail at the upcoming Ministerial Aviation Strategy roundtables.

Agenda Item 2 – Objective for airspace modernisation

DfT explained that a new proposed objective for airspace modernisation had been jointly developed by DfT and the CAA, further to the draft objective that was published in the draft CAA Airspace Modernisation Strategy in July 2018. Attendees raised a number of points in discussion:

- That the objective should be up-front if its intended purpose is to create more capacity.
- That the objective was about growth and resilience.
- That the first parameter should be clear that it did not just relate to commercial aviation.
- Concerns were raised that existing policy and regulation (e.g. CAA duties) meant that industry interests would always be prioritised over community interests.

DfT noted the discussion, and emphasised that there was a balance of competing interests inherent in the airspace modernisation process and that it would be necessary to have trade-offs between them. All parties were encouraged to focus on the end benefits and to 'lean in' to ensure progress takes place. There was general consensus that doing nothing was not an option.

DfT made clear that the objectives had not yet been finalised, and that the department would review them before setting out an updated objective in the Aviation Strategy Green Paper and CAA airspace Modernisation Strategy. This would take into account views from stakeholders, including those which had been put forward in the meeting.

Agenda Item 3- Governance

DfT introduced the Governance structure which had been developed with the CAA, NATS and the IPA. Stakeholders had contributed to the proposal through engagement sessions and there was general consensus on the structure. The meeting discussed a number of key points:

- The ASB sits at the top of the governance structure;
- The DfT and CAA have made a commitment to act as co-sponsors;
- The CAA are developing a Delivery Monitoring and Oversight function to oversee and track the delivery of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy.
- The final governance structure will be published in December.

DfT set out the Government's expectation that funding for airspace modernisation, including for the governance groups, will be provided by industry.

The CAA set out its commitment to co-sponsor modernisation and its role in running the Delivery Monitoring and Oversight function, which will act as a bridge between industry delivery groups and the strategic level to coordinate activity and elevate risks. The CAA will fulfil two distinct airspace roles; to consider whether to approve Airspace Change Proposals, and the economic regulation of NERL.

NATS presented on the proposed Airspace Modernisation Organising Group (AMOG) Programme Management Office. This will coordinate the programme to deliver airspace change and ensure it is integrated and optimised with the en-route modernisation. NATS emphasised that collaboration is necessary to be successful as programme management cannot be delivered by NATS alone. The Boards underneath AMOG will also be vital to coordinating airspace changes and the governance structure ensures the group reports to the FASI-S Board. Attendees highlighted that developing a structure is important step in ensuring delivery.

NATS also set out that it had been commissioned by DfT and the CAA to produce a masterplan of the airspace changes required. This was due in the middle of 2019.

The Board supported DfT and the CAA making the commitment to act as co-sponsors and agreed it was a positive step that the Government is supportive of airspace modernisation. There was interest in seeing the masterplan in due course and understanding the timetable for airspace changes.

Representatives from various groups identified the importance of effective communication with those affected by these changes, whilst others stressed the importance of finding balanced solutions and implementing fair packages of mitigations.

The meeting recognised that resource will need to be carefully managed over the upcoming years across the sector to ensure it is used in the right place at the right time. It was suggested that AMOG could be used as a tool for managing this resource, with DfT also playing a role in coordination.

Agenda item 4 -December publications

DfT set out to the Board that the department will publish the Aviation Strategy Green Paper later this year, which will include a section on airspace. Given the amount of detail required on airspace the department will also publish further information separately alongside the Green Paper.

DfT explained what information is due to published in December:

- The objective for modernisation;
- The role of DfT and CAA as co-sponsors;
- The final governance structure;
- A consultation proposal on legislation to direct a sponsor to bring forward an airspace change;
- NATS feasibility work and CAA assurance of this work.

Agenda Item 5 – Update on Airspace Modernisation Strategy

The CAA provided an update on their Airspace Modernisation Strategy. It had received 263 responses to its consultation from the public, and was now in the process of adapting the Strategy to take on stakeholder views. The feedback had focused mainly on the objective, which the meeting had discussed under agenda item 2.

There was broad support for the detail and initiatives in the Strategy, which will be provided to the Secretary of State in December. It will also be published on the CAA website. It would be updated in 2020, once the Aviation Strategy work had been completed and any new policies introduced.

DfT stressed how important it was for everyone to continue to engage with the Airspace Modernisation Strategy (AMS).

Agenda Item 6 - Delivery update on FASI-North and FASI-South.

FASI-North - NATS explained that there are a number of CAA decisions pending over the next year.

FASI-South - It was felt that there had been excellent input from airports and airlines as to what they were looking for going forward, with lots of proposals progressing. A masterplan of these changes would be written by NATS by mid-2019.

The Aviation Communities Forum and other community representatives felt that, whilst progress had been made from an industry perspective, there had not been similar developments for communities. A number of suggestions were made, including minimising the impact for those who lose out through airspace modernisation or a comprehensive package for those affected.

The Board agreed that a balanced outlook was needed with considerations made for both industry and communities, whilst ensuring clear and transparent communication as to the benefits and costs for those affected. It was recognised by all attendees that airspace modernisation would never be welcomed by everyone but could deliver improvements on the current status quo.

Concluding comments

Baroness Sugg concluded the meeting, saying she felt it had been beneficial and that it was a positive step to be discussing airspace modernisation with senior aviation stakeholders. This view was supported by the Board.

The Board agreed that more regular meetings were needed rather than the proposed bi-annual format and it was suggested the next meeting be held early in 2019.

The Board agreed that the next meeting would include an update on progress and that it should take place after the Aviation Strategy Green Paper had been published. There will also be an agenda item to discuss the policies within the Green Paper and how they interact with airspace policy.

ACTION:

- DfT to arrange next ASB meeting.
- DfT to add a discussion on how environmental policies in the Aviation Strategy Green paper fit within Airspace Modernisation at next ASB meeting.