



## Department for Transport

### **Jet Zero Taskforce – 2026 Annual Plenary 11:30am – 13:00pm, Tuesday 20 January 2026**

#### **Attendees**

##### Chair

- The Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP, Secretary of State for Transport

##### Ministers

- Chris McDonald MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Industry, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and Department for Business and Trade
- Keir Mather MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Aviation, Maritime and Security, Department for Transport (virtual)

##### In Person

- Tim Alderslade, Chief Executive, Airlines UK
- Rob Bishton, Chief Executive Officer, Civil Aviation Authority
- Simon Burr MBE, Group Director, Engineering and Technology, Rolls-Royce
- Elizabeth de Jong, Chief Executive Officer, Fuel Industry UK
- Shelley De Souza, Director, Banking and Investments, National Wealth Fund
- Karen Dee, Chief Executive Officer, Airports UK
- Prof. Carol Eastwick, Head of Mechanical and Aerospace Systems Research Group, UK Aerospace Research Consortium
- Paul Greenwood, Chairman, Esso UK Ltd, ExxonMobil
- Kenton Jarvis, Chief Executive Officer, easyJet
- Tim Johnson, Director, Aviation Environment Federation
- Steve Kelly, President, International for 1PointFive
- Katie Roscoe, Director – UK Public Affairs and Policy, Airbus (*deputising for Julie Kitcher, Chief Sustainability Officer and Communications*)
- Corneel Koster, Chief Executive Officer, Virgin Atlantic
- Duncan McCourt, Chief Executive Officer, Sustainable Aviation
- Prof. Rob Miller, Director Whittle Laboratory, University of Cambridge
- Grant Pearson, Chairman, Renewable Transport Fuel Association
- Emma Pinchbeck, Chief Executive Officer, Climate Change Committee
- Andy Prendergast, National Secretary, GMB Union
- Rt. Hon. Sir Jeremy Quin, President, Boeing UK & Ireland
- Matt Gorman, Director of Carbon Strategy, Heathrow Airport (*deputising for Thomas Woldbye, Chief Executive Officer*)

##### HMG Attendees

- Stef Lehmann, Special Advisor, Department for Transport



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- David Silk, Interim Director General, Aviation, Maritime and Security, Department for Transport
- David Buttery, Director, Low Carbon Fuels, Department for Transport
- Joe Delafield, Deputy Director, Aviation Decarbonisation and Environment, Department for Transport
- Sonia Krylova, Deputy Director, Carbon Budget Delivery & Framework, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
- Paul Griffiths, Deputy Director, Aerospace, Department for Business and Trade

### Apologies

- Dr Jennifer Holmgren, Chief Executive Officer, LanzaTech
- Steve Heapy, Chief Executive Officer, Jet2
- Ken O'Toole, Group Chief Executive, Manchester Airports Group
- Sean Doyle, Chief Executive Officer, British Airways
- Val Miftakhov, Chief Executive Officer, ZeroAvia

## Summary of Meeting Readout

### 1. HMG Welcome

The Transport Secretary opened the meeting by thanking members for their attendance and Boeing for hosting. She stressed that the aviation sector must decarbonise to grow and highlighted the Government's strong support over the past 18 months, including the Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) Mandate, SAF Bill for a Revenue Certainty Mechanism, increased funding to the Aerospace Technology Institute (ATI) and airspace modernisation. She recognised the industry's progress, including developments in hydrogen-electric aircraft, contrail forecasting, and new SAF facilities, but said more collective action is needed. She also noted the Government's announcement on the day up to £43 million in new 'Jet Zero' R&D funding for UK companies and universities. She welcomed the work of the Jet Zero Taskforce (JZT) Expert Group and Task and Finish Groups, thanking the organisations which had taken part.

### 2. Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF)

David Buttery (Director, Low Carbon Fuels, DfT) took members through Government's progress in SAF through 2025, noting that this had been the first full year of the SAF Mandate and that early signals show that it is operating well. He referenced the SAF Bill which passed through the House of Commons and is currently in the House of Lords. He also flagged other significant announcements of the year, including £63 million being allocated through the Advanced Fuels Fund.



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Following this, Holly Boyd-Boland (JZT Expert Group Industry Chair) turned to the 2025 SAF Task and Finish Group (TFG), taking members through its key findings and recommendations. She noted it had found that the mandate was facing some challenges around market transparency and that policy stability around the RCM and SAF policy more broadly is critical. They have recommended improved market transparency, the set-up of a SAF Delivery Council and a SAF value chain action plan.

Discussion points from members included:

- Welcoming the progress made regarding SAF, as well as the value of the JZT, recognising that the UK is taking a leadership role globally.
- Noting that the sector needs to remain committed to affordability and accessibility, including that the UK must ensure that the cost of SAF to airlines does not make UK aviation uncompetitive globally.
- Stressing the importance of consensus in how to meet mandate obligations and the need to avoid buy-out scenarios.
- Noting the potential need to consider the level of the HEFA cap, while recognising the importance of understanding how this could interact with future investment and market certainty.
- Raising wider economic challenges for the biofuels and chemical industries, and how this could make a UK e-SAF market challenging to develop. Chris McDonald MP stressed the Government's commitment to support the growth of a domestic SAF industry and the benefits of avoiding sole reliance on imports.

The Transport Secretary and David Buttery replied to members by reiterating the importance of policy stability and noting that there are review points built into the mandate design. They also recognised the need for collective effort to keep growing both supply and demand.

### **3. Carbon Markets and Removals**

Joe Delafield (Deputy Director, Aviation Decarbonisation, DfT) summarised Government progress in carbon markets and removals in 2025, reiterating that there is a key role for carbon markets in aviation decarbonisation. He noted that negotiations on linking the UK and EU Emissions Trading Schemes (ETS) are taking place this year. He also highlighted the recent milestone of CORSIA offsetting requirements coming into force, given emissions growth in 2024. Finally, he flagged the independent Alan Whitehead review of greenhouse gas removals, commissioned by the Department for Energy, Security and Net Zero (DESNZ).

Holly Boyd-Boland then took members through the 2025 TFG on greenhouse gas removals (GGRs). The group looked at three main questions: the size of the prize, the development of an industry demand signal, and the policy levers that need to be pulled. The outcomes showed that there was a strong interdependency between activity inside and outside the aviation sector, and the opportunity to boost supply was clear with appropriate policy framework in place. The group



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recommended that aviation industry could act to support in signalling demand for GGRs from the sector, as well as helping to enable supply. It also recognised the interdependency with the ETS and considered the question of whether and how the UK should approach mandating removals.

Discussion points from members included:

- Support for the Advanced Market Signal developed between Sustainable Aviation and the GGR TFG, with recognition there is more work to do to scale this further and assess its efficacy.
- Considerations on the current policy landscape, including the importance of further developing ICAO's carbon offsetting scheme (CORSIA) and support for nature-based GGRs.
- Noting the findings from the independent Alan Whitehead review, with particular interest in the recommendation for a 'net zero mandate' for aviation, with some concerns raised on the risks this proposal could pose for SAF investment stability.
- Recognition of the central role aviation will play in supporting the GGR market as one of the most significant off takers, with aviation and agriculture project to be the highest residual emitters in the economy by 2040.
- Noting potential trade-offs in the decarbonisation of the sector and how this relates to cost and investment, for example given the some of the interdependencies between SAF production and the deployment of GGRs.
- Raising that any unintended environmental consequences of CO2 capture must also be considered.

### **4. Technologies and Efficiencies**

Joe Delafield took members through Government progress in technologies and efficiencies through 2025. He set out government's support for zero emission flight, reiterating that the 'Jet Zero' R&D funding announced on the day would support operational applications, alongside the Aerospace Technology Institute (ATI) funding to support technology development. He recognised the greater efficiencies and technological improvements that will come from the next generation of aircraft and again flagged the importance of the ATI in that context. He noted that airspace modernisation is an important lever for reducing carbon emissions, with significant progress being made.

Holly Boyd-Boland then took members through the third 2025 TFG on hydrogen flight. She noted there was very broad alignment within the group around the UK's potential to lead in the deployment of small-scale operations, as well as on the key findings of the work. The roadmap from now to 2060 reflects the need not only to move at pace domestically, but also to bring the rest of the world with the UK from a regulatory point of view. She noted that there are sequencing challenges from a regulatory perspective, and that a significant gap remains between small-scale operations from regional airports and the creation of a full ecosystem supported by a defined bridging zone.

Discussion from members included:



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- Recognition that the UK is well placed to lead on new technologies with the home of Airbus' wing design and fuel systems, as well as Rolls-Royce.
- Support for developing technology in the UK through programmes such as the ATI.

The Transport Secretary asked for further clarity on the supporting the deployment of new technologies given the interdependencies with regulation and infrastructure requirements. Joe Delafield noted that this could be done via the JZT and through the upcoming R&D programme.

### **5. Tackling All of Aviation's Climate Impacts**

Finally, Joe Delafield set out Government progress over the last year regarding tackling all of aviation's climate impacts. He noted it was good to see engagement from all parts of the sector on tackling non-CO2 impacts and the importance of supporting progress on this challenging issue. He also stressed that we cannot lose sight of the international and geopolitical context in which we are operating. He described the outcome from last year's ICAO Assembly as a positive sign of global support for aviation decarbonisation, but emphasised that the sector will need to work together to maintain momentum as difficult decisions approach.

Holly Boyd-Boland then took members through the final TFG from 2025 which focused on contrail impact mitigation. She noted they looked at the scientific research, and the actions that have been taken both in the UK and internationally. Their recommendation is that there should be a permanent body responsible for testing contrail-mitigation measures and for developing a more standardised approach. They emphasised the need for an agreed, consistent set of standards to guide future work in this area.

Discussion points from members included:

- Noting that to make progress in contrail impact mitigation, the UK should run a properly designed trial, similar to the Virgin Atlantic 100% SAF flight, leveraging the strong geographical position over the North Atlantic.
- Raising the opportunity for the UK to show global leadership on this issue.
- Calling for the sector needs to start quantifying the non-CO2 impacts of aviation.

### **6. AOB and Closing Remarks**

The Transport Secretary closed the meeting by thanking members for their attendance and noting that while this is a complex challenge, she is confident that both Government and industry have a real determination to drive forward progress. She also reiterated the Government's commitment to support both economic growth and decarbonisation. The meeting closed by reminding members the Expert Group will meet again in February.