

NATMAC Representatives

12th September 2012

CAA DECISION LETTER

Dear Colleagues,

**PROPOSED INTRODUCTION OF CARDIFF/BRISTOL 'SEVERN' AND
ADDITIONAL 'COTSWOLD' CONTROL AREAS**

1. INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

1.1 On 24 May 2012, NATS issued a consultation document outlining a single option to propose the introduction of Severn and Cotswold Control Areas (CTAs) to improve Continuous Climb Operations (CCO) from Bristol airport. The project was titled The Severn ACP. These new CTAs would provide vertical extensions to parts of the Bristol and Cardiff CTAs, up to FL195, as Class C controlled airspace. These new volumes of controlled airspace would be designated as Severn CTA 1&2 from FL105 to FL165 and Cotswold CTA 1&2 from FL165 up to FL195. The existing Cotswold CTA Class A controlled airspace will remain unchanged but will be redesignated as Cotswold CTA3. Severn CTA1 and Cotswold CTA1 will operate H24, whilst Severn CTA2 and Cotswold CTA2 will be active Mon 0800 – Fri 1600 UTC (Summer 1hr earlier), outside the operational hours of weekend routes N90 and N862 (between ERNOK and BHD).

2. AIRSPACE EFFICIENCY

2.1 DAP is required to secure the most efficient use of airspace consistent with the safe operation of aircraft and the expeditious flow of air traffic. I am satisfied that the new airspace will facilitate CCO for Bristol departures routeing to the south and west and will serve to reduce the complexity of traffic in the EXMOR area. At present, traffic is descended early due to the limitations enforced by the existing controlled airspace structure, which creates a bottleneck resulting from the routine interaction of Bristol, Cardiff and Exeter operations.

2.2 It is anticipated that there will be no change to any track over the ground for Bristol Standard Instrument Departures (SID), but the additional airspace will provide the opportunity for aircraft to climb and remain within controlled airspace rather than having to operate in Class G uncontrolled airspace or restrict the climb. At present, 25% of Bristol departures on the EXMOR SID level-off at FL100 to remain within the vertical confines of the Bristol Control Area (CTA), which in 2011, resulted in 1323 movements being affected. The

additional airspace will provide the protection of controlled airspace and the CCO will result in a reduction in CO₂ emissions.

- 2.3 In accordance with the derogation of the NERL license, Cardiff will provide radar services in all new controlled airspace up to FL165 in the Severn CTAs from 0800-2300 UTC, with London Area Control (LAC) providing radar services outside these times. LAC will also provide radar services H24 in the operational hours of the Cotswold CTAs 1&2.

3. AIRSPACE USERS

- 3.1 DAP is required to satisfy the requirements of operators and owners of all classes of aircraft. Due to the nature of this proposal, NATS completed a limited but proactive operational consultation with all affected stakeholder groups. No environmental stakeholders were identified given that the proposal sought to introduce airspace that lay above pre-existing controlled airspace and lateral dispersion of any traffic was not envisaged. The results of the consultation, although only 16 responses were received, indicate that the aviation community has no concerns with this proposal and I am therefore satisfied that the additional airspace structure is appropriate to accommodate the fundamental needs of Bristol departures and will address traffic complexity issues in the EXMOR area.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 I have considered the environmental impact of air operations and my expert Environmental Research and Consultation Department agreed it is reasonable to conclude that an overall environmental benefit can be achieved as a result of this airspace change, even if that benefit is modest. Any benefit is entirely dependent upon an increase in aircraft achieving continuous climbs and therefore producing a reduction in CO₂ emissions

5. SAFETY

- 5.1 As DAP's primary duty is to maintain a high degree of safety in the provision of air traffic services, DAP staff, together with colleagues from the Safety Regulation Group of the CAA have confirmed that the proposed airspace design and associated management arrangements can be safely adopted. The appropriate safety management processes resulting from this airspace change will be completed prior to the introduction of any operational change and thus safety levels will be maintained.

6. NATIONAL SECURITY

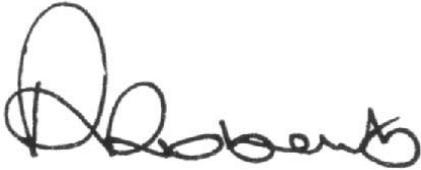
- 6.1 I am satisfied that national security will not be impacted by this proposal and the specific consultation requirements with the Secretary of State for Defence have been discharged by correspondence with the MoD who have confirmed they are content with the proposal.

7. REGULATORY DECISION

- 7.1 I am satisfied that the 'Severn' airspace arrangements will deliver greater efficiency by providing CCO from Bristol airport and by introducing a less complex flow of traffic in the EXMOR area, which meets the needs of the principal users without disadvantaging any others. I am also satisfied that the

single option put forward in the consultation was the only viable option, as it provided greater flexibility and a potential reduction in CO₂ emissions.

- 7.2 I have therefore decided to approve the Severn airspace changes. The revised airspace will become effective from 13 December 2012. DAP staff will review the effectiveness of the arrangements not before 12 months after introduction and the results of this review will be published.
- 7.3 If you have any queries, the DAP Project Leader is Mac Mackay, who can be contacted on 020 7453 6552, mac.mackay@caa.co.uk

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Roberts', with a large, stylized initial 'P'.

Phil Roberts
Assistant Director

Enclosure: 1. 'Severn' Airspace Change Proposal

