

CAA Environmental Sustainability Panel Meeting

Minutes

10:30 – 16:30 1 May 2024

Attendees

Mark Westwood (MW) *Panel Chair*

Anil Namdeo (AN)

Charlotte Clark (CC)

David Lee (DL)

Martin Hawley (MH) *(online)*

Harry Armstrong (HA)

Elly Shafran (ES)

Katherine Hughes (KH)

Polina Webb (PW)

Tomos Joyce (ToJ) *(online)*

Tim Johnson (TJ)

Abigail Grenfell (AG)

Nic Stevenson (NS) *(online)*

Bronwyn Fraser (BF)

Alison Harris

Apologies

Ruth Mallors-Ray (RMR)

Alistair Lewis (AL)

Harry Armstrong (HA)	CAA, (Item 2)
Elly Shafran (ES)	CAA, (Item 6)
Katherine Hughes (KH)	CAA, (Item 6)
Polina Webb (PW)	CAA, (Item 7)
Tomos Joyce (ToJ) <i>(online)</i>	CAA, (Item 7)
Tim Johnson (TJ)	CAA, (Item 8)
Abigail Grenfell (AG)	CAA
Nic Stevenson (NS) <i>(online)</i>	CAA
Bronwyn Fraser (BF)	CAA, Secretariat
Alison Harris	CAA, Panel Support

1. Welcome and Update

1.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

1.2 RMR is due to present the Panel's annual update at the CAA Board meeting on 15 May. The Panel discussed and agreed the key messages to convey to the CAA Board.

2. Introduction from Harry Armstrong, new CAA Head of Sustainability

2.1 HA introduced himself to the Panel and sought views on what he can do, or continue to do, as the new CAA Head of Sustainability. The Panel noted that the role could:

- Support the CAA to recognise that it has a more powerful voice on an international level than it appears to realise, and could use that power;
- Help the CAA to realise that whatever steps it takes will have significant social and economic implications;
- Drive the CAA to broaden its work beyond its statutory roles;
- Encourage the CAA to consider how economic drivers of behaviour can be used to address sustainability challenges;
- Encourage the CAA to take into consideration the potential for aviation to be viewed in an increasingly negative way by consumers; and
- Prompt the CAA to take well rounded views on the 'big picture' awareness of aviation's sustainability plans and look ahead where others are not.

3. Environmental Sustainability Panel Dashboard

3.1 The Panel reviewed its progress against the pillars of its work programme.

4. Overview of delivery of CAA Environmental Sustainability Strategy & Panel Impact Summary

4.1 The CAA provided its regular update on the delivery of its Environmental Sustainability Strategy. The Panel noted:

- The importance of the CAA taking a long-term view to securing funding that matches long-term programmes of work, such as hydrogen, while also not being distracted from addressing legacy aircraft impacts by future technologies;
- The importance of building a stable knowledge base over a long time that support addressing the questions that currently have no answer; and
- That the CAA could have a role in communicating and managing expectations around how long research takes to complete.

5. Knowledge Delivery Programme

5.1 The Panel and CAA discussed and agreed a proposed structured approach to drawing in Panel knowledge and expertise into and across the CAA, using established CAA communication platforms and tools.

6. CAA Strategic Overview

6.1 TJ provided an update from the CAA Board on its direction on sustainability, including:

- Consideration of how the Board signals (both to the rest of the CAA and industry) that it is shifting its mindset to leading and influencing on sustainability where the CAA may not currently have a direct regulatory role;
- The practical steps the CAA can take that make the most significant difference to sustainability, such as by identifying the areas of industry to focus on where it can best lead and influence; and
- Consideration of how the CAA effectively communicates that it is growing to take on additional functions.

6.2 The Panel sought clarity over how it could support the Board, noting that the Panel's role may be more centred around supporting CAA working level projects and programmes and building skills and knowledge across the organisation.

7. Economic Regulation and Competition Policy (ERCP) – responses to consultation on future framework

7.1 The ERCP team presented the initial feedback from the recent CAP2618 consultation on the approach to future price controls. The high-level feedback from the consultation was that stakeholders were keen to focus on sustainability as part of future economic regulation.

7.2 The Panel discussed:

- The role of the CAA in challenging the understanding and use of correct and consistent language and terminology – for example, being clear on what 'net zero' means from a scientific perspective;
- How price controls can drive sustainable behaviours by encouraging regulated businesses to have a long-term view of sustainability, including by ensuring that regulatory frameworks enable investments for pilot projects and research;
- The potential for the CAA to be asked to assess the sustainability credentials of certain projects if stakeholders in a regulated business cannot agree on their value, and the role of the Panel in supporting the CAA to understand the relative value of different technologies to sustainability; and
- The importance of the CAA being able to understand, verify and challenge sustainability elements of regulated companies' business plans, and how the Panel could assist the CAA in helping to understand and verify the long-term sustainability narrative of these plans.

8. Introduction to GHG minimum standard methodology project

8.1 The CAA presented its initial planning on a new GHG minimum standard methodology project to support airspace change sponsors in assessing the GHG implications of their Airspace Change Proposals (ACP) through CAP1616. The project aims to understand the models being used by airspace change sponsors to model GHG and whether the input parameters are applicable to the airspace change, but does not intend to develop a specific tool for sponsors to use. The output document is intended to be kept live and evolve, so as to be able to update to account for factors such as changing fleets, SAF usage and alternative fuels use.

8.2 The Panel discussed:

- It generally supports the project, but cautioned the CAA to be cognisant of its potential size and scale especially within limited timescales;
- The CAA should consider how it intends the work to be used in practice and the degree of robustness needed for it to be used as intended, and suggested that its practical use be tested against previous ACPs;
- The kinds of changes being considered by this project are by their nature small, so a high degree of fidelity of information will be required to be able to effectively compare the impacts of an airspace change against the current baseline; and
- There is scope for the CAA to consider developing a mechanism that is used in designing an airspace change, rather than just measuring the impact of a change.

8.3 The Panel were open to undertaking a technical deep dive on specific aspects of the project once a scope had been confirmed.

9. Strategic Panel Input

9.1 The Panel discussed its approach to developing its second piece of strategic Panel input to the CAA around questions to ask new technologies, products or services.

9.2 TJ noted that, to meet its goal of a mindset shift for the CAA to considering sustainability beyond its direct regulatory remit, the Board would benefit from understanding case studies that unpack the complexities of sustainability claims, what areas of the industry these are most relevant to and what questions the CAA could ask to understand these claims better. TJ foresees the Board signalling the rest of the CAA that it is encouraged to ask questions of sustainability claims it comes across, and this in turn can signal to industry that the CAA is interested in sustainability (including beyond its direct regulatory remit).

9.3 The Panel discussed:

- Different questions may be required for different parts of the sector.
- The Panel can support the CAA by identifying the key areas of sustainability where there are significant unknowns. This includes offering insight on how areas of the market may evolve and the key issues the CAA should be aware of and asking questions around.
- The CAA could develop a roadmap that signals how different regulatory tools may be used to drive behaviours, so that industry is aware of the hurdles it may need to meet in future; and
- The CAA Board should consider its risk appetite and how far it feels comfortable in challenging industry, in order to help the rest of the organisation understand the Board's direction.

10. AoB

None.