

GENERAL AND BUSINESS AVIATION STRATEGIC FORUM

Tuesday 2 February 2021 10:30-12:30
Via Microsoft Teams conference call

In attendance:

Roger Hopkinson (RH)	General Aviation Alliance, GAA (Chairman)
Marc Bailey (MB)	British Business & General Aviation Association
Martin Robinson (MR)	Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
Phil Dunnington (PD)	GA Advocate
Rannia Leontaridi (RL)	Director of Aviation, DfT
David Harding (DH)	Deputy Director of Aviation Strategy, DfT
Jai Nathan (JN)	Head of GA Policy, Skills & Stakeholders, Safety and CAA Division, DfT
Richard Moriarty (RM)	Chief Executive, CAA
Rob Bishton (RB)	Director, Safety & Airspace Regulation Group, CAA
Jon Round (JR)	Head of Airspace, ATMs & Aerodromes, CAA
Glenn Bradley (GB)	Head of Flight Operations, CAA
Mike Macdonald (MM)	Head of GA Policy and External Relations, CAA
Laura Greenslade (LG)	PA to Head of UAS & GAU (Secretary)

Apologies:

Sophie O'Sullivan (SLOS) Head of Unmanned Aircraft Systems Unit & General Aviation Unit

1. Introduction & apologies

The chair opened the meeting and requested that the forum focus this meeting on looking ahead and on delivery. He noted and welcomed that Rannia Leontaridi Director General will be joining the meeting.

2. Agreement of minutes from the last meeting

The minutes from the last meeting, held in October 2020, were agreed. CAA will publish them on the CAA website.

3. Action Log review

116 DH to discuss with Chair about paper to Secretary-of-State and report back **Update: planned to cover under agenda item 7. Post meeting note: Proposal to review the various engagement meetings raised (including GBASF itself) at GBASF/CAA Board. Follow through to be discussed. Requires new action**

118 Chair to set up Secretary-of-State/Aviation Minister GBASF briefing **Update: holding until GBASF stakeholders have had their session at the CAA Board Meeting. Post Meeting note: Chairman discussed with Aviation Minister who indicated he would appreciate a specific GBASF briefing**

123 DH and RGP to look at creating a high level one page activity plan (similar to the EASA roadmap) to show progress and generic terms **Update: DH confirmed that DfT do have a draft roadmap which is currently with ministers, the timing of publication is to be confirmed as it needs to be reviewed due to the on-going position with the pandemic. DH will arrange for the draft to be circulated to GBASF stakeholders to review and comment.**

125 MB and DH to discuss network airfields offline and pick up again at the next GBASF **Update: MB shared with DH an example of what Germany have done and recommended that DfT need to do the research of the network of airfields for 30-50 so we can protect, develop and get the right strategy in place for the future of the UK.**

128 DH to consider undertaking an analysis of the effect of the loss of EGNOS on UK commercial and general aviation should assured access to EGNOS not be achieved in EU exit negotiations **Update: this will be covered on AOB**

129 JF & DH to engage with RH, MB and MR to understand business aviation interests, and how these could be captured and addressed. **Update: DH held a meeting with MB and colleagues involved in the commercial side**

of GA. DfT appreciate that issues are very different, and they are actively thinking about how they can cover those interests (potentially with a separate grouping) and how that interacts with the GBASF work. Item closed. (Note action 116 under item 3 above)

4. Airspace position & progress

- AMS project

JR provided an update on the AMS project. Listening sessions were held in the autumn where the CAA gained a huge amount of input from multiple stakeholders (including GA). The feedback from those sessions will be shared in March. The next stage of the project is for the CAA to check they have an understanding of what has been said in those sessions and try to find a way forward. This will then allow the CAA to work on the output of deliberations post March. The final output of this project will be in Q3 or Q4. The AMS project will be shaped around the current financial situation and state of the industry.

- UAS TDA proliferation

There is a lack of knowledge from applicants on what they are trying to do and the context. SLOS is in the process of arranging a meeting between GAA who deal with Airspace and the drone group to discuss what can be done to improve the situation. AAA recognise this point.

JR pointed out that he is happy to engage on any particular TDAs that give particular concern to try to put minds at rest about how the CAA are managing them as this is a particular frustration for the GA community.

- Engagement with GA on Airspace

JR and RH have set up the Airspace Engagement Group with attendees from both GA and AAA parties to work on a number of items i.e. at the moment they are taking feedback from GA parties on the latest draft of CAP 1404. There are also some other live debates happening in the meeting itself which are useful. It is important to JR that GA stakeholders talk openly about the engagement and whether they are getting everything they want having played a part in the creation of where they are going forward.

RM stressed the importance of the Airspace Engagement Group and stakeholder engagement, and encouraged the GBASF stakeholders to think about this. RH observed that the Airspace Engagement Group is going in the right direction.

RH voiced his disappointment regarding the unacceptable comments being made by a minority of GA stakeholders, some of which were threatening, towards CAA staff. RM commented on this poor behaviour stating that it can never be acceptable for CAA or DfT staff to feel physically threatened to carry out their job role, there is zero tolerance on this. All present supported that view.

- Meaning of 'best in the world'

JR's understanding of what it means to be the 'best in the world' is that we align the vast majority of the global standards, but JR is prepared to accept that if there is a very good reason, the UK may do something different and lead the world, but he would look to create as much standardisation as possible.

RH commented that one of the key things from his perspective is that aviation thrives, and this is important. Discussions are currently taking place between GBASF stakeholders and DfT with regards to forming a group on the replacement for Airspace for all and funding from government. DH expanded noting DfT are looking at more ambitious options for increasing GA representation at Airspace forums in order for the GA community to be able to have more input into Airspace decisions. DfT are looking at options such as creating a body that would receive some degree of government funding (subject to the right T&Cs), this would provide support to GA around issues on airspace change or airspace strategy issues. This is still work in progress and DfT have had a good degree of engagement from parts of the sector. DH will provide more information on this as it develops.

An update paper regarding the Airspace Change Organising Group was circulated prior to the meeting. Due to timings JR suggested that the forum read this paper offline.

5. DfT position & progress

- Rannia Leontaridi introduction

RL introduced herself to the forum and provided an overview of what the Aviation team at DfT are focussed on:

- The GA team is very significant and continues to be at the heart of everything that the DfT and CAA do
- DfT and the CAA are focussing on representing the GA interests at Board level

- DfT are focussed on creating career opportunities in aviation such as pilots, engineers and scientists
- There is also a focus on encouraging youngsters to join a career in aviation
- DfT have an ambitious decarbonisation programme and they will work very closely with airfields to understand the magnitude of airfields that exist across the country.
- The Secretary of State and RL have worked with the team to create a very exciting and ambitious programme for GA for the next 12 months, this will focus on the priorities in place now as well as any new ideas from stakeholders on what the team can do to work further and engage together.

RL asked that the stakeholders inform DfT if they are not receiving enough information about what DfT are doing so that this can be improved going forward.

RL committed to attending another GBASF meeting in 2021.

- Covid-19 and recovery

DfT continue to keep guidance on recreational and sporting GA under review, hoping to open up activities when possible but very conscious that this will need to be in line with the health position and the regulations which are stemmed centrally.

DfT are particularly concerned about some of the safety risks and are working closely with the CAA around this.

Currency flights is a core safety risk concern, DfT will look at what can be done through the current regulations or what could be possible when the regulations are reviewed again in late February.

The GA COVID Recovery workshops will be starting up again with the first meeting scheduled to take place on the 23rd February.

DfT are looking at commercial support for the sector, they are trying to push for where other measures could be supported for the sector, and will continue to engage treasury on some of those funding. DfT will keep stakeholders updated as and when they know if there will be more support measures. It is important to support organisations in the short term that earn an income from GA activity and currently unable to do so due to the COVID guidance. DfT are trying to do what they can to help these organisations by continuing to push this with treasury.

DH pointed out that there is COVID guidance on international travel as well as domestic travel.

- Brexit

DfT are having discussions with the EU and EASA around the implementation of the safety agreement and the air services agreement.

Air services – there are on-going bilateral discussions with each of the EU 27 members around freedoms and what can be done above the air services agreement, it is a big priority for DfT to make sure it remains competitive for UK businesses, business aviation and other non-scheduled services.

The CAAs GAU Post EU Exit opportunities consultation has gained lots of interesting feedback and analysis about some of the proposals that we might be able to take forward on the domestic side. DfT are constantly trying to reach out to different parts of industry to remain aware of the trade-offs.

RH noted that he has received feedback from stakeholders stating that the UK make aviation regulation too complex. Simplification is important in order for the UK to be the best in the world for aviation.

Action: At RB and RH next 121 meeting, discuss what the CAA can do to help simplify regulation

- Airfields (incl ADAF) and Skills

DfT are very conscious of the opportunities around linking innovation and airfields, they are exploring what they can do with the Future Flight Challenge and they are keen to set up some future sessions around this. DfT are aware that there are some concerns around technology and future implications for airspace and integration but they also see some big opportunities in terms of making test beds at airfields and providing new opportunities for business and aviation services. DfT are currently working with the CAA on this and plan to engage more widely on what a programme might look like in the future.

There is lots of work going on between DfT and the CAA on engagement with the sector.

RM raised the importance of GA organisations clearly stating which sector they are querying when engaging with DfT and the CAA on GA, whether it be GA as a whole, recreational and sport or recreational, sport and commercial.

A positive aviation skills announcement will be made by DfT in the next few days having worked closely with MB, this is linked with aviation services.

- **GA Advocate**

PD presented a slide deck regarding the meaning of making the UK the best in the world for aviation. The slides covered what we need to consider in the short term in order to achieve this objective and why. The three main points were:

- The need to have reciprocity with the EU/EASA
- Not imposing more charges on pilots and crew
- Urgency to 'get back into the saddle as soon as possible'

PD stated that these points will likely undermine our future plans if we don't act on them now, therefore PD focus over the coming months will be to try and ensure that these points are addressed as much as we look forward to the exciting future.

MR agrees with these points from PD and stated that we need to narrow our focus and ensure businesses are ready to deal with both the exit from the EU and the exit from COVID.

6. GA Unit position & progress

MM introduced himself to the forum and provided an update on the GA Unit progress.

The CRD has been introduced allowing the UK to revert to previous rules for visibility and distance from Cloud Minima for flying in visual meteorological conditions. A press release was issued on the 28th January.

The Restart Recovery workshops will start up again with the first one focussing on providing GA stakeholders with updates as well as how we go about a safe return to flying. It is envisaged that three or four of these workshops will be scheduled dependant on how the lockdown and easing of restrictions progress.

SLOS is arranging meetings with the UAS and GA communities regarding Temporary Danger Areas.

The Post EU Exit GA Consultation has now come to a close, the CAA received a great response receiving 9,700 items of quantitative data points as well as 5,500 comments. The GA Unit are currently going through an analysis stage and will be looking to release the consultation responses at the end of March/beginning of April and look at proceeding with projects.

MB encouraged the CAA and DfT to look at a restart and recovery programme for the GA for business sector as well as the recreational sector.

The CAA are currently at the research and data gathering stage of the Traethyllead (TEL) project, working closely with DfT. This project focusses on looking at moving away from leaded fuels with a societal push to move to green fuels.

7. GBASF Key issues

Agenda item not covered (Note item 3 above)

8. Aviation Services

Agenda item not covered

9. Any other business

- **CAA update on EGNOS and EWA (working agreement)**

EGNOS is secured until the 25th June and at this point it's likely to be withdrawn, CAA are looking at the mitigating options that are in hand and this is also being reviewed at a government level. Ministers are aware of this issue and want to help but the CAA need to work through what the approach might look like first.

The impact will be on about 17 airfields with existing approaches where they will lose the vertical element and revert to an LNAV approach with a higher minima, this will have operational impact in the highlands and islands for Logan Air at some airports where in some weather conditions they may or may not be able to set off or land. The impact is also on existing GNSS approaches without approach control.

JR requested that DfT bring together a coalition of government departments to perhaps give BAES a bit more than just DfT's word on this and collectively see if we can re-open the debate.

Action: JR to respond to MR question: If it's not possible to reach a settlement with the EU on the continued use of the EGNOS safety of life service and where the ESPAS signal will still remain useable without an EGNOS working agreement, will the CAA allow and approve LNAV PLUS V for approaches in IMC whether it's a no signal performance commitment in compliance with ICAO annex 10 SARPS?

Action: MR to send JR links to ICAO and EASA regulation

Upcoming meetings

- Tuesday 11 May 2021, 10.30-12.30, Location TBC
- Wednesday 21 July 2021, 10.30-12.30, Location TBC
- Wednesday 13 October 2021, 10.30-12.30, Location TBC