



Department
for Transport

Baroness Vere of Norbiton
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Sir Stephen Hillier
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Aviation House
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Dear Sir Stephen,

Ministerial Priorities for the Civil Aviation Authority

Thank you for the annual report sent to the Secretary of State on 20 December 2022 covering the Ministerial priorities set for the CAA across both your core regulatory and enabling roles. It was helpful to see your assessment of how the CAA has delivered against them. This response is intended to put on record that we intend that very similar priorities should inform the work of the CAA until the public body review of the CAA has concluded.

The aviation sector has showed unprecedented growth in the past 12 months as it recovers from COVID, and that rightly was the priority area of focus for the sector, CAA and DfT during 2022. The publication of the CAA's first Aviation Sustainability Strategy and your role supporting the work of the Jet Zero Council is particularly welcome, including the establishment of its supporting infrastructure, and the advisory Sustainability Panel shows real commitment to the UK taking a leading role in enabling decarbonisation of aerospace.

Furthermore, I share your positivity around initial feedback from the ICAO Safety Audit, which suggests that, subject to seeing the final audit reports, the day-to-day work of the UK system as a whole to maintain high standards of safety is effective.

There was significant additional pressure from dealing with and supporting the sector in the transition from the European Aviation Safety Agency to UK CAA based organisational and license approvals as the savings period ended in December 2022. There was little, if any, disruption to passengers and cargo customers and this is testament to the work the sector and the CAA did in the run up to the end of last year.

As discussed when we met on 24 January, we do not feel it is the right approach to significantly change the current priorities until the Department and the CAA have had the opportunity to consider the report and recommendations from the public body review of the CAA, other developments in Government priorities, and changes in the wider aviation and aerospace sectors.

The priorities across your core regulatory and enabling roles that I would like you take into account when setting your plans therefore are:

- **Supporting the recovery and growth of the aviation industry** – as it recovers from the impacts of the pandemic and deals with the consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.
- **Remaining a credible, trusted and globally influential future regulator now the UK is outside the EASA system** – ensuring the capacity and capability to deliver its regulatory responsibilities.
- **Facilitating skills** – supporting efforts to build a highly-skilled and diverse aviation workforce.
- **Supporting innovation** – to ensure safe deployment of new aviation technology.
- **Supporting aviation decarbonisation** – to help meet our Jet Zero ambitions.
- **Modernising airspace** – supporting delivery of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy.
- **Ensuring the safety and security of the space sector** – building on the experience from the first launch, confirming CAA as an efficient and effective spaceflight regulator.
- **Making the UK the best place in the world for aviation at all levels** - ensuring vibrant aviation grass roots that support wider aviation and nurture the next generation of aviation professionals.
- **Identifying ways of improving the CAA's sustainability and resilience** – to ensure you have the people, processes and resources to deliver effectively.

When we have had time to digest the report and recommendations from the current review, and considered wider Government policy priorities, my officials will liaise with yours to ensure we understand the impact on the CAA's functions and work together to identify a clear set of priorities for the future. We see the review offering the opportunity to improve and ensure the CAA is a regulator that is fit for the future. I appreciate your collaborative approach in supporting the review.

Yaws,
Charlotte

BARONESS VERE OF NORBITON