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Supporting Commercial Spaceplane Operations in the UK. Consultation on Criteria to Determine the Location of a UK Spaceport.

Dear Jeremy,

I am pleased to include below my response, as an individual, to the above consultation.

Question 1. Do you agree with the CAA's high-level recommendation that, if a decision were taken to proceed, sub-orbital operations should preferably commence, either on a permanent or a temporary basis, from one (or more) of the following:

- an existing EASA-certificated aerodrome;
- an existing UK CAA-licensed aerodrome; and/or
- an existing UK military aerodrome, subject to approval from the MOD.

Yes.

Question 2. Do you agree that in order to make maximum use of existing infrastructure, the location should preferably still be active but at a low level of aircraft movements and should have existing and appropriate ground infrastructure/facilities and service provision?

Yes. Paragraph 2.15 refers to "...investment potentially involving public funding....". Ideally, the private sector would provide all of the funding. Using existing infrastructure should hopefully reduce the prospect of any public funding.

Question 3. Do you agree that greenfield sites should not be considered?

Yes.

Question 4. Do you agree with CAA's analysis identifying the criteria to be considered in identifying a permanent location for a UK spaceport? If not, please explain why.

Yes.

Question 5. Do you think there are any other criteria that should also be taken into consideration? If so, please explain why.

No comment.

Question 6. Do you agree that these are relevant criteria? What weight should be attached to them?

Yes. I would give particular weight to the population density within 10 miles of each potential spaceport location (the table on pages 232 and 233 of the Technical Report gives details).

Question 7. If more than one location closely meet the essential operating criteria, safety, meteorological, environmental and economic criteria, do you agree that we should also consider factors around the contribution to local and national growth? If so, what weight should be given to these factors?

No.

Question 8. Do you agree with the CAA's analysis and strong recommendation that until there is a better understanding of sub-orbital spaceplane safety performance, spaceplane operations should only take place in areas of low population density and the resulting view that only a coastal location is suitable to protect the uninvolved general public

Yes. The last sentence of paragraph 2.6 seems very pertinent, where it is stated "Spaceplanes cannot currently demonstrate the same safety standards as commercial aviation – and it might not be possible for them ever to do so." A coastal location therefore seems sensible. As far as low population density is concerned I would regard the key definition as being within 10 miles.

Question 9. What are your views on the CAA's shortlist of eight potential sites?

I have carefully examined the table on pages 232 and 233 of the Technical Report. That table gives the population resident within 1, 2, 5, 7 and 10 miles of the potential eight sites. I consider that the most meaningful data relates to 10 miles.

Three of the potential eight sites have very high numbers of population resident within 10 miles, namely Glasgow Prestwick Airport (241,250), RAF Leuchars (230,350) and Newquay Cornwall Airport (102,900). I would therefore exclude these three sites from the CAA shortlist of eight potential sites. Two further sites

also have relatively high numbers of population resident within 10 miles, namely Kinloss Barracks (52,800) and RAF Lossiemouth (48,300). A case could also be made for excluding these two potential sites, but on balance I would not exclude these two sites.

Question 10. Are there any locations on the CAA's shortlist which you consider should be disregarded? If yes, please give your reasoning.

Please see my response to Question 9. I urge the exclusion of the potential locations at Glasgow Prestwick Airport, RAF Leuchars and Newquay Cornwall Airport.

Question 11. Are there any additional locations that you consider should be on the CAA's short list? If yes, please explain why.

No.

Yours sincerely

Graham M. Phillips