

**Airspace and Noise Engagement Group – 13 October 2017**

<b>Attendees:</b>	
Sarah Bishop – DfT (Chair)	Andy Kershaw – Airlines
Tim May – DfT	Dave Wood – Airlines
Rob Mills – DfT	Robin Clarke - Nats
Fran Kingsmill – DfT (Secretariat)	Andy Sinclair – Airports
Rebecca Roberts-Hughes – CAA	Neil Robinson – Airports
Jeremy Pine – Local Authorities	Keith Bushell – Manufacturers
Ben Fenech – Public Health England	Charles Lloyd – Community Groups
Tim Johnson - AEF	Martin Peachey – Community Groups
Frank Evans - UKACCs	John Stewart – Community Groups
Amanda Francis – Express Industry	Andy Jefferson – Sustainable Aviation
Geoff Clark - Airlines	
<b>Observers:</b>	<b>Apologies:</b>
Peter Smart - UKACCs	Tim Hardy – General Aviation
Sally Stolworthy - DfT	Rebecca Mitchell - DfT

**Welcome and Introduction**

Introductions were made and minutes from the last meeting were agreed.

**Agenda item 1: Airspace Consultation**

The chair took the room through a broad overview of the feedback received during the consultation. Key points were that: there was considerable support for the proposed Secretary of State call-in function; while the government remained committed to making the tier 2 change proposed in the consultation, the implementation would be delayed to allow time for further discussion on what PPRs were in and out of scope of this change; that many respondents had shown lack of trust in the CAA and therefore a lack of agreement over ICCAN being established as an independent arm of the CAA; and; a call to clarify wording in draft Air Navigation Guidance on noise impacts between 4000 – 7000 feet.

**Action for DfT:** Circulate a summary to meeting attendees of the consultation feedback.

There was concern that the definition of overflights was unclear together with related noise metrics and effects of property prices. The limited compensation proposals in the consultation were generally supported but community groups felt they did not go nearly far enough.

The proposal for options analysis in airspace change proposals was supported. There was no clear view on noise thresholds under concentrated flight paths.

A frequency noise metric was supported; average noise metrics were not thought adequate and background noise levels were thought to be a material consideration where ambient levels were low.

There was some concern from communities over delaying the tier 2 announcement. CAA explained there was a need for clearer definition of the threshold at which CAA should get involved in these types of airspace changes to avoid unnecessarily encompassing the 1000s of changes that take place within this category that have no noise impacts.

DfT confirmed the aim was still to announce the government response in the autumn, excluding the announcement on tier 2 which would be being discussed with CAA in more depth over the coming months, with the possibility of a further consultation in 2018. The room asked for confirmation of CAA's airspace

guidance timeline, CAA confirmed they were still planning to introduce the new process in January, but this was dependent on the announcement of the Government response. There was also a question on the timing of the South East airspace masterplan which NATS are putting together. DfT explained that the findings should be available in 2018 and these would feed into the Aviation Strategy, but wouldn't hold up implementation of an improved airspace change process.

One attendee questioned how work on background noise and tranquillity would be taken forward, DfT explained this had been highlighted as an area in the Aviation Strategy call for evidence but the difficulty was that there was no current robust evidence on how to measure it. It could be something for ICCAN to look at. CAA highlighted although tranquillity and background noise is not formally factored into the airspace change process it can rank highly for some stakeholders so is often looked at. AEF mentioned that CAA had in the past produced a report on tranquillity.

**Action CAA:** Circulate tranquillity report to meeting attendees

The chair explained compensation would be something looked at further as part of the Aviation Strategy.

### **Agenda item 2: webTag**

DfT introduced the guidance documents, inviting feedback from the room. Much of the room agreed the guidance was useful but there was some concern raised over webTag's ability to assess respite. CAA explained it would be possible to account for respite if noise exposure varied, but if not it would have to be assessed qualitatively. The limitations of webTag were explained, highlighting it was based on the best available research and is kept under constant review. For example the WHO's latest guidance (which has been delayed) could lead to further updates. There was a call from some for more detailed guidance to explain the evidence it was based on, and for it to be peer-reviewed.

Action: DfT to consider updating qualitative aspects of guidance and a peer review

### **Agenda item 3: Airspace change process**

CAA explained they would not be publishing their guidance until a month after the government response, if the government met their target of announcing in October they can publish in November with it coming into force from January.

CAA further explained those going through the change process who have consulted before the government announces its response will be able to follow the old process but those consulting after will need to follow the new process.

CAA shared some of their consultation feedback highlighting the polarised opinions on the level of information being supplied. CAA explained they would balance this by producing new communications to simplify the guidance while keeping the actual guidance a similar length. Responses will be published whilst a consultation is ongoing.

CAA will set a minimum in terms of community engagement and it's up to stakeholders to decide where they want to go beyond the minimum standard set out

Many questioned CAA resourcing given the increase in work created by the new airspace change process and CAA moving some of its staff to Gatwick. CAA explained they were recruiting, to introduce people as soon as possible. Nine posts are being recruited for, two officers regulating community engagement but not going out to communities, and one in the communications team who will be stakeholder focussed and help to introduce and explain the new process. This was welcomed by the community groups present. In addition to resourcing

CAA explained they were also looking at how they can more effectively manage their workload, and for sponsors to highlight when there is a resourcing gateway.

#### **Agenda item 4: Aviation strategy**

DfT introduced the strategy and ran through the planned timetable, highlighting that the call for evidence closes today (13/10). DfT opened up to the room for feedback on the aims, objectives and ordering. There was concern from some attendees that the environment consultation being last sent the wrong message. DfT clarified it was not in order of priority, highlighting the benefit of coming last in allowing more time to develop policy. There was some concern about the perceived link between supporting growth and tackling environmental impacts, rather than having environmental impacts as a justifiable aim on its own. There was a call to contextualise statistics being used and to balance the positive messages about aviation benefits with the negative impacts. This was important not to lose communities' trust. Many asked for ongoing engagement leading up to the consultation. DfT explained they were considering a series of roundtables on each area. Attendees asked for updated government forecasts which DfT confirmed would be coming soon. An inconsistency between the questions in the response document and response form was highlighted and there was a call to contextualise the statistics being used.

Areas which were raised by attendees as priorities included compensation, noise charges, compliance and enforcement, noise targets and land use planning.

DfT confirmed the strategy would be taken around the country and that the department has been working closely with the devolved administrations. Some asked if the timetable would slip, DfT explained no decisions had been made on this. There was a call from manufacturers to address night flights in the aviation strategy.

#### **Agenda item 5: Noise regulation**

Communities introduced the paper highlighting a lack of trust in the current self-regulatory environment and laying down their proposals to improve noise regulation. It was stressed that these proposals were aimed only at airports where the relationship between communities and the airport has broken down. Some attendees suggested that ICCAN could perform the role suggested in the communities' paper, and publish guidance around this initially and if this is not effective enforcement could be considered. There was a call from airports to be cautious around regulation as it could encourage conservative behaviours, highlighting voluntary actions in this area that have proved successful. Although much of the room agreed something might be beneficial if it built trust some felt it should be approached with caution. ACCs raised the point that issues/complaints relating to noise varied widely between airports, and that a one size fits all approach, based on the interests of the south east airports, would not be appropriate.

Communities explained they felt ICCAN would be ineffective in this role as its proposed remit is not as outlined in the paper and it does not have enforcement powers. There was a call not to purely focus on noise and see if compensation and investment in the neighbourhood could have an impact on quality of life. One attendee asked whether a strategy workshop could be used to pick this up, DfT confirmed that they would consider focussing one of the proposed workshops on regulation and sharing the benefits of growth. Land use planning was also highlighted as an issue and how more people living around the airport is being dealt with.

#### **Agenda item 6: PBN research**

Communities introduced the paper, proposing a study be commissioned into the effects of concentration on communities living under PBN flight paths. It was proposed it cover measurement methods, criteria and thresholds, measures on the number of aircraft and number of people affected, modelling tools, comparison of single vs multiple routes and options appraisal. It was asked that a study be sponsored by ANEG looking into this. DfT explained a lot of this overlapped with the strategy and explained ANEG does not have a budget

but agreed some cases did need to be looked at. One member suggested research councils. DfT suggested discussing research priorities at the next meeting.

**Action airports:** airports to consider sharing noise data on PBN routes

**Action manufacturers:** Ask research council about funding research around PBN

**Action Communities:** The author to submit further clarifications on the scope of the study and to be taken together with follow up information under Matters Arising at next meeting with minuted discussion

**PMN** – The author's draft scope of study reference *MFP 22.10.17* is attached