

**THE NOISE & TRACK MONITORING ADVISORY GROUP (NaTMAG) Thursday 6th August 2020
(virtual meeting)**

IN ATTENDANCE

Lee Howes (Chair)	Gatwick Airport Ltd - Airspace & Environmental Performance Manager
Kimberley Heather	Gatwick Airport Ltd – Airspace Office and Secretary to NaTMAG
Andy Sinclair	Gatwick Airport Ltd – Head of Airspace, Strategy and Engagement
Laura Boccadamo	Gatwick Airport Ltd - Noise Mgmt Initiative Engagement Manager
Daniel Kominak	Gatwick Airport Ltd – Airspace & Noise Programme Lead
Jannik Post	Gatwick Airport Ltd – Airspace Office
Goran Jovanovic	Gatwick Airport Ltd – Regulatory Lead
Brian Cox	Independent Technical Advisor to GATCOM
Mike George	GATCOM
Liz Kitchen	GATCOM
Matthew Balfour	GATCOM
Leon Hibbs	Reigate and Banstead Borough Council
Liz Lockwood	GATCOM
Alan Jones	GATCOM
Adam Dracott	Mid Sussex District Council
Caroline Salmon	GATCOM
Peter Barclay	GACC
Ian Greene	Department for Transport (DfT)
Jonathan Drew	Noise Management Board Executive Committee (NEX) Chair
Matt Hadden	NATS
Henry Game	Air Navigation Solutions (ANS)
Matthew Taylor	Air Navigation Solutions (ANS)

APOLOGIES

Robin Clarke	NATS
Jonathan Friel	Department for Transport (DfT)

MEETING SUMMARY

- Passenger numbers at the airport have declined in recent months as well as the number of air traffic movements due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The airport is now operating in a single terminal and 750 staff have left the business so far and further job losses are expected.
- Virgin Atlantic have ceased operations at Gatwick, however they have continued to hold onto their future slots which means they are not available at the present time for reallocation to other airlines. However, this does mean that the Boeing 747-400 Series aircraft has been withdrawn from Gatwick operations which is expected to bring a noise benefit.
easyJet are performing a few daily maintenance flights to keep the aircraft in service when the demand for flying returns.
NaTMAG members continue to receive representations from members of the public regarding aircraft joining the Instrument Landing system inside 8NM. The Chair of NaTMAG mentioned that instead of making general statements regarding such events, the public are encouraged to submit dates and times when they make a complaint so that the Airspace Office can conduct further

analysis regarding these non-compliances. An additional layer will be added to WebTrak¹ to allow the public to view the joining point zones on the map.

- An analysis of Slinfold overflights was presented as requested by correspondence received in November 2019 that overflight of the town has worsened. A comparison of aircraft departures between 2016 and 2019 showed typical altitudes each year between 4,000ft and 10,000ft. However, a concentration in departures in 2014 were noted due to the ADNID trial route, which is no longer in use. For arrivals, the altitudes were between 8,000ft and 15,000ft between 2014 and 2019, except for a few outliers at around 2,000ft which could be some westerly arrivals passing through the gate. As there is a similar picture of overflight each year, the claim that overflight has worsened cannot be supported.
- The noise contours for 2019 have reduced compared to the 2018 contours largely due to the gradual introduction of the A320 NEO and A321 NEO aircraft types which operate at Gatwick and have also contributed to a reduction in night noise. The 57dBA contour showed the lowest ever figures for Gatwick. The 54dBA also shrank by 11.3% since 2016. The report for 2019 includes for the first time two supplementary noise metrics: the N65 day and N60 night contours which will be considered as a metric to be included in future noise studies.
- Analysis of recent complaints highlighted that for Q1 2020, the largest number of complaints were located from the Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Langton Green locations, however the largest number of individual complainants resided in Horley and Crawley. During Q2 2020, the number of complaints recorded were much fewer than the previous quarter, the areas with the highest complaint numbers were in Reigate, Warnham and Bidborough. For individual complainants these were highest in Horsham and Horley. Military aircraft (A400) and general aviation aircraft (not originating from or destined to Gatwick) and easyJet maintenance flights have accounted for a large number of recent complaints.
- The Route 5 post-implementation review (PIR) took place in 2017 and data was collected by the Airspace Office during the 6 month monitoring period and then sent to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). A letter was sent to the CAA in April 2020 for an update on a decision regarding the Route 5 PIR but the CAA have yet to provide a response. They have asked for the data to be resubmitted.
- Gatwick met with the CAA on 15 January 2020 regarding the northern runway airspace change and no changes to the design of the airspace or routeings, but a small alteration to the runway datum was necessary. The project is a Level 0 airspace change (i.e. no consultation is required for the airspace as such), only a small change to the Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) is necessary. However, once the Development Consent Order (DCO) process is restarted in autumn 2020 there will be consultations and engagements to follow.
- Stage 1 of the 2018 Route 4 airspace change was completed. Engagement with local communities, airlines and industry members has been fulfilled. The preferred option selected was submitted to the CAA in March 2020. The CAA responded saying that a 'do nothing' option is not viable due to Route 4 currently in a temporary RNAV status and further analysis is required. A suitable traffic sample for analysis would be between 3-9 months to capture a decent period of strong north-westerly winds which often affect flights performing the 180° turn on Route 4. Alternatively, the baseline could be modelled on the 2016 monitoring period data. Gatwick Airport has committed to pursue the 2018 airspace change as a promise to local communities and it intends to continue until a solution has been reached.
- The 2012 Route 4 airspace change was deemed unsuccessful by the CAA and so the 2016 RNAV routes must be removed, as they do not replicate the original conventional routeings. Gatwick met with the CAA, NATS and ANS in July 2020, to discuss how to make the airspace changes to Route 4 implementable. There is a requirement to shorten the conventional routes so they can successfully join other RNAV routes in the upper airspace. Legal action against the CAA on the decisions on Route 4 have been taken by community noise groups. Options are planned to be delivered by February 2021. At the present time, it is difficult to determine how the aircraft trajectories look like after this change is implemented. It will be for individual airlines flying the

¹ <https://webtrak.emsbk.com/lgw2>

route to code route overlays into their Flight Management Systems (FMS), which is an unregulated process driven by aircraft navigation database suppliers.

- ANS presented an update on the overall go-around activities during 2020 compared with 2019. During 2019, 0.6% of arrivals performed a go-around. Of these, 47% of go-arounds were caused by the runway being occupied. Storms Ciara and Dennis earlier in the year caused a number of go-arounds. Data on go-arounds is captured by the ATC tower by ANS and the technical details are broken down and sent to Gatwick. FLOPSC frequently report on go-arounds. It was suggested that a glossary of go-around reasons and runway occupancy reasons could be produced by ANS to better understand the differences between reasons.
- The new Phase 3 development proposals to the NTK system work was prepared during March 2020, although the COVID-19 pandemic meant that many staff were furloughed and the funding for major projects was put on hold including this project. At the present time we cannot predict when the project can restart, however we hope it will be possible in 2021. Some smaller internal items could probably be fulfilled in the meantime.
- The DfT's Airspace and Noise Team have been temporarily redeployed to other projects due to the COVID-19 pandemic but a restart program is underway for September 2020. Airspace modernisation is still considered critical to complete. The CAA along with the DfT issued a joint statement in July 2020 regarding the urgency of pushing forward with airspace modernisation. There is an outstanding issue with the use of slots. This requires further engagement with airlines and other stakeholders, as the air industry is currently governed by European Union (EU) laws until the end of the year. The Airports Commission is due to report back in September 2020 which will give airports a clearer short term overview on slot allocations.
- The DfT consultation on night flights has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, however a new night flight regime needs to be published by October 2021. The current proposal is to rollover the current regime, however there needs to be an assessment carried out following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on air traffic movements.
- The Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise (ICCAN) published a paper on noise metrics² in July 2020 which suggested that the current noise metric used by airports uses average noise rather than specific noise events which is deemed a more accurate representation of noise levels experienced at a location. An alternative metric proposed is the N-above metric.
- A review of the criteria for granting dispensations for flights that have been delayed into the night period was suggested. The DfT are currently reviewing the criteria for dispensations and it was discussed as part of the previous night noise consultation, as it also applies to Heathrow and Stansted Airports. The Airspace Office, as part of the monitoring of night flights, routinely check the DfT criteria when there is potential for dispensation, as a result, two-thirds of potential dispensations are not approved.
- The Noise Management Board (NMB) commenced its second term at the beginning of 2020 and the Board is now split into three groups: the NMB Community Forum (NCF), the NMB Executive Board (NEX) and the NMB Delivery Group (NDG). The NMB has had to pause its activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The current plan is to continue these bilateral meetings virtually using teleconference apps. The NMB and Airspace joint public meeting is still planned to go ahead in December of this year. Two nominated community noise group representatives have been selected for the NCF and there will be nominations to choose the two Council candidates to for the NEX Board.
- It was noted that there is a current issue with the arrivals of AirBaltic A220 aircraft. This was suggested to be the result of the dragging of the landing gear (not confirmed) once it has been deployed leading to a delayed 'whale call' style of sound after the aircraft has passed at a distance from the monitor. The DfT have recognised that this is an issue not just at Gatwick but at other airports and some detailed investigation is required.
- A letter was received from CAGNE regarding the issue of additional noise generated from early deployment of aircraft landing gear. They referred to the Luton Airport Delayed Landing Gear Trial

² <https://iccan.gov.uk/iccan-review-aviation-noise-metrics-measurements/>

Report³ and it was suggested that as it would bring a noise benefit to people living near the ILS, then Gatwick should take the initiative and discuss this further at FLOPSC. It was suggested the NMB could pick this up at a later date or a national effort through Sustainable Aviation in a similar manner to the Low Noise Approach Metric currently being developed.

- The fixed noise monitoring terminal at Russ Hill (#101) has been temporarily out of use due to issues with the UK Power Networks supply line to it, although it will be reactivated in the near future. There are two other fixed noise monitoring terminals for RWY 26 departures nearby which continue to remain active to capture the same aircraft activity.
- NaTMAG member's views were sought on the ongoing requirement for, and benefits of, the automated telephone complaint line that had been introduced in 2018 as part of the Airspace Office improvement programme. Data was shared during the discussion that showed the phone line had only been used 7 times over the past quarter and was 2.2% of the overall numbers of complaints. The harsh economic reality of COVID-19 impacts would drive the need to focus reduced resources in the most efficient way and so the group should take a view on the necessity to maintain such a facility given its cost when set against the paucity of use. NaTMAG members felt there was a lack of awareness locally on the availability of a telephone noise complaint channel, causing infrequent usage, and so suggested the need for increased publicity. It was also suggested that the removal of the phone line would disadvantage people with some disabilities or those who did not have internet access. It was offered by members that probably the best way to increase visibility was for locally elected and community members to assist with promoting the phone line.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

- The group noted of the passing of Councillor Ken Harwood in March 2020 who was a well-respected member of Tandridge District Council representing Felbridge for 16 years and contributed a great deal to GATCOM and NaTMAG. Our condolences go out to his family and friends.
- Douglas Moule has stepped down from his role in Flight Operations at easyJet and therefore will no longer be attending NaTMAG. The group thanked him for all his contributions over the years both from an easyJet and an airline perspective and also in his previous role on the Gatwick Airline Operators Committee.
- Two new members of the Airspace Office recently joined the team in March 2020 – Jannik Post and Laura Boccadamo. They were welcomed to the group.
- Jonathan Drew was also welcomed as the Chair of the Noise Management Board Executive Committee (NEX).

GATWICK AIRPORT LTD BUSINESS UPDATE

- Adrian Witherow (Chief Operating Officer) and Jonathan Pollard (Chief Commercial Officer) have recently taken on new executive roles at Gatwick Airport.
- A graph on passenger throughput was presented which illustrated 2019 and 2020 passenger number levels showing an overview of each year; both pre-COVID-19 pandemic and during the pandemic. It was clear that passenger numbers are severely reduced in 2020 compared with 2019. More departures have been in operation than arrivals mainly due to the demand for travel abroad during the summer season. Gatwick Airport is not expecting traffic levels to recover quickly. The Government is managing the corridors of air travel to meet demand.
- Virgin Atlantic have recently ceased operations at Gatwick Airport. However, they have maintained some of their slots for a return in the future when traffic levels pick up. This has been criticised by other airlines hoping to utilise these slots more effectively. The Department of Transport were monitoring this but could provide no update. It was noted that many airlines are leaving it as late as possible to make a decision on whether to remain or cease operations at certain airports. British

³ <https://www.london-luton.co.uk/LondonLuton/files/ef/ef9e85e0-416e-444a-8683-640355dba7a4.pdf>

Airways have continued with their long-haul operations with a proposal to resume short haul flights soon.

- With Virgin Atlantic withdrawing its operations (they had 3,535 total movements in 2019), the use of the Boeing 747-400 Series aircraft will also be withdrawn as the only regular operator of the aircraft at the airport. British Airways have also withdrawn the B747 at Heathrow Airport which also regularly routed around Gatwick airspace. Overall, it is expected that this will have a positive impact on the noise levels in the vicinity of Gatwick Airport.
- At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic there were a number of repatriation flights, which were used to return stranded British citizens from abroad. The aircraft used in these repatriation flights were often wet-leased and in some circumstances, older aircraft types which were noisier and were operated by pilots who did not have extensive knowledge of United Kingdom / Gatwick noise abatement procedures such as Continuous Descent Operations (CDO).
- In addition to repatriation flights, the quieter 'lockdown' period has meant that many aircraft were grounded at the airport and therefore required routine maintenance flights in order to keep the aircraft fit for flying commercially. In particular, easyJet are performing a number of short maintenance circuit flights around the airport vicinity to maintain the engines of the aircraft.
- Operations at the airport have reduced to a single terminal, with only the North Terminal currently in operation.
- Gatwick Airport has already offered two voluntary severance schemes to its staff, which was also announced at GATCOM. In total, 750 staff left the business with a further scheme planned to be offered in the next few weeks.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF NaTMAG

- It was noted that the Environmental Noise Directive (END) Noise Action Plan (NAP) was still not showing as a standing item on the agenda.
- **Action 06/2020** – Add END NAP as a standing item to the agenda.

ACTION TRACKER

Action	Comments
01/2019 Airspace Office to engage with Sustainability Team and the Chief Planning Officer to highlight the issues surrounding odour complaints and air quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open – Ricardo AEA were commissioned by Gatwick to conduct an assessment of air quality to allow mapping and measurements of odour with a report due once the research is complete. The latest update from Ricardo AEA is that they have experienced a delay in the project due to the COVID-19 pandemic. An update will be provided at the next meeting.
13/2019 ANS to give an update on go-arounds at the next meeting. Also to be added as an agenda item.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed – ANS were present at the meeting and gave an update under agenda item 8.
15/2019 Airspace Office to liaise with NATS to monitor aircraft joining inside 8NM to determine any trends or causal factors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open – NATS were present at the meeting. There are alleged discrepancies between Gatwick and NATS data which requires further investigation. NATS have had reports from the local community on this issue and it has also been raised at FLOPSC. NATS receive data from the Airspace Office on a monthly basis. NATS have agreed to update at the next meeting.
17/2019 Airspace Office to conduct gate analysis of overflight of Slinfold.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed – Some graphs and maps of the past and present aircraft activity were presented to the group and the presentation will be circulated.

Action	Comments
01/2020 Airspace Office to share the 2019 END NAP Annual Report with NaTMAG for feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open – The END NAP for 2019 has been drafted, however, it is still needed to have relevant aspects of the CAA 2019 Noise Exposure Contour Report (which had only been received in the preceding days) incorporated. Once completed and approved internally the report would be circulated and added as an agenda item for the next meeting.
02/2020 Airspace Office to liaise with Airside Compliance to enquire if they are able to provide a more detailed Ground Noise Report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed – The Airspace Office enquired about this action, however Airside Compliance have declined due to personnel leaving the business under the severance schemes due to COVID-19 and as such have to focus their resources in the most optimal manner so it would not be possible at the present time.
04/2020 Airspace Office to circulate Airspace Office Annual Report 2019 for feedback when available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closed – This report was circulated with the NaTMAG papers.
05/2020 NATS to investigate why core night CDO performance has decreased in recent months.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open – NATS commented that core night CDO performance has increased in July 2020 to 88.89% from 75.32% in January 2020. This action will remain open to monitor if this trend will continue.

MATTERS ARISING

The following section is used to discuss matters of interest raised by NaTMAG members in the pre-meeting notes or raised by Gatwick Airport.

ILS JOINING POINT

- It was noted that there needs to be evidence provided in the event of a persistent complaint to NaTMAG members from a member of the public about the number of aircraft joining the Instrument Landing System (ILS) inside 8NM (nautical miles). These complaints are general in nature and it was mentioned that specific dates and times need to be provided; then the Airspace Office can cross check this against the Noise and Track Keeping (NTK) system so that it can be determined if a flight was compliant. Members noted that a complaint was received from the same individual who complained about a night flight during June 2020 which was the only night flight to have taken place, only to find that it joined within the 10NM swathe. It was suggested that the Gatwick noise complaint system would be a useful way to record instances of non-compliance experienced by the public. Also proposed was the introduction of an additional layer of the 8-14NM joining point lines either side of the airport so that the public can check whether an aircraft was compliant. It was noted that this will be a key message to FLOPSC and the NMB that there is increasing public interest in this issue.
- **Action 07/2020** – Add 8-14NM joining point indicators to WebTrak as a new layer.

SLINFOLD ANALYSIS

- There is an outstanding request for gate analysis to be undertaken in response to the complaint that overflight of Slinfold has worsened. This was recorded in the November 2019 NaTMAG minutes.
- A number of graphs were presented with maps explaining where the Slinfold 'gate' had been set up to capture flights passing over the town. The town can experience westerly departures utilising the Route 7 and Route 8 departure routes and also arriving aircraft which are heading in a south-

east direction from the north towards the holding stacks. The arrivals are at a higher altitude than the departures.

- The graphs represented a typical summer days' worth of arrivals and departures over the period 2014 to 2019. Departures showed a similar picture each year with similar altitudes (between 4,000ft and 10,000ft). However, it was noted that there was more of a concentration in departures in 2014 due to the ADNID trial route, which is no longer in use. For arrivals, the altitudes were similar for each of the years (between 8,000ft and 15,000ft) except for a few outliers at around 2,000ft. These could be westerly arrivals joining the ILS.
- As a result of this analysis, it was concluded that each year had a similar picture for the altitudes of arrivals and departures (except for departures due to ADNID in 2014) and therefore we cannot support the claim that overflight has worsened over the town.
- It was suggested that the analysis that was presented and analysed at NaTMAG should be a key message to GATCOM, FLOPSC and the NMB that this has been investigated.

NOISE CONTOURS 2019

- The noise exposure contour report for 2019 by the Environmental Research and Consultancy Department (ERCD) of the CAA was delivered to the airport this week. 2019 was one of the busiest years for air traffic movements. The noise footprint has reduced compared to the 2018 contours largely due to the introduction of the A320 NEO and A321 NEO aircraft types which operate at Gatwick, a factor which also contributed to a reduction in the night noise contour. The standard metric for measuring average noise impact, the 57dBA contour, had reduced to 38.7km² encapsulating 2,550 local residents within it; this was the smallest on record for the airport and in its busiest year.
- The new nationally recognised standard measurement (54dBA Leq contour area) reduced from 77.1km² in 2018 to 74km² in 2019. Cumulatively, since 2016, the standard 54dBA Leq contour shrank by 14.5%, with 1,250 people being taken out of that noise footprint.
- The report for 2019 includes for the first time two supplementary noise metrics: the N65 day and N60 night contours. These two metrics show the number of noise events above a particular threshold (rather than a sound level averaged over time) which gives a more accurate picture of the noise level experienced in a particular location. Historical N-above data is not available as it has not previously been recorded, but this report could be the beginning of a data set for the future. It was noted that the Airports Commission previously used N60 and N65 metrics, so that could be a credible historic data source.
- The 2019 contour report was issued to Gatwick Airport this week so would be circulated to NaTMAG members at the earliest opportunity.
- **Action 08/2020** – Circulate the 2019 ERCD noise contour report when it is available.
- It was proposed that the news that the 2019 contour has shrunk compared to the previous year be a key message to GATCOM, FLOPSC and the NMB.
- The removal of the Boeing 747-400 Series aircraft as a result of Virgin Atlantic withdrawing its operations from Gatwick is expected to have a positive effect on the contours for the future. It is also encouraging to see that airlines are investing in newer aircraft types as charges for older aircraft to use the airport are a lot higher than for newer types.
- A letter was referenced regarding Gatwick's CEO explaining that the current situation with the COVID-19 pandemic meant that the airport would close during the night period and reduce its operations to a single terminal. However, since night flights have been resuming and Gatwick is returning to a 24-hour airport operation there has been no follow up notification to inform local people that this is the case and so there are more complaints being generated. It was questioned if the airport needed to still operate at night due to its low number of operations. This issue was also addressed at GATCOM who followed up with some of the airlines. Airlines request night slots due to the timing of arrival at destination airports which are not open during the night. Gatwick will be a part of the DfT night flight consultation which the DfT expects will commence by the end of the year. This is to be a key message to GATCOM, the NMB and FLOPSC.

NOISE COMPLAINTS ANALYSIS

- Charts were presented to the group illustrating the total number of complaints and individual complainants for Quarters One and Two of 2020 broken down into towns and villages. It showed that for the first quarter of 2020, the locations with the largest number of total complaints were in Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Langton Green, however the largest number of individual complainants resided in Horley and Crawley. During quarter two of 2020, the number of complaints recorded were much fewer than the previous quarter, and the locations with the largest number of total complaints were in Reigate, Warnham and Bidborough. The areas with the greatest number of individual complainants were in Horsham and Horley. In addition to the graphs, a couple of heat maps were shown as a more visual representation of the locations with the most complaints received. It was agreed to share the presentation on complaints after the meeting.
- **Action 09/2020** – Airspace Office to circulate the complaints presentation post-meeting.
- It was noted that in recent months due to the COVID-19 pandemic there have been a number of maintenance flights operated by easyJet that have made a circuit flight to the south of the airport and returning to the airport close to Horsham where the Airspace Office have recorded a number of new complainants making complaints about these flights. In addition, there have been a number of complaints received regarding military flights and also light general aviation aircraft commonly originating from other local airfields such as Biggin Hill and Fairoaks Airport.
- There seems to be a number of people taking to Twitter⁴ to voice their complaints against the airport and night flights. As the airspace in the south-east is quieter, any aircraft activity is more likely to be noticed (termed 'outliers') and this generates more complaints.
- A recent webinar was referenced which was hosted by ANIMA which brought together different European airports to discuss worldwide issues of aircraft noise. The webinar included some discussion on plans for post-COVID-19 pandemic recovery to the air industry. The majority of issues that were discussed are already being addressed by Gatwick Airport, so it could be used as a positive example. It was agreed that webinars are a useful way of sharing best practice between airports.

AIRSPACE UPDATE

ROUTE 5

- The Route 5 Post Implementation Review (PIR) took place in 2017 when data was collected by the Airspace Office during the 6-month monitoring period and then submitted to the CAA to support the PIR evaluation. A request was sent to the CAA in April 2020 for an update on progress on the decision regarding the Route 5 PIR but the CAA has not provided a response due to a backlog of airspace change projects and lack of resources. The CAA has requested that the Route 5 PIR data to be resubmitted for evaluation.

NORTHERN RUNWAY AIRSPACE CHANGE

- Gatwick met with the CAA on 15 January 2020 to initiate the airspace change process for the Northern runway project airspace change proposal. Although the northern runway project airspace design would be the same as it is today, dual runway operations would require minor modifications to the airport's Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP). The CAA published its decision on the northern runway ACP in July 2020 categorising the project a Level 0 airspace change 'notification only', meaning there is no requirement for consultation on airspace change modifications as the routes flown are unchanged. The DCO, which it was hoped would restart in autumn 2020, would include all the required aspects of environmental impact assessment. It was expected that there would be public consultations in support of the DCO in 2021.

⁴ <https://twitter.com/>

ROUTE 4 – 2018 AIRSPACE CHANGE

- At the Stage 2 Develop and Assess Gateway meeting in March the CAA was not satisfied that the existing pattern of traffic - using the temporary RNAV routes - provided an adequate baseline/'do nothing' option against which to assess the proposed route options developed during stage 2 through engagement with local stakeholders. The options for a suitable baseline involve modelling previous distributions of traffic based on more up-to-date aircraft and ATC performance or to await the implementation of the Route 4 2012 ACP PIR solution and take a suitable traffic sample over an agreed period of time; this in itself may present a challenge as traffic levels were significantly reduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Gatwick is considering how to address the issues raised by the CAA. Given the delay to the process and the impact of COVID-19, Gatwick's plans for progressing this ACP will be significantly delayed.
- The question was asked whether it is still viable to proceed with the 2018 airspace change as due to the proposals put forward under the auspices of the Future Airspace Strategy Implementation – South (FASI-S) will mean that the airspace may be altered again in a few years' time. Gatwick had committed to pursue the Route 4 2018 airspace change until a solution has been achieved.

ROUTE 4 – 2012 AIRSPACE CHANGE

- The CAA requires Gatwick to remove the temporary Route 4 satellite-based departure routes – RNAV-1 Standard Instrument Departures (SIDs) - that were introduced on 26 May 2016. Gatwick has developed a plan with NATS and ANSL for the safe withdrawal of the temporary Route 4 RNAV-1 SIDs taking into account the complexities of reverting from a modern to legacy route structure (a reversion never previously undertaken in the UK). Once these RNAV-1 SIDs are removed airlines will continue to fly Route 4 departures with the track over the ground guided by a satellite-based coded overlay of the currently published conventional SIDs. Due to the fact that coded overlays fall outside of the regulated process, it is not possible to predict the variations in aircraft track that may result.
- Gatwick met with the CAA, NATS and ANS twice in July 2020 to discuss the plan for the removal of the Route 4 RNAV-1 SIDs and the complementary requirement to shorten the conventional routes so they can successfully integrate with the RNAV route structure in the London airspace. It was expected that implementation would be completed by February 2021 but it was heavily reliant upon NATS and ANS to complete safety, and operational and system integration activity. The CAA had yet agreed to the plan however given the limited time available - even with a February 2021 implementation - activity had been commenced in order to achieve the proposed timeline, including a period of testing by NATS with Eurocontrol.

ROUTE 4 – PERFORMANCE

- It was noted that recently aircraft appeared to be climbing higher more quickly on departure from the airport. All aircraft would follow the route as designed and published unless instructed by an air traffic controller who is able to vector an aircraft onto a more direct routing if there were no conflicts in the airspace. This had been the case on Route 4 in recent months where aircraft had been vectored north towards London by ATC due to fewer aircraft operating from Heathrow Airport and therefore there were fewer restrictions and air traffic conflicts. It was agreed that dispersal of air traffic during quieter periods was a positive outcome, however, the Airspace Office had noticed an increase in complaints from areas to the north of Route 4.
- An altitude map of recent Route 4 activity at the beginning of July 2020 was presented to the group and a comparison altitude map of the same period in 2019 was shown. It illustrated that in July 2019, the Route 4 180° turn altitude band was typically between 3,000ft and 5,000ft. The 2020 map showed far fewer aircraft tracks, however the altitude band on the turn was higher between 5,000ft to 7,000ft with a lot of dispersal to the north of the Route. It was suggested by members that although there would likely be some complaints from areas not usually overflown, communities have been campaigning for dispersal of aircraft tracks and for options to achieve greater altitudes in the climb so this was a positive outcome.

GO-AROUNDS UPDATE (ANS)

- ANS presented an update on the overall go-around activities during 2020 compared with 2019. A go-around is a missed approach that is instructed to be performed by either the flight crew or the Air Traffic Controller, it is a safety procedure. During 2019, 0.6% of arrivals performed a go-around. This equates to 5.7 per 1,000 arrivals per month performing go-arounds. Of these, 47% of go-arounds were caused by the runway being occupied.
- During the first quarter of 2020, there were two major storms (Ciara and Dennis) which caused a large number of go-arounds; 54 were recorded in one day in February due to weather and unstable approaches.
- During the summer months, it is likely that there will be more go-arounds due to the increase in air traffic movements and a more congested airspace. However, there can be spikes during the winter months if there is localised storm activity.
- Data on go-arounds is captured by the ATC tower by ANS and the technical details are broken down and sent to Gatwick. This detail includes reasons for runway occupancy. It is important to capture as much data as possible. Regular briefings with NATS and Gatwick take place on speed control of aircraft which is recognised by the tower as one of the reasons why a go-around may occur if an aircraft is too fast on approach.
- FLOPSC frequently report on go-arounds and recognise that the main runway is a high intensity runway and there is a requirement to reduce as much as possible the number of aircraft occupying the runway longer than necessary. There is a standardised procedure for go-arounds for each runway direction, although the controllers can deviate from these procedures for safety reasons.
- The difference between windshear and weather as reasons for go-arounds was questioned. Some departures refuse to depart due to windshear on the runway and some report instances of poor weather along their departure route which prevents them from departing the runway on time. ATC misjudge was also explained in that sometimes the controller can misjudge the speed and distance of an arriving aircraft and therefore line up an aircraft for departure. Then the gap closes forcing the arrival to go-around. COVID-19 was also questioned as a reason and it was confirmed that some pilots were absent from flying for a number of months due to the COVID-19 pandemic and unable to recall fully the correct procedures for arrival. It was suggested that a glossary of go-around reasons and runway occupancy reasons could be produced by ANS to better understand the differences between reasons.
- **Action 10/2020** – ANS to produce glossary on go-around and runway occupancy reasons.
- The load factors of aircraft have also reduced in recent months due to fewer people flying on aircraft and therefore this affects the speed of aircraft on approach and may lead to more go-arounds.

NTK PHASE 3 UPDATE

- During the February 2020 NaTMAG meeting, the feedback was presented on what the new Phase 3 development proposals to the NTK system would entail. Work on this was prepared during March 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic meant that many staff were furloughed and the funding for major projects was put on hold including the NTK Phase 3 project. At the present time we cannot predict when the project can restart, however we hope that it will be possible in 2021.
- Some smaller internal items could probably be fulfilled in the meantime such as adding layers to WebTrak⁵, improving glossary terms and categorisation of complaints. The display of ILS joining point lines can be completed internally so the public can observe actual joining points of flights.

DFT UPDATE

- The DfT's Airspace and Noise Team have been temporarily redeployed to other projects due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One of these projects is a restart program to bring back the focus on aviation environmental and noise issues in September 2020.

⁵ <https://webtrak.emsbk.com/lgw2>

- The Aviation 2050: The Future of Aviation⁶ strategy green paper published in December 2018 is currently awaiting a decision on how to take this forward.
- Airspace modernisation is still considered critical to complete. The CAA along with the DfT issued a joint statement in July 2020 regarding the urgency of pushing forward with airspace modernisation. As a result of this, the Master Plan is due to be restarted in autumn 2020. Both the DfT and the CAA mostly agreed on the statements, though there is an outstanding issue with the use of slots. This requires further engagement with airlines and other stakeholders, as long as the air industry is governed by European Union (EU) laws. This will inevitably change when the UK withdraws from the EU at the end of the year. Until this time, there are limits on what can be changed. The Airports Commission is due to report back in September 2020 which will give airports a clearer short term overview on slot allocations.
- The DfT consultation on night flights has been delayed since March 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and a new proposed date for restarting this is October 2020. This will involve a two-stage consultation to determine the need, purpose and monitoring abilities of the night flight regime which is due to end in 2022. A new night flight regime needs to be published by October 2021. The current proposal is to rollover the current regime, however there needs to be an assessment carried out following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on air traffic movements.
- ICCAN published a paper on noise metrics in July 2020 which suggested that the current noise metric used by airports uses average noise rather than specific noise events which is deemed a more accurate representation of noise levels experienced at a location. An alternative metric proposed is the N-above metric.
- Referring to the pre-meet notes, it was suggested that there needs to be a review of the criteria for granting dispensations for flights that have been delayed into the night period. There was a particular concern on the weather reason for delay; the group contended that weather is not a viable reason to apply for dispensation. The DfT are currently reviewing the criteria for dispensations and it was discussed as part of the previous night noise consultation, as it also applies to Heathrow and Stansted Airports. It is for the DfT to challenge any dispensation which does not fit the conditions, however it is ultimately for the individual airport to decide which flights to apply for dispensation. The Airspace Office, as part of the monitoring of night flights, routinely check the DfT criteria when there is potential for dispensation and when using the netting process for dispensation, two-thirds of potential dispensations do not meet these criteria and are therefore not approved.

NOISE MANAGEMENT BOARD (NMB) UPDATE

- The NMB commenced its second term at the beginning of 2020 and the Board is now split into three groups: the NMB Community Forum (NCF), the NMB Executive Board (NEX) and the NMB Delivery Group (NDG). Bilateral meetings, also titled 'NMB surgeries', between the Chairs of each group and community noise groups took place in January 2020. Since then, the NMB has had to pause its activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic and it was difficult to predict when it could restart its workplan. The current plan is to continue these bilateral meetings virtually using teleconference apps.
- The NMB and Airspace joint public meeting is still planned to go ahead in December of this year, although plans for how this can be delivered virtually are still ongoing. It was noted that local communities and industry members were becoming frustrated with the delay to the NMB work plan activities. The challenge for the NMB in the coming months is to focus less on process and drive forward improvements in noise management performance.
- The question was asked whether the membership had been organised for the NCF with the Chair and it was confirmed that two nominated community noise group representatives had been selected. As part of the restart process, there will be nominations to choose the two Council candidates to sit on the NEX Board.

⁶ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/769695/aviation-2050-web.pdf

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- It was noted that there is a current issue with the arrivals of AirBaltic aircraft experienced over the town of Lingfield where an additional noise event has been recorded by the Lingfield noise monitor. This was suggested to be the result of the dragging of the landing gear once it has been deployed leading to a delayed 'whale call' style of sound after the aircraft has passed at a distance from the monitor. AirBaltic only operate Airbus A220-200 aircraft at Gatwick Airport and it is not an issue previously brought to the attention of the Airspace Office. The DfT have recognised that this is an issue not just at Gatwick but other airports have also experienced problems saying it is similar to the Airbus A320 'whine' but have only just been made aware of this so some detailed investigation is required. Post-meeting note: The CAA have agreed to share their initial thoughts on this and further conclusions from investigations will also be passed to NaTMAG.
- GACC recently sent a letter to the CEO of Gatwick Airport and the Chair of the NEX Board in June 2020, however no response was received. It was stated that whilst many of the issues were raised and generally discussed as part of the broader discussion on COVID-19 impacts at the GATCOM Steering Group on 25 June, and also raised and covered to some extent at the GATCOM meeting in July, there was a lack of clarity in the response and no clear record of the discussion in available meeting notes. It was agreed that this letter be shared with NaTMAG members and a GAL response would be formalised as soon as possible.
- **Action 11/2020:** Airspace Office to circulate the GACC letter to the CEO of Gatwick Airport.
- Referring to the pre-meet notes, a letter was received from CAGNE regarding the issue of additional noise generated from early deployment of aircraft landing gear. CAGNE referred to the Luton Airport Delayed Landing Gear Trial Report⁷ on this subject and suggested that as it would bring a noise benefit to people living near the ILS, then Gatwick should take the initiative and discuss this further at FLOPSC. The Landing Gear Deployment work forms part of Sustainable Aviation's work programme to which Gatwick contributes through leading some elements of the programme and the Luton report has previously been shared with the NMB. During the NCF meeting on 26 February, it had been explained that a project on landing gear deployment would form part of the workplan moving forward. The report was then discussed and shared with the Noise Delivery Group at their most recent meeting on 11 March, prior to the pause of the NMB due to the coronavirus. The formulation, testing and deployment of such procedures is not 'easy' and it is critical for work of this nature to be technically robust and draw in support from across the industry, hence the benefits of working in partnership with Sustainable Aviation as part of a pan-industry work plan.
- It was announced that the fixed noise monitoring terminal at Russ Hill (#101) has been temporarily out of use, although it will be reactivated in the near future. There are two other fixed noise monitoring terminals nearby which will remain active to capture the same aircraft activity.
- NaTMAG member's views were sought on the ongoing requirement for, and benefits of, the automated telephone complaint line that had been introduced in 2018 as part of the Airspace Office improvement programme. Data was shared during the discussion that showed the phone line had only been used 7 times over the past quarter and was 2.2% of the overall numbers of complaints. The harsh economic reality of COVID-19 impacts would drive the need to focus reduced resources in the most efficient way and so the group should take a view on the necessity to maintain such a facility given its cost when set against the paucity of use. NaTMAG members felt there was a lack of awareness locally on the availability of a telephone noise complaint channel, causing infrequent usage, and so suggested the need for increased publicity. It was also suggested that the removal of the phone line would disadvantage people with some disabilities or those who did not have internet access. It was offered by members that probably the best way to increase visibility was for locally elected and community members to assist with promoting the phone line. Post-meeting note: Regrettably, persons unknown have leaked this information to a noise protest group resulting in social media activity 'sensationalising' this discussion.

⁷ <https://www.london-luton.co.uk/LondonLuton/files/ef/ef9e85e0-416e-444a-8683-640355dba7a4.pdf>

KEY MESSAGES

Key Messages to GATCOM:

- Analysis of the overflight of Slinfold was presented to the group which showed how the overflight of Slinfold has remained rather the same over the years (not including during the ADNID trial in 2014).
- The 2019 ERCD noise contour report has shown a reduction in the area of the 54dBA and 57dBA actual and standard contours as well as the number of people residing in the contours. The figures for the 57dBA contour are the lowest ever for Gatwick Airport.
- The DfT is to begin its consultation on the new night flight regime for 2022 at the end of the year. Gatwick will engage with the DfT to maintain its night flight quota.

Key Messages to FLOPSC:

- NATS are investigating the discrepancy of the data between NATS and Gatwick Airport on the number of joins inside 8NM. There is an increasing public interest regarding this issue.
- Analysis of the overflight of Slinfold was presented to the group which showed how the overflight of Slinfold has remained rather the same over the years (not including during the ADNID trial in 2014).
- The 2019 ERCD noise contour report has shown a reduction in the area of the 54dBA and 57dBA actual and standard contours as well as the number of people residing in the contours. The figures for the 57dBA contour are the lowest ever for Gatwick Airport.
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Key Messages to NMB:

- NATS are investigating the discrepancy of the data between NATS and Gatwick Airport on the number of joins inside 8NM. There is an increasing public interest regarding this issue.
- Analysis of the overflight of Slinfold was presented to the group which showed how the overflight of Slinfold has remained rather the same over the years (not including during the ADNID trial in 2014).
- The 2019 ERCD noise contour report has shown a reduction in the area of the 54dBA and 57dBA actual and standard contours as well as the number of people residing in the contours. The figures for the 57dBA contour are the lowest ever for Gatwick Airport.
- The DfT is to begin its consultation on the new night flight regime for 2022 at the end of the year. Gatwick will engage with the DfT to maintain its night flight quota.

DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

FLOPSC – Wednesday 19 August, via Zoom teleconference.

GNMG – TBC

NaTMAG – Thursday 5 November 2020 10am, location TBC.

ANNEX A: ACTION SUMMARY

Action No/Year	Action/Decision/Next Step	Raised	Responsible	Plan date	Actual date	Status	Comments: Updated August 2020
01/2019	Airspace Office to engage with Sustainability Team and the Chief Planning Officer to highlight the issues surrounding odour complaints and air quality.	Feb 2019	AO	May 2019		OPEN	Ricardo AEA were commissioned by Gatwick to conduct an assessment of air quality to allow mapping and measurements of odour with a report due once the research is complete. The latest update from Ricardo AEA is that they have experienced a delay in the project due to the COVID-19 pandemic. An update will be provided at the next meeting.
13/2019	ANS to give an update on go-arounds at the next meeting. Also to be added as an agenda item.	Aug 2019	ANS	Nov 2019	Aug 2020	CLOSED	ANS were present at the meeting and gave an update under agenda item 8.
15/2019	Airspace Office to liaise with NATS to monitor aircraft joining inside 8NM to determine any trends or causal factors.	Aug 2019	AO/NATS	Nov 2019		OPEN	NATS were present at the meeting. There are alleged discrepancies between Gatwick and NATS data which requires further investigation. NATS have had reports from the local community on this issue and it has also been raised at FLOPSC. NATS receive data from the Airspace Office on a monthly basis. NATS have agreed to update at the next meeting.
17/2019	Airspace Office to conduct gate analysis of overflight of Slinfold.	Nov 2019	AO	Feb 2019	Aug 2020	CLOSED	Some graphs and maps of the past and present aircraft activity were presented to the group and the presentation will be circulated.

Action No/Year	Action/Decision/Next Step	Raised	Responsible	Plan date	Actual date	Status	Comments: Updated August 2020
01/2020	Airspace Office to share the 2019 END NAP Annual Report with NaTMAG for feedback.	Feb 2020	AO	May 2020		OPEN	The END NAP for 2019 has been drafted, however, it is still needed to have relevant aspects of the CAA 2019 Noise Exposure Contour Report (which had only been received in the preceding days) incorporated. Once completed and approved internally the report would be circulated and added as an agenda item for the next meeting.
05/2020	NATS to investigate why core night CDO performance has decreased in recent months.	Feb 2020	NATS	May 2020		OPEN	
06/2020	Add END NAP as a standing item to the agenda.	Aug 2020	AO	Nov 2020	Nov 2020	CLOSED	Added to the November meeting agenda.
07/2020	Add 8-14NM joining point indicators to WebTrak as a new layer.	Aug 2020	AO	Nov 2020		OPEN	
08/2020	Circulate the 2019 ERCD noise contour report when it is available.	Aug 2020	AO	Nov 2020		OPEN	
10/2020	ANS to produce glossary on go-around and runway occupancy reasons.	Aug 2020	ANS	Nov 2020		OPEN	
11/2020	Airspace Office to circulate the GACC letter to the CEO of Gatwick Airport.	Aug 2020	AO	Nov 2020	Aug 2020	CLOSED	Circulated after the August NaTMAG meeting.

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