Directorate of Airspace Policy

All NATMAC Representatives

1 August 2011

CAA DECISION LETTER

Dear Colleagues,

DVR/LYDD DL4 AIRSPACE CHANGE PROPOSAL

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Information Notice 2011/61 dated 30 June 2011 advised that NATS had submitted an Airspace Change Proposal (ACP) for changes to the ATS route structure within existing controlled airspace over the English Channel and within the La Manche areas of delegation of ATS (over the English Channel and French mainland). Upon receipt of the proposal, my staff undertook a detailed analysis of the operational requirements, the environmental assessments and the consultation process. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with an overview of the proposal and my subsequent decision on it.

2 PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

2.1 This change revises the route structure in NATS Sector 17 and systemizes and improves delivery of traffic from Paris and Reims ACCs by introducing a 3-route structure through ALESO, KUNAV and SUBIP (see Attachment)[1], as opposed to the current 2-route structure via ALESO and GURLU (as shown in the consultation document). The operational objective was to reduce complexity of air traffic interactions in Sector 17; the change was also forecast to produce a capacity increase of 10% in Sector 17. There is no change to existing controlled airspace with the majority of changes to routes being over the sea or over the French mainland. There is a slight extension to the volume of delegated ATS from France to UK.

3 STATUTORY DUTIES

3.1 My statutory duties are set out in Section 70 of the Transport Act 2000 (the Act), the CAA (Air Navigation) Directions 2001, as varied in 2004 (the Directions), and Guidance to the CAA on Environmental Objectives relating to the exercise of its air navigation functions.[2]

[1] Since consultation, route designators and 5LNCs have changed to the operational names; see last page for details.
[2] Issued in 2002 by the DfT (then called the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions) (the Guidance).

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3.2 Safety

3.2.1 My primary duty is to maintain a high standard of safety in the provision of air traffic services and this takes primacy over all other duties.[3] In this respect, I am content that the proposed airspace design is appropriate for the intended use.

3.3 Airspace Efficiency

3.3.1 I am required to secure the most efficient use of the airspace consistent with the safe operation of aircraft and the expeditious flow of air traffic.[4] All traffic presented from Paris and Reims ACCs to LAC will be vertically separated against other traffic on transfer to LAC, although with radar monitoring, traffic on the outer routes of UM 733 (at SOSUN) and UT 420 (at ABNUR) can be at the same level on transfer. After transfer from French ACCs to LAC, vertical separation between traffic will continue to be required until appropriate radar separation (5nms) can be maintained.

3.4 Airspace Users

3.4.1 I am required to satisfy the requirements of operators and owners of all classes of aircraft.[5] The Sponsor conducted extensive consultation with all affected stakeholder aviation groups as part of the design process. There is no change to existing controlled airspace.

3.4.2 Due to operational issues with Paris ACC, a number of minor changes were required following NATMAC consultation. The majority of changes were on the French side of the FIR Bdy[6]; the minor changes on the UK side of the FIR Bdy are:

- (U)T427 (became (U)T421) was straightened out between KESAX-KUNAV-BIG (no longer via BEXIL).

- As the intended route for Solent arrivals from ABUSE (now KESAX) -GUBSU south of the FIR Bdy was withdrawn, a revised link route from KUNAV-WAFFU replaced this link route; Solent arrivals now route to WAFFU via (U)T421/Y8 or UM 733/M8. (NB: the segment PARKY (now SUBIP)-WAFFU was renamed M8).

- For the same reason as above, the Stansted and Luton LOREL 3Q STAR commences at BANVA with traffic routeing to this point either via (U)T421/Y8 or UM 733 (this avoids the need for an extra LOREL STAR).

- For flight plan connectivity, upper routes were also added above M8 and Y8.

These minor operational changes following consultation do not affect existing controlled airspace, and therefore we were satisfied that these changes did not require further consultation.

3.5 Interests of Other Parties

3.5.1 I am required to take account of the interests of any person (other than an owner or operator of an aircraft) in relation to the use of any particular airspace or the use of airspace generally. There is no change to existing controlled airspace in this proposal. Within the existing controlled airspace overland, the existing route (U)M 733 has been replaced with (U)T421, although the route alignment is displaced at the coast by approximately 2 nms to

[3] Transport Act 2000, Section 70(1).
[4] Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(a).
[5] Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(b).
[6] For completeness, changes made on the French side of the FIR Bdy after consultation are annotated on the last page..

the east. However, this displacement reduces to zero, as the route converges to the existing navigational aid at BIG VOR. Moreover, the lowest available level of this route is now defined as FL 160. Whilst there will be some over-flights using this route, NATS has advised that the dispersion of traffic above the High Weald AONB (which the existing route (U)M 733 currently flies over) will be unchanged as current practice is to vector traffic across the entire width of the AONB to establish appropriate separation. The revised routes structure systemises flight planning and improves delivery of traffic by segregating the traffic on different routes, therefore NATS advise there will be no material change in overall distribution of traffic through this region.

3.5.2 The only other minor change overland, was a minor change to the Stansted and Luton LOREL STAR, which now has an alignment from SUBIP direct to MAY VOR as opposed to the previous alignment from GURLU to MAY. This represents a slight displacement of approximately 1.3 nms to the west at the coast but this reduces to zero as aircraft approach the MAY VOR. The lowest level of traffic is such that traffic will be descending to not below FL 180 by MAY. Again, due to existing vectoring, NATS advise that there is no material change to overall traffic distribution.

3.5.3 Other changes to alignments are over the sea and include a change to the Gatwick STAR from KUNAV to BEXIL where it resumes the existing profile, and to the route for Solent arrivals which saw a modification to Y8 and included an additional link route of M8, both from their respective FIR Bdy positions to WAFFU.

3.6 Environmental Objectives

3.6.1 In performing my statutory duties, I am obliged to take account of the Guidance provided by the Secretary of State[7]. My detailed considerations of the environmental aspects of this proposal are detailed later.

3.7 Integrated Operation of ATS

3.7.1 I am required to facilitate the integrated operation of air traffic services provided by or on behalf of the armed forces of the Crown and other air traffic services.[8] Interaction with other ATS providers will be accommodated in the same fashion as at present, via extant ATC liaison procedures and/or specific arrangements between ATS Units.

3.8 National Security

3.8.1 I am required to take into account the impact any airspace change may have upon matters of national security.[9] There are no national security issues identified; I am therefore satisfied that national security requirements will not be jeopardised by implementation of the change.

3.9 International Obligations

3.9.1 I am required to take into account any international obligations entered into by the UK and notified by the Secretary of State.[10] The revised ATS route structure has been designed in accordance with national regulatory requirements, and in close co-operation with French ANSP, DSNA. Whilst there have been changes to the routes within the area of ATS delegation, and a slight change to the volume of delegated ATS, these changes have been

[7] Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(d)
[8] Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(e).
[9] Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(f).
[10] Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(g).

designed in conjunction with DSNA. Additionally, the French regulator, DSAC has confirmed that they have no objection to this proposal.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 The Environmental Research and Consultancy Department has delivered a comprehensive assessment of the environmental impact of this change. This concludes that:

- There is an expected annual reduction in CO_2, forecast as 6,800 tonnes (based on 2009 traffic, route segments within UK airspace) when all routes are considered as a whole, although individually, some routes are forecast to have a CO_2 reduction whilst others result in a CO_2 increase. It is noted that the major improvement will be for traffic inbound to Stansted and Luton via the LOREL 3Q STAR via May VOR, due to the fact that aircraft are expected to be able to cruise for longer before commencing descent to meet the existing level requirement by MAY.

- No noise impact is anticipated due to the height at which changes are made, that for the large part the route changes are over sea (or over French land), and the sponsor's assertion that traffic dispersion over UK land will be largely unchanged due to continued use of vectoring;

- No LAQ impact due to height at which the changes are made;

- No expected impact upon tranquillity, visual intrusion or biodiversity.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 The Sponsor undertook a NATMAC consultation between 20 September 2010 and 14 December 2010 in accordance with the requirements of CAPs 724 and 725. Given that the changes were in the main over the English Channel within existing controlled airspace, the proposal had little relevance to a large number of representatives. This resulted in the majority of responses (10) being no comment/no objection rather than outright support (3) – comments were raised by consultees to that effect. No environmental stakeholders were identified, although positive support for the proposal came from AEF through NATMAC over the improvements in CO_2 emissions that the proposal had predicted. Whilst there was a requirement to make slight changes after consultation following feedback from Paris ACC, on the UK side, these changes were minor and did not require further consultation.

6. REGULATORY DECISION

6.1 I am content that the proposed airspace design is safe, which satisfies my primary statutory duty. Thereafter, when considering the competing demands of my remaining duties, together with the Directions and Guidance, I am satisfied that the final option and the operational arrangements that have been proposed represent an improvement to the existing route structure. I am therefore satisfied that operational and environmental benefits will be delivered and consequently, the route structure as proposed was accepted in its entirety. I have therefore decided to approve this change proposal.

6.2 The revised airspace will become effective from 17 November 2011 (AIRAC 12/2011 and will be promulgated via a double AIRAC cycle. If you have any queries, the DAP Project Leader, Mr D W Raine, may be contacted on 020 7453 6518, or via e mail: dave.raine@caa.co.uk .

Mark Swan
Director

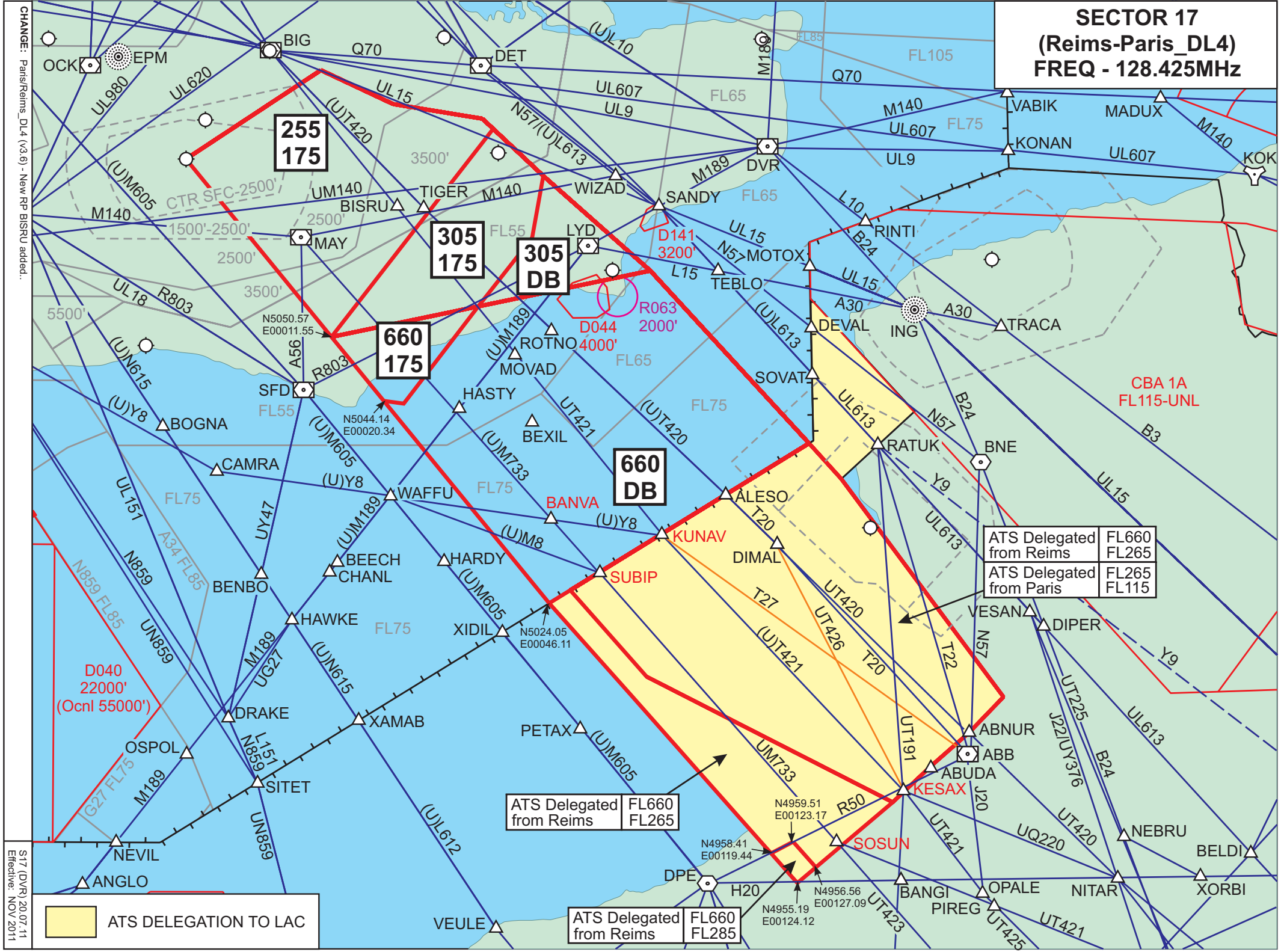
Attachment: NATS Diagram DVR/LYDD DL 4 ver 3.6.

Attachment Note – Revisions to consultation routes/designators and 5LNC changes within NATS Sector 17 and the area of ATS delegation are indicated below:

CONSULTATION DIAGRAMS	FINAL PROPOSAL	ROUTEING
UK Routes:		
UT427 renamed	(U)T421	KESAX-BIG
Y8 partially renamed	(U)M8	SUBIP-WAFFU
-	(U)Y8 added	KUNAV-WAFFU
French Routes:		
S25 withdrawn	-	ABUSE-GUBSU
S11 renamed	UT 191	KESAX-RATUK
T20 withdrawn	T20 retained	ABB-DIMAL
T27 withdrawn	T27 revised	ABB-KUNAV

Designators:

PARKY	SUBIP
LARUE	KUNAV
-	BANVA added
NADIN	SOSUN
ABUSE	KESAX
GUBSU	Withdrawn



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