

All NATMAC Representatives

11 August 2011

CAA DECISION LETTER

Dear Colleagues,

RECLASSIFICATION OF THE GLASGOW CONTROL AREA (CTA)

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Glasgow CTA was formed on 28 September 2008 through the redesignation of that part of Class E Scottish TMA within which Glasgow acted as de facto controlling authority/ATS provider. In May 2009 the Directorate of Airspace Policy received a formal proposal from NATS Glasgow to further revise the airspace through the reclassification of the CTA from Class E to Class D Controlled Airspace. Assessment of the proposal revealed numerous deficiencies that were referred back to the Change Sponsor. Following extensive communication with the Change Sponsor further proposal development and refinement (including further sponsor-led consultation) took place. A revised submission was subsequently received on 29 July 2011, with a target implementation date of not before 17 November 2011 (AIRAC 12/2011) being sought.
- 1.2 However, following an AIRPROX incident on 23 July 2011 between a glider and civil air transport aircraft within the Glasgow CTA, a safety critical risk is deemed to exist within the CTA. Consequently, it has been considered necessary to reclassify the Glasgow CTA to Class D as an interim safety measure pending full assessment of NATS Glasgow's proposals in accordance with the requirements of the Airspace Change Process, and the subsequent introduction of permanent arrangements within the subject airspace.
- 1.3 The purpose of this letter is to advise you of my decision, based upon the statutory duties as 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 issued in 2002 by the then Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (the Guidance).

CHANGE OVERVIEW

- 1.4 In accordance with Civil Aviation Publication (CAP) 724 – *The Airspace Charter*, the Directorate of Airspace Policy (DAP) reserves the right to implement a 'Fast Track' process that is reserved specifically for use by the Directorate where a clear and present threat to public safety is identified. Following the AIRPROX incident on 23 July 2011, a safety critical risk is now considered to exist and I have consequently decided to reclassify the Glasgow CTA to Class D as an interim safety measure. A

permanent solution will be identified following assessment of the NATS Glasgow proposal in accordance with the normal Airspace Change Process.

- 1.5 The interim arrangements will, through reclassification of the Class E CTA to Class D, result in the creation of a known traffic environment in which Glasgow Air Traffic Control Unit will continue to act as Controlling Authority. There will be no changes to the current lateral limits as described in the UK AIP at EGPF AD 2.17 — ATS AIRSPACE (page AD 2-EGPF-1 - 5) and depicted at page AD 2-EGPF-4-1, however the CTA base will rise from 2500 ft amsl to 3000 ft amsl.

## **STATUTORY DUTIES**

### **2 Transport Act 2000**

#### **2.1 Safety**

- 2.1.1 The Authority's 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.<sup>1</sup> In this respect I am satisfied that the proposed interim arrangement can be safely adopted. Whilst current operations to and from Glasgow Airport are safe, the existing airspace arrangements are no longer considered to be adequate in the light of the Airprox. Expanding the known traffic environment afforded by controlled airspace, whilst continuing to facilitate use of the airspace by adjacent airspace users and transit aircraft of all types through designating such airspace as Class D, will serve to enhance the safety of operations in the local area.

#### **2.2 Airspace Efficiency**

- 2.2.1 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.<sup>2</sup> The dimensions of the proposed interim airspace are considered to be the minimum necessary to ensure that the required arrival sequence can be achieved without compromising the minimum separation between such aircraft whilst ensuring that these can be contained within the boundaries of controlled airspace, separated from aircraft departing from both Glasgow and Edinburgh airports, and separated from other aircraft operating within the airspace.
- 2.2.2 A known traffic environment will result from the change. This will reduce the need for avoiding action and therefore result in more predictable profiles for aircraft approaching Glasgow via Talla. This in turn is expected to reduce workload for pilots (in a critical phase of flight) and controllers alike and facilitates more efficient sequencing of arrivals traffic. However, the overriding consideration is the enhancement of safety for all aircraft operating within the subject airspace; this will be achieved through the creation of a known traffic environment.
- 2.2.3 All aircraft seeking to operate within the CTA will be required to do so in accordance with a clearance from the controlling authority (Glasgow ATC).

#### **2.3 Airspace Users**

- 2.3.1 I am required to satisfy the requirements of operators and owners of all classes of aircraft.<sup>3</sup> For this purpose it is necessary for me to understand the concerns of

---

<sup>1</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(1).

<sup>2</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(a).

<sup>3</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(b).

affected airspace users and to ensure that these are addressed as far as practicable. To that end, NATS Glasgow will, as conditions of the temporary 'fast track' change, be required to:

- Commit to proposed changes in working practices contained within their change proposal to ensure that VFR transit flights will be allowed access to the airspace wherever possible.
- Record all instances where access has been denied together with associated reasoning for the refusal.
- Develop an operating agreement to mitigate the impact of the change upon Cumbernauld operations and to safely facilitate flight between the upper limit of the Cumbernauld ATZ and the base of the Glasgow CTA.

## **2.4 Interests of Other Parties.**

2.4.1 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.<sup>1</sup> Implementation of the interim arrangements is necessary to maintain a high standard of safety in the provision of air traffic services within the Glasgow CTA and this takes primacy over all other duties.<sup>2</sup>

## **2.5 Environmental Objectives and Impact**

2.5.1 In performing my statutory duties, I am obliged to take account of the Guidance provided by the Secretary of State. Implementation of the interim arrangements is necessary to maintain a high standard of safety in the provision of air traffic services within the Glasgow CTA and this takes primacy over all other duties.<sup>3</sup> However, as the interim arrangements do not cause changes to Glasgow Airport's published Standard Instrument Departure procedures, Standard Arrival procedures, instrument approach procedures and associated holding patterns, changes to the environmental impacts of these are not foreseen.

## **2.6 Integrated operation of ATS**

2.6.1 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.<sup>4</sup> In this respect, I am satisfied that such service provision arrangements will not be jeopardised by the introduction of the interim arrangements.

## **2.7 National Security**

2.7.1 I am required to take into account the impact any airspace change may have upon matters of national security.<sup>5</sup> I am satisfied that national security requirements will not be jeopardised by the introduction of the interim arrangements.

## **2.8 International Obligations**

2.8.1 I am required to take into account any international obligations entered into by the UK and notified by the Secretary of State.<sup>6</sup> No new international obligations arise

---

<sup>1</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(c).

<sup>2</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(1).

<sup>3</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(1).

<sup>4</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(e).

<sup>5</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(f).

<sup>6</sup> Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(g).

as a result of the introduction of the interim airspace arrangements, neither are international interfaces affected.

- 2.8.2 The interim airspace arrangements accord with national regulatory requirements and comply with ICAO Standards and recommended practices.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **3 Environmental Assessment Report**

- 3.1. The interim airspace arrangements are required to address a safety critical risk within the CTA. Therefore an environmental assessment of the impact of these is not considered necessary.

## **CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 Although NATS Glasgow has consulted on its airspace change proposals, and the interim arrangements reflect aspects of these, the interim arrangements have not in themselves been subject to consultation. The formal airspace change proposal will continue to be assessed in accordance with the Airspace Change Process described in CAP 724 and industry will be notified of the decision regarding the proposal in due course.

## **REGULATORY DECISIONS**

- 5.1 I am satisfied that the implementation of the interim arrangements in accordance with the Airspace Charter's 'fast track' Airspace Change Process will enhance safety through the creation of a known traffic environment. Therefore the classification of the Glasgow CTA will change from Class E to Class D on 16 September 2011 and will be promulgated by NOTAM, supported by a CAA Safety Notice, an Aeronautical Information Circular and a CAA press notice.
- 5.2 CAP 724 notes that a 'fast track' change may be reinforced by Statutory Instrument (SI); however, a change in airspace classification does not represent a formal airspace restriction and lies within the Directorate's legal powers without resort to an SI. Meanwhile, the formal airspace change proposal will continue to be assessed in accordance with the Airspace Change Process described in CAP 724 and industry will be notified of DAP's decision regarding the proposal in due course.
- 5.3 A map illustrating the interim arrangements is enclosed.

*Made sincerely,*



**P Roberts**  
Acting Director

Enclosure:

Glasgow Control Area 'Fast Track' effective 16 September 2011 (map).

