

**Chief Executive's Office**

Sent by Email – 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023

The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP  
Secretary of State for Transport  
Department of Transport  
London, SW1P 4DR

Dear Secretary of State,

Re: CAA observations and comments relating to the NATS preliminary report 4/9/23 (Major incident 28/8/23)

The NATS report (attached) was received at 12.00 today, the CAA is forwarding it as planned at 14.00. The report is preliminary, but covers the facts of the incident, its' impact, and NATS plans for next steps.

Key initial CAA conclusions

1. The CAA agrees with the NATS statement that at no stage did this incident represent a safety concern. It is being handled under the SAF 013 process which should be for either Major incident or safety incident, the former is the reason for the report.
2. The initial conclusions about the sequence of events and unique circumstances that caused the system failure are understood. Systems of this nature are used throughout the world and this scenario has never been encountered before. Both primary and secondary systems shut down to preserve safety.
3. This technical event is now understood and should it reoccur would be fixed quickly with no effect to the aviation system. A software adaptation is planned to be implemented by the manufacturer this week once testing is complete and change process assessed, this will mean it will not reoccur.

Next steps

NATS have listed a series of longer-term detailed investigations that they intend to carry out and the CAA in both its Safety and Consumer roles will carefully oversee that work requiring additional clarification and investigation where necessary.

In addition, the CAA intends to undertake an independent review of the circumstances surrounding this incident.

Yours faithfully



Rob Bishton  
**Group Director Safety and Airspace  
Regulation and Interim Joint CEO**



Paul Smith  
**Group Director Consumer & Markets and  
Interim Joint CEO**