

CAA AIRSPACE CHANGE DECISION

INTRODUCTION OF CONDITIONAL ROUTE (CDR) Q60

Executive Summary

Organisation proposing the change: NATS (NERL)

Date of Airspace Change Proposal: 15th September 2016

Objective of the Proposal:

A high level ATS link route to be implemented in the southwest of the UK. This conditional route (CDR) will help to introduce a more efficient westbound traffic flow for UK overflights inbound to Dublin and those positioning for transatlantic routes. This CDR will be shorter than the extant routing so will enable airline operators to upload less fuel on their flight-planned route.

The CAA has determined that the airspace design is safe, is shorter than the existing flight plan route due to reduced track mileage provided by Q60 and will subsequently provide a small but positive environmental benefit.

Decision Process and Analysis

- 1. Aims and Objectives of the proposed change**
- On 25 May 16, the CAA Safety and Airspace Regulation Group (SARG) received a formal Airspace Change Proposal (ACP) from NATS (NERL) to establish a conditional ATS route (CDR) from OKTAD to LANON in the southwest of the UK, to provide improved flight efficiencies. The NATS Airspace Efficiency Database team submitted this proposal as part of the initiative to identify areas where fuel savings could be made as part of the work undertaken by the Flight Efficiency Plan.
- The ACP has been developed to provide a more fuel efficient flight-plannable route for aircraft operators overflying the London FIR, inbound to Dublin or positioning for transatlantic routes. Presently, although most aircraft filing to fly this route are given tactical directs (DCT) as indicated by the green hachured line at Appendix A, the proposed Q60 has to maintain connectivity with other routes and the nominal track for a more efficient flight-planned route is OKTAD to LANON via TALGA, indicated by the blue line on the chart at Appendix A. The existing longer flight-planned route via DIKAS is shown as a thick black line. The conditions that are to be applied for Q60 are:
 - Westbound route only between OKTAD and LANON.
 - Available H24 above FL305.
 - Below FL305 it is aligned with the temporal operation of (U)L18, available Mon-Thu 0830-1700; Fri-Mon 1700-0830 and all day Bank Holidays and Weekends.
 - The weekly daytime operational hours are coordinated with the activation of the North Wales Military Training Area (South) Low (FL285 and below) and managed through the UK AMC.
- The volume of air traffic that flight-planned the existing route during 2015 was approximately 12000 aircraft overflying the London FIR above FL245, which flight-planned the existing route between Compton (CPT) and the existing point LANON on UL18 off the west coast of mid Wales. These aircraft were a mixture of Heavy (transatlantic) and Medium category (Dublin arrivals) jets. The 4nm reduction on fuel uplift for flight panning purposes for this

number and type of aircraft was calculated as 280 tonne of fuel save and 890 tonne CO₂ saving.

5. Consultation

Documents considered by the CAA:

- NATS Airspace Change Proposal dated 25th April 2016
- CAA SARG Case Officer's Operational Assessment (Annex C)

6. Sponsors must conduct their consultation exercise in accordance with the criteria set out in the Cabinet Office's Consultation Principles (2013 Update).
7. As the proposed airspace change is wholly contained in the upper air and above FL245, the Sponsor undertook targeted consultation with the MoD and with the airline operators through the Flight Efficiency Plan (FEP). The MoD provided a response that indicated it had no concerns as a result of the introduction of Q60. Airline operators were fully supportive of the change due to reduced track and flight planned mileage and reduced fuel burn due to a reduction in fuel uplift. An environmental statement was provided by NATS that clearly indicated why there would be fuel savings and the numbers of aircraft likely to be benefit from the change. For these reasons, it was only the two documents indicated above that were considered during the approval process.

CAA assessment and decision in respect of Consultation

8. Public consultation was not deemed necessary due to the high level changes and that there would be no environmental disbenefit. The CAA has nevertheless conducted its own assessment of the consultation undertaken and is satisfied that the evidence supports the proposal and was conducted in accordance with the requirements of CAPs 724 and 725.

CAA Consideration of factors material to our decision whether to approve the change:

9. Explanation of statutory duties

10. The CAA's 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.¹
11. In summary, the CAA's primary duty under section 70(1) of the Act requires that the CAA exercises its air navigation functions so as to maintain a high standard of safety in the provision of ATS. This duty takes priority over the remaining factors set out in section 70(2). Where an airspace change proposal satisfies all of the factors identified in section 70(2) and where there is no conflict between those factors, the CAA will, subject to exceptional circumstances, approve the airspace change proposal. Where an airspace change proposal satisfies some of the factors in section 70(2) but not others, this is referred to as a conflict within the meaning of section 70(3). In the event of a conflict, the CAA will apply the material considerations in the manner it thinks is reasonable having regard to them as a whole. The CAA will give greater weight to material considerations that require it to "secure" something than to those that require it to "satisfy" or "facilitate". The CAA regards the term to "take account of" as meaning that the material consideration in question may or may not be

¹ Revised in 2014 by the DfT (the Guidance).

applicable in a particular case and the weight the CAA will place on such material considerations will depend heavily on the circumstances of the individual case. The analysis of the statutory duties in this case is set out below.

12. Conclusions in respect of Safety

13. The CAA's primary duty is to maintain a high standard of safety in the provision of ATS and this takes primacy over all other duties.²

14. In this respect, the CAA is content that the proposed introduction of Q60 has no safety implications.

15. Conclusions in respect of securing the most efficient use of airspace

16. The CAA is required to secure the most efficient use of the airspace consistent with the safe operation of aircraft and the expeditious flow of air traffic.³ The CAA considers that the most efficient use of airspace is defined as:

"Secures the greatest number of movements of aircraft through a specific volume of airspace over a period of time so that the best use is made of the limited resource of UK airspace."

17. In this respect, the CAA is content the introduction of Q60 is aligned with this principle.

18. Conclusions in respect of taking into account the Secretary of State's guidance to the CAA on environmental objectives

19. In performing the statutory duties, the CAA is obliged to take account of the extant guidance provided by the Secretary of State,⁴ namely the 2014 Guidance to the CAA on Environmental Objectives.

20. Having considered this information, the CAA has concluded that there will be a small but positive environmental impact as a result of the reduced fuel uplift.

21. Conclusions in respect of aircraft operators and owners

22. The CAA is required to satisfy the requirements of operators and owners of all classes of aircraft.⁵

23. In this respect, the CAA is content that Q60 will have no detrimental impact on any other airspace users.

24. The CAA's Operational Assessment will be published on the CAA's website before implementation.

25. Conclusions in respect of interests of any other person

26. The CAA is 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.

² Transport Act 2000, Section 70(1).

³ Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(a).

⁴ Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(d).

⁵ Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(b).

27. In this respect CAA is content that no other persons will be adversely affected by the introduction of Q60.
28. **Integrated operation of ATS**
29. The CAA is required to facilitate the integrated operation of ATS provided by or on behalf of the armed forces of the Crown and other ATS.⁶
30. In this respect, the CAA is content that the introduction of link route Q60 will ensure the continued successful integration of ATS operations in UK airspace.
31. **Interests of national security**
32. The CAA is required to take into account the impact any airspace change may have upon matters of national security.⁷
33. In this respect the CAA is content that there are no impacts for national security as a result of the establishment of Q60.
34. **International obligations**
35. The CAA is required to take into account any international obligations entered into by the UK and notified by the Secretary of State.⁸
36. In this respect the CAA is content that there are no international obligations as a result of the introduction of link route Q60 as it is wholly within UK sovereign airspace.
37. **No conflicts**
38. In accordance with section 70(3) of the Act and the CAA published policy, the CAA is required to consider whether the airspace change proposal produces any conflicts between the material considerations identified in section 70(2). For the reasons given above, the CAA does not consider that there are any conflicts between pertinent factors as a result of the establishment of link route Q60.
39. **CAA's Regulatory Decision**
40. The CAA is content that the proposed airspace design is safe, which satisfies our primary statutory duty. For the reasons given above, the CAA is also content that the proposed change has a positive or neutral impact on each of the other factors identified in section 70(2) of the Act. In addition, the 4nm reduction in track mileage for flight-planning will result in a small environmental benefit. In such a case, and in the absence of exceptional circumstances, it is CAA policy to approve the airspace change proposal. There are no exceptional circumstances in the instant case to justify departing from the CAA's standard practice.
41. We have made this decision and concluded that there are no applicable conditions placed on NATS for the implementation of this airspace change.

⁶ Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(e).

⁷ Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(f).

⁸ Transport Act 2000, Section 70(2)(g).

42. The revised airspace will become effective on 15th September 2016. Any queries are to be directed to the SARG Project Leader, [REDACTED] on 020 7453 [REDACTED] or via e mail: [REDACTED]
43. In accordance with the CAA standard procedures, the implications of the change will be reviewed after one full year of operation, at which point, CAA staff will engage with interested parties to obtain feedback and data to contribute to the analysis.

27th July 2016

Civil Aviation Authority

Appendix A:

Chart showing new CDR Q60: OKTAD to LANON

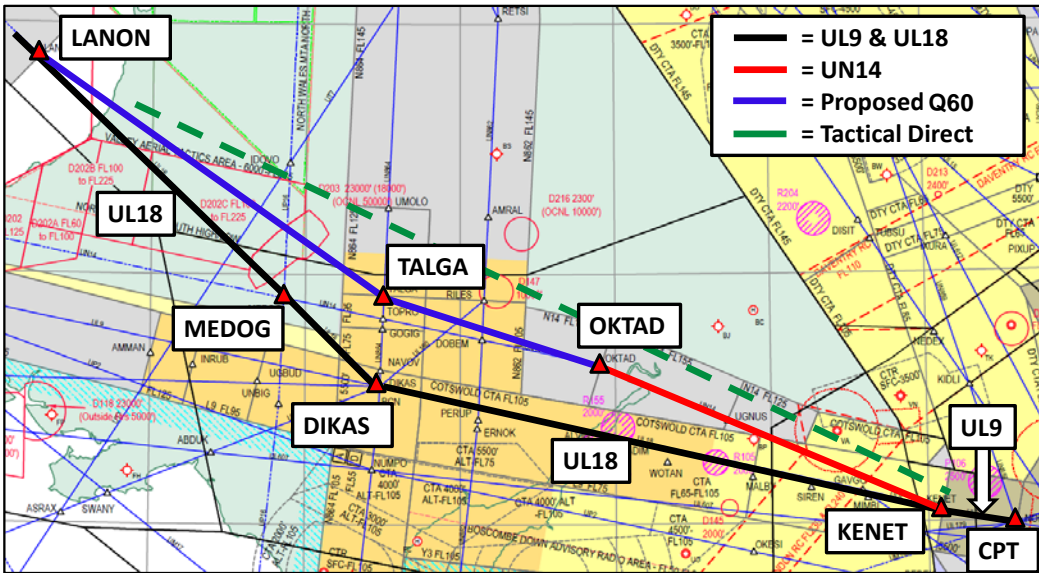


Chart showing new CDR Q60: OKTAD to LANON