



Electronic Conspicuity – a call for evidence and future plans

March 2019

The widespread adoption of Electronic conspicuity (EC), where everything flying sends out an electronic signal identifying it, will be key in achieving safe and sustainable airspace for the UK in the future.

The government recognises this and asked us to develop proposals for its UK-wide roll out as part of its Aviation Strategy Green Paper. We have done this via our Airspace Modernisation Strategy (AMS) that sets out the main initiatives required to upgrade the UK's airspace structure.

Now we have launched a call for evidence about some of our key proposals for the wider roll out of EC in the UK. The output of the call will directly influence the way forward.

Benefits of EC

Successful implementation of EC can deliver significant benefits in many areas including:

- The potential to save lives by reducing the likelihood of mid-air collisions – as everything flying will be able to be detected by air traffic control and onboard detection systems
- A reduction in airspace infringements (when an aircraft makes an unauthorised entry into controlled airspace) – as air traffic services will be able to see all airspace users

- Allowing more access to airspace for a variety of users, including General Aviation (GA) and unmanned aircraft (drone) operators – as air traffic services will be able to see everything operating and automatic sense and avoid systems fitted to unmanned aircraft would be able to detect all other airspace users.

To achieve these benefits we need 100% of users operating in the relevant blocks of airspace to be able to be detected electronically.

Our proposal

Rather than initially mandating EC across all the UK's airspace we are looking at targeted blocks of airspace where there are greater benefits and more demand to accommodate a variety of airspace users.

Our call for evidence covers the devices, systems and infrastructure that can deliver EC in the UK, ensuring they are fully interoperable with each other to achieve the maximum benefit. That can include airborne transponders, moving map displays and air traffic data displays.

Current situation

There has already been work in the UK to develop EC which we are now building on:

- An EC Working Group has enabled stakeholders to share their goals and requirements to help develop future proposals
- New lower power / lower cost EC devices are available for airborne carriage

- Traffic Data Displays (TDDs) that present the outputs of EC devices to air traffic units without primary or secondary surveillance radars (SSR) are being trialled with some success.

Many UK stakeholders already use EC solutions. While this has delivered some benefits this voluntary investment has not led to fully interoperable solutions or the 100% adoption that is essential to maximise the benefits. As a result, the stakeholders that have already invested are not getting the full benefit and others are delaying adopting the technology.

New call for evidence

Our call for evidence sets out our suggested approach to achieve all of the aims. We now need stakeholders to let us know whether they feel this is the correct approach, that we are considering the right issues and have developed the right options.

The call for evidence is open from 18 March to 25 May 2019. Responses should be submitted via <https://consultations.caa.co.uk/corporate-communications/e-conspicuity-solutions>

