

PUBLICATION VERSION

## **UK Civil Aviation Authority**

### **Minutes of the 592<sup>nd</sup> Meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2025, 13:00, Harwell Innovation Campus & Teams**

#### **Attendees:**

Sir Stephen Hillier (Chair); Katherine Corich (Senior Independent Director); Jordan Giddings (Non-Executive Director); Anne Lambert (Non-Executive Director); Manny Lewis (Non-Executive Director); Trisha McAuley (Non-Executive Director)

Rob Bishton (Chief Executive); Giancarlo Buono (Group Director, Safety & Airspace Regulation); Selina Chadha (Group Director, Consumers & Markets); Tracey Martin (Chief Financial & Operations Officer)

Jonathan Spence (General Counsel & Company Secretary)

#### **Present:**

Tim Johnson (Director, Communications, Strategy & Policy, and Chief of Staff); Dave King (Independent Safety Advisor); Nick Lew (Boardroom Apprentice)

Briar Mulholland (Head of Office of Chair & CEO, and Deputy Chief of Staff); Maria Nash (GA Strategic Stakeholder Manager); Graeme Paterson (Corporate Governance & Secretariat Lead)

Amy Mathias, Nic Stevenson (Item V); Julie Bryer, Ed Johnstone, Stephen Hofmann (Item VII); Helen Swanbury, Katerina Vlachavus, Freya Whiteman, Rt. Hon. Jenny Willott (Item VIII); Darryl Abelscroft, Ed Clay, Rob Garner, Colin Macleod (Item IX)

#### **I. Welcomes, Apologies & Conflict of Interest Declarations**

1. The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and to Harwell Innovation Campus. It was highlighted that it had been four years since the CAA had taken on the space regulator role, so it was important for the Board to engage with stakeholders in this sector.
2. Apologies had been received from AVM Marshall.
3. No conflicts of interest were declared.

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4. The Board expressed its sympathies to the victims of the Air India flight 171 accident and their families. Although the accident had not involved a British aircraft, the flight had been carrying a large number of British citizens and residents.
5. Following the accident, the CAA had supported Government by providing technical briefings.
6. The cause of the accident was currently unknown, and it was noted that there had been a lot of speculation and misinformation presented in the immediate aftermath.
7. The investigation into the accident would be led by Indian authorities.

## II. Approved Minutes of Previous Meetings & Matters Arising

8. *Minutes* - The minutes of the May 2025 Board meeting were noted as having been approved out of committee.
9. *Actions* – The Board confirmed that the five actions listed could be closed.

## III. Chair's Report (BRD-2025-041) By Sir Stephen Hillier

10. The Board noted the report.

## IV. CEO Report (BRD-2025-042) By Rob Bishton

11. *Internal Matters* – The Board was provided with an update on the ongoing discussions with the CAA's recognised Trade Unions.
12. The Board also noted that some resourcing issues had arisen in parts of the organisation. These were being worked through by ExCo.
13. *Safety Data* – The Board was advised that the backlog of Mandatory Occurrence Reports (MORs) was now trending red. This was a longstanding issue, but the backlog had increased with the implementation of the ECCAIRS2 system.
14. It was emphasised that all MORs received by the CAA were triaged, with high-priority ones dealt with. The backlog was therefore made up of lower priority issues. It was also highlighted that all MORs would have been reviewed in accordance with the safety management systems of regulated entities before being provided to the CAA.
15. In discussion, the Board was assured with the triage process in place. However, it sought clarity over how the longstanding issue would be addressed. It was noted that the use of technology, including AI to assess reports was being taken forward but was at an early stage.
16. There was no way to know how many reports might be received, so it would be difficult to develop a scalable solution which did not involve technology.

**ACTION:** The Board requested that further updates on this activity be provided, and that a credible timeline to address the backlog be devised.

## V. Government Priorities: Delivery & Alignment Review – June 2025 (BRD-2025-053) By Rob Bishton & Tim Johnson

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17. The Board was advised that an update on the CAA's delivery against Government priorities would be a standing item at future meetings.
18. The work in support of Government had and was expected to continue to be fast-moving. However, the CAA was well positioned to deliver against commitments made in its letter to the Prime Minister and in the subsequent meeting with the Chancellor in January.
19. The planned expansion of Heathrow was highlighted as being a key priority for the Government, and one that the CAA would take a key role in. The Board queried how consumer interests would be factored into the expansion and wider growth initiatives.
20. It was explained that the CAA needed to establish that an expanded Heathrow would offer benefits to consumers and a regime that had consumer interests embedded from the start would help be a catalyst for growth.
21. With the Spending Review outcomes now known, it was emphasised that the CAA would need to make clear and credible bids for grant-funded activities.
22. It was also recognised that in developing proposals for the 2026/27 Scheme of Charges, the CAA would need to be mindful of Government ambitions for public sector efficiencies.

#### **VI. Summary of the Audit & Risk Committee Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

##### **(BRD-2025-044) By Anne Lambert**

23. The Board noted the summary report.
24. Following the Audit & Risk Committee's meeting, members had reviewed an updated draft of the CAA's Annual Report & Accounts and signalled their endorsement of the document out of committee.
25. Based on this, the Committee was able to recommend to the Board that it approve the Annual Report & Accounts and the Letter of Representation.

#### **VII. CAA Annual Report & Accounts 2024/25 (BRD-2025-045) By Tracey**

##### **Martin**

26. The Board was invited to consider the CAA's Annual Report & Accounts for 2024/25 and the Letter of Representation.  
**DECISION:** The Board approved the CAA's Annual Report & Accounts 2024/25 and authorised the CEO to sign the accounts.  
**DECISION:** The Board approved the Letter of Representation and authorised the CEO and Company Secretary to sign it.

#### **VIII. CMG Report (BRD-2025-046a &b) By Selina Chadha**

27. *Consumer Panel Annual Report* - The Board was updated on the work of the Consumer Panel over the last year. It was noted that there had been particularly positive engagement in respect of innovation and consumer vulnerability and accessibility.

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28. The Panel had suggested that different parts of the CAA consider how consumer interests could be more effectively considered and embedded. The Panel Chair suggested this could be achieved through a mapping exercise across the organisation to identify how the consumer interest feeds into different policy areas, which would create a baseline against which to progress further targeted work. It was also requested that as work developed, teams from across the organisation approach the Panel for input on possible consumer issues at an early stage.

**ACTION:** A mapping exercise to determine how the consumer interest feeds into different policy areas should be led and coordinated by CMG, with ownership of individual outputs the responsibility of ExCo members across the organisation. Steps should also be taken to remind colleagues to seek Panel feedback on consumer issues.

29. It was noted that Panel members were involved in the DfT run Aviation Accessibility Task and Finish Group. In discussion, it was highlighted that passengers with accessibility needs often faced barriers to travel and when they did, could experience inconsistent support as no entity had ownership of the end-to-end journey.
30. It was also noted that those with accessibility needs did not necessarily all need the same level of support.
31. Despite challenges, it was recognised that there were some cases of good practice from airports and airlines. The respective accessibility frameworks the CAA oversaw would help drive accountability and also give those with additional needs, greater transparency over the level of service provided by different airlines and airports.
32. It was also suggested that increased transparency of service quality could encourage individuals to travel by air who may not have done so previously.
33. *Consumer Update* – The Board welcomed the progress that had been made in delivering the revised programme of consumer-focused activity.
34. In terms of upcoming work, the CAA would review the outcome of EU proposals to amend the scope of EU261 as it could have implications for the UK's own regime for dealing with delays and denied boarding. There was concern that the changes proposed by the EU could cause confusion for consumers.
35. It was noted that a meeting of the Business & Trade Select Committee would take place on 24 June, with a session airline pricing. EasyJet, Airlines UK and the CMA were scheduled to appear.
36. It was also noted that work to review the effectiveness of the ADR process in the UK was underway. Under the current legal framework, the CAA did not have visibility of many consumer complaints against airlines unless they were made to an ADR provider or submitted to the CAA.
37. It was noted that through planned work the CAA would encourage industry to improve passenger communications, and provide more

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transparency through the upcoming consultation on wheelchair damage.

38. It was suggested that an update on consumer work could be raised in the regular meeting with the Aviation Minister and that the CAA should write to the Secretary of State as part of the 6-monthly written update previously requested.

**ACTION:** The CAA to prepare a written update for the Secretary of State on the work it has undertaken in respect of its consumer-focused activities.

## IX. SARG Report (BRD-2025-047) By Giancarlo Buono

39. *Introduction* – The Board welcomed the launch of the roadmap for future Advanced Air Mobility certification. The roadmap had been developed in collaboration with other regulators in the National Aviation Authorities Network.

40. The Board expressed its sadness at the death of two parachutists at Dunkeswell Aerodrome. The Board was advised that parachute and skydiving activities in the UK were overseen by the British Skydiving Association under a delegation from the CAA.

It was noted that a number of GA activities were overseen by bodies operating with a CAA delegation. **ACTION:** An overview of the GA delegation of authority landscape to be prepared and shared with the Board at a future meeting.

41. *Space Regulation* – The Board had a wide-ranging conversation regarding the CAA's role in respect of licensing space activities and the UK space sector.

42. *Regulatory Capture* – The Board noted the work that had been undertaken to determine how regulatory capture was managed by other regulators in the UK and abroad. A further update on the development of this would be provided as part of the SARG Report in December.

## X. Summary Report of the People Committee Meetings held on 6<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> May 2025 (BRD-2025-049) By Manny Lewis

43. The Board noted the summary report.

## XI. Draft July Board & Forward Agenda

44. The Board noted the draft agenda for July's meeting.

## XII. Any Other Business

45. No other business was raised.