



PUBLICATION VERSION

## **UK Civil Aviation Authority**

### **Minutes of the 597<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026, 11:00, Aviation House & Teams**

#### **Attendees:**

Sir Stephen Hillier (Chair); Katherine Corich (Senior Independent Director); Jordan Giddings (Non-Executive Director) (Items I-VII); Manny Lewis (Non-Executive Director); Trisha McAuley (Non-Executive Director); Crispin Orr (Non-Executive Director); Charmion Pears (Non-Executive Director); AVM Ian Townsend (Ex-Officio 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)

Maria Nash (Head of the Office of Chair and CEO); Graeme Paterson (Corporate Governance & Secretariat Lead)

Emma Jardine, Dan Mellows, Sacha Reid (Forvis Mazars - Item IV), Ella Payne (Item VI); Amy Mathias, Nic Stevenson (Items VI & VII); David Silk (DfT – Item VII); Anna Bowles, Katie Morrison, Katerina Vlachavas, Freya Whiteman, Jenny Willott (Consumer Panel Chair) (Item VIII); Stuart Algar, Tendai Mutambirwa, Rick Newson (Item IX)

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

1. The Chair welcomed attendees to the first meeting of 2026.
2. The Chair also welcomed Crispin Orr to his first meeting as a CAA Non-Executive Director, with a specific focus on safety.

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3. No apologies had been received
4. No conflicts of interest were declared.

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

5. *Minutes* - The minutes of the December 2025 Board meeting were noted as having been approved out of committee.
6. *Actions* – The Board noted the updates provided against the actions.

**III. Chair's Report (BRD-2026-001) By Sir Stephen Hillier**

7. The Board noted the paper.

**IV. Board Effectiveness Review Report (BRD-2026-002) By Forvis Mazars**

8. Following the conclusion of its work, the Board Effectiveness Review team advised that in its assessment, the CAA Board was an effective one.
9. The report contained a number of recommendations which were suggestions to support the CAA's continuous improvement, rather than actions required to address fundamental problems.
10. The Board noted the recommendations; a plan to implement pertinent ones would be developed, with an update at either the February or March meeting. It was confirmed that once the follow-up action plan had been devised, the report would be provided to DfT in line with the Framework Agreement.

**V. CEO Report (BRD-2026-003) By Rob Bishton**

11. *Approval* – By way of resolution, the Board was asked to authorise two individuals to authenticate the seal of the authority.
12. The Board was updated on the CAA's participation at the recent Regulators' Council meeting. This was seen as a recognition of the work the CAA was undertaking to support growth.
13. More broadly it was noted that the CAA was continuing to deliver strongly against the government's growth agenda. It was emphasised that much of the focus on growth would relate to Heathrow expansion.
14. The Board recognised the importance of supporting growth, but also emphasised the need to ensure that core safety obligations were being effectively discharged.

**VI. Annual Strategic Objectives and Priorities (BRD-2026-004) By Rob Bishton and Tim Johnson**

15. *BRD-2026-004a* - The Board was reminded of the relationship between the CAA's overarching strategic focus areas (SFAs) and the annual strategic objectives (ASOs). It was emphasised that the ASOs did not represent the totality of work undertaken by the CAA. They were, however, programmes of work that would help support delivery of the SFAs.

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16. It was also outlined how the ASOs were cascaded down to director objectives and those of colleagues within the CAA.
17. A candidate set of ASOs had been provided to the Board in October and the set put forward for approval now had reflected earlier feedback.
18. *BRD-2026-004b* – The Board reviewed the approach to setting the goals for the CEO. The objectives would be subject to final approval by the People Committee in February.

**VII. Insights and Perspectives from DfT (Verbal Update) By David Silk**

19. The Board was reminded that the 2023 ALB Review of the CAA had prompted the CAA to invite the DfT Director for Aviation to attend relevant parts of two CAA Board meetings per year.
20. The Board was advised that the CAA continued to work well with DfT and other parts of government and was viewed as an effective regulator.
21. It was highlighted that there was an increased focus within DfT to put the customer and passenger at the centre of work and ensure that high standards of safety, security and resilience were maintained.
22. The Board was advised of the continued government focus on growth, including Heathrow expansion and the critical role the CAA would play in delivering these objectives.
23. The Board welcomed the update.

**VIII. CMG Report (BRD-2026-005) By Selina Chadha**

24. *CMG Update* - The Board noted the wider update on CMG activities.
25. *Consumer Protection Programme Update* – The Board was provided with a six-monthly update on the CAA's consumer protection activities. The scaling up of work had been possible due to additional posts being funded via the Scheme of Charges.
26. Of the work in train, the Board welcomed the progress made on the Airlines Accessibility Framework and the benefits this was helping to deliver for passengers.
27. Work was also underway to monitor the compliance of airlines with UK261. It was anticipated that data to inform the scale of this activity would be available in the spring.
28. The Board also noted that a consumer-interest mapping exercise had been undertaken within the CAA. The results had been reviewed by the Consumer Panel. It was noted that these were broadly positive, but there were areas of the organisation where there was less awareness of relevant consumer-focused resources when making decisions or policies. The Consumer Panel would be proposing an action plan for ExCo to consider.
29. The Board discussed the experiences of those with hidden disabilities or who were neurodiverse. It was noted that the CAA had previously published a report on supporting people with hidden disabilities at UK airports. It was anticipated that these issues would be considered further as part of a refreshed Airports Accessibility Framework.

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30. It was confirmed that the CAA did not have a dedicated programme of work on addressing the impact of digital exclusion of passengers.
31. The Board recognised the progress made in the structuring and delivery of consumer protection activities. It was proposed that the work to deliver value for the consumer should form a key part of the CAA's annual address in the Spring.

### **IX. SARG Report (BRD-2026-007) By Giancarlo Buono**

32. *Introduction* - The Board was advised that three general aviation accidents had occurred over the festive period. One of these had resulted in a fatality.
33. *Safety Leadership Group* – The Board noted the report of the last SLG meeting. It was emphasised that all NEDs were welcome to attend these sessions.
34. *RSMS* – The Board noted the update on key risk areas and tolerability assessments for the commercial air transport and non-commercial operations domains.

### **X. Summary Report of the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee Meeting Held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026 (BRD-2026-006) By Charmion Pears**

35. The Board noted the update of the Committee's January meeting.

### **XI. Draft February Board and Forward Agenda**

36. The Board noted the draft agenda for February's meeting.

### **XII. Any Other Business**

37. No other business was raised.