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UK Civil Aviation Authority

Minutes of the 601st Meeting held on 17th June 2026, 11:00, Aviation House & Teams

Attendees:

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

Rob Bishton (Chief Executive); Giancarlo Buono (Group Director, Safety & Airspace Regulation) (Items I-X); Tracey Martin (Chief Financial & Operations Officer)

Jonathan Spence (General Counsel & Company Secretary)

Present:

Tim Johnson (Director, Communications, Strategy & Policy, and Chief of Staff); Karen St.Jean-Kufuor (Next Gen NED) (except agenda item IX)

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

Andrew Walker (Item IV); Rick Newson (Item V); Julie Bryer, Ed Johnstone, Matt Tuddenham (Item VII); Anna Bowles, Helen Swanbury, Freya Whiteman, Jenny Willott (Item VIII); Ben Alcott, Rob Foskett (Item X); Harvey Neve (Item X-XIII); Stuart Lewis; James Bell, Niall Erskine, Nic Stevenson (Item XII); Sean Gallagher (Item XIII)

Airline Community Item IX:

Nick Careen (SVP Operations, Safety & Security; IATA), Neil Chernoff (Chief Planning & Strategy Officer; British Airways), Sean Doyle (CEO; British Airways),

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Corneel Koster (CEO; Virgin Atlantic), Simon Laver (Assistant Director Airport Infrastructure; IATA & Secretariat; LACC Executive), Vari Madore (Senior Manager UK Airport Development; Virgin Atlantic), Gavin Molloy (Director Economic Regulation & Airport Infrastructure; British Airways & Chair; LACC Executive), Michael Petrides (Head of Economic Regulation, British Airways), Jonathan Sullivan (Chief Corporate Development Officer, IAG), Willie Walsh (Director General, IATA), Nigel Wicking (CEO; Heathrow AOC)

I. Welcomes, Apologies & Conflict of Interest Declarations

1. The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting.
2. Apologies had been received from Selina Chadha.
3. The Board was advised that Katherine Corich's term had been extended beyond the end of June 2026. The extension would ensure additional Board capacity and expertise was available, particularly in light of significant discussions on Heathrow Airport expansion.
4. No conflicts of interest were declared.

II. Approved Minutes of Previous Meetings & Matters Arising

5. *Minutes* - The minutes of the May Extraordinary and full Board meetings were noted as having been approved out of committee.
6. *Actions* – The Board noted the updates on the actions.

III. Chair's Report (BRD-2026-034) By Sir Stephen Hillier

7. The Board noted the paper.

IV. CEO Report (BRD-2026-035) By Rob Bishton

8. *Operating Context* – The Board noted the range of strategic issues affecting the organisation and the ExCo response to managing these. The Board discussed the need to effectively manage issues such as Heathrow expansion with day-to-day operational matters. It was highlighted that ExCo was taking further steps to enhance the focus of its meetings to ensure effective alignment and support of the Board.
9. The Board highlighted that the Audit & Risk Assurance and People Committees could both be used as a further means of providing support and assurance to ExCo.
10. In discussion, the Board was supportive of the work being undertaken by ExCo to manage a complex range of issues, and welcomed the opportunity to reflect on how these were being responded to. The Board emphasised a need to maintain a balance between strategic issues and operational matters in a growing and complex organisation.

V. SARG Report (BRD-2026-036) By Giancarlo Buono

11. The Board was updated on various workstreams within SARG. Following the query raised at May's meeting regarding RPAS applications, the Board had been updated out-of-committee and was further advised that the number of rejections had been minimal in April and May.
12. The Board noted a consultation on Unmanned Aircraft Systems Traffic Management (UTM) had been launched. The successful implementation of UTM would be fundamental to the scaling up of RPAS operations.
13. A consultation would be launched on whether to include an obligation to accept diversions for matters not immediately related to safety into aerodrome licences.
14. The Board discussed the Safety Strategy outlined in the accompanying paper. The strategy would support the CAA and UK's compliance with ICAO Annex 19. The Board noted that the strategy had been reviewed in detail at the most recent Safety Leadership Group, which had been well-attended by Board members.

VI. Summary Report of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee (BRD-2026-037) By Charmion Pears

15. The Board was advised that the Committee had extensively reviewed the draft Annual Report and Accounts in the lead up to and at its meeting on 8th June 2026.
16. The Committee had considered the key accounting judgements used in the preparation of the document and was assured with the basis of the going concern and viability statements.
17. Draft Letters of Representation had been approved by the Committee, but had been updated subsequently. The Board was assured that the amendments related to a very small number of immaterial misstatements. The final Letter of Representation would be provided to the Board for formal approval in July alongside the publication version of the Annual Report and Accounts.
18. The Committee had also reviewed the External Auditor's completion report and noted comments regarding complexity of the CAA's revenue streams. The Board noted that the Scheme of Charges was complicated, but no concerns regarding the accuracy of income received had been raised.
19. On the basis of the review, the Committee recommended that the Board would be able to give initial approval of the CAA's Annual Report and Accounts.

VII. Annual Report and Accounts Initial Sign-Off (BRD-2026-038) By Tracey Martin

20. The Board welcomed the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee's recommendation to give initial approval to the Annual Report and Accounts.

21. The Board was reminded that, subject to comments, the content would be designed and formatted ahead of final approval at the extraordinary Board meeting scheduled for 8th July.
22. The Board noted that the CAA had exceeded its regulatory rate of return in the financial year. However, it was assured that the rationale for this was well articulated in the document.
23. The Board thanked the team for their efforts in preparing the document and confirmed that it was content for the Annual Report and Accounts to be prepared for final sign-off in July.

VIII. CMG Update (BRD-2026-039) By Tim Johnson

24. *CMG Update* - The Board noted the overview of CMG activities.
25. *Consumer Protection Programme Update* – The Board welcomed the six-monthly update on the CAA's Consumer Protection Programme.
26. The Board also noted the team had provided a significant amount of information for consumers on their rights where flights have been disrupted by the Middle East Conflict, and where fuel price surcharging had been applied by airlines/tour operators.
27. The Board was updated on the CMA's investigation into Ryanair and charges being applied for parents/carers wishing to be seated with their children.
28. *Consumer Panel Annual Report* – The Board was advised that the Panel had previously developed a two-year workplan through to November 2026. However, most of this had already been completed. In preparation for a new Panel Chair being appointed, a further one-year plan had been created to ensure continuity of activities.
29. The Board queried areas where the CAA had made progress in respect of consumers and areas where further improvements could be made. From a Panel perspective it was recognised that there had been a step change in the focus on consumers and the consumer interest in the past few years, particularly in CMG and AvSec. There had also been an increase in the range of issues being submitted to the Panel for its input. However, the embedding of the consumer interest across the wider CAA remained a work in progress, including for situations where the direct or indirect impact on consumers might not necessarily be obvious.
30. The Panel Chair also highlighted that the airport and airline accessibility frameworks and review of terms and conditions had brought about benefits for consumers, but had not necessarily attracted widespread media coverage.
31. The increased demand for accessibility support at airports post-Covid was discussed, as was the issue of passenger vulnerability.
32. The Panel had also welcomed the Aviation Bill and the enhanced consumer protection powers that this would afford the CAA.
33. The Board thanked Jenny Willott for her contribution to the Consumer Panel ahead of her term as Chair finishing towards the end of 2026.
34. Karen St.Jean-Kufuor was recused from the meeting.

IX. Heathrow Airport Stakeholder Session By the Airline Community

X. CX&M Programme Update (BRD-2026-041) By Tracey Martin

35. Karen St.Jean-Kufuor rejoined the meeting.
36. The Board noted the update previously provided in January on CX&M and the subsequent demonstration in May of the ROCC application process. It was acknowledged that earlier delays had appropriately attracted Board scrutiny, and that action has since been taken to address these issues and identify lessons learned.
37. The Board welcomed the identification of lessons learned and noted that steps were being taken to implement them.
38. The Board was advised that governance and oversight arrangements were being strengthened, with digital delivery within the wider CX&M programme moving under the CDIO portfolio.
39. It was agreed that the revised governance and delivery approach should be allowed to operate for a period of six months before a further update to the Board was provided.
40. The Board requested that the next update include a latest status report, with performance presented against the baseline position at this Board.

    ACTION: A further update on the CX&M Programme to be provided to the Board in early 2027. This should reflect the points raised above.

XI. Cyber Improvements (BRD-2026-043) By Tracey Martin

41. The Board welcomed the update on work to enhance the CAA's cyber security capabilities.

XII. Artificial Intelligence Update (BRD-2026-042) By Tim Johnson and Tracey Martin

42. The Board discussed the challenges and opportunities presented by AI.
43. Despite the emergence of AI, the Board recognised the importance that human skill and judgement had in respect of the CAA's operations and the decision-making by accountable individuals.
44. The Board noted the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee's recent deep dive on AI. This had shown that the CAA's internal governance for AI was proportionate.
45. The Board noted the importance of ongoing engagement with the sector to ensure the CAA understood how AI was being used and the pace of change. The Board highlighted the potential risk of knowledge and capabilities being diluted within the sector if AI was relied upon in the development and assessment of safety cases and activities. There would also be a need to understand how other aviation regulators were responding to AI, including how they were preparing for whole sector 'disrupter' AI models that could have an impact on aviation and regulation.
46. From an internal CAA perspective, it would be important to ensure colleagues had access to the right tools and were aware of the policies

and guardrails in place regarding the use of AI tools for business purposes. The Board recommended that change management tools be applied to help identify the cumulative impact of AI-driven changes across the organisation. In respect of its own operation, Board members were also asked to consider how they might make effective use of AI.

47. In discussion, the Board noted the paper and endorsed the accompanying recommendations for implementing AI within the CAA. It was also proposed that a more detailed discussion on AI be tabled for an awayday conversation.
48. Jordan Giddings and Charmion Pears left the meeting.

XIII. Website Development Stocktake and Demonstration (BRD-2026-044) By Tim Johnson

49. The Board welcomed the improvements made to the CAA's website. It was noted that enhancements had been made without the use of external resources or spend.
50. Work to enhance the website would be ongoing and require ownership and input from subject matter experts across the organisation.

XIV. Draft Board and Forward Agenda

51. The Board noted the draft agendas for forthcoming meetings.

XV. Any Other Business

52. No other business was raised.