

GATCOM

30 JANUARY 2014

GATCOM STEERING GROUP – MATTERS CONSIDERED

REPORT BY CHAIRMAN

This paper summarises the matters considered by the GATCOM Steering Group at its meeting on 9 January 2014.

1. FLOODING AND POWER OUTAGE ON CHRISTMAS EVE

1.1 GAL provided an overview of local flooding and the systems failures in the North Terminal on Christmas Eve as a result of the unusually high rainfall on Christmas Eve. In the early hours of Christmas Eve GAL received notification from the Environment Agency that the River Mole would burst its banks within 30 minutes. GAL explained that the flood risk for Gatwick was last assessed with the Environment Agency in 2008. At that time, the South Terminal had been assessed as having a 1 in 20 year flood risk and the North Terminal with a much lower risk of between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 year flood risk. The majority of GAL's investment in flood alleviation and mitigation had therefore been focused on the South Terminal.

1.2 In addition to flooding in the surrounding area, the exceptionally high rainfall resulted in the North Terminal's roof and associated drainage network (outflows and drainage ponds) being overloaded and flooding Gatwick's power distribution room which affected a number of, but not all, airport systems. GAL therefore took the decision to try to ensure passengers could continue with their journey on Christmas Eve and transferred a significant proportion of the flight schedule from the North Terminal to the South Terminal where power and systems were unaffected.

1.3 GAL's management of the significant disruption and operational recovery is now subject to a comprehensive internal review being conducted by David McMillan, one of GAL's Non-Executive Directors. The review will look at the lessons learned and what actions are required to avoid a reoccurrence. GATCOM's Passenger Advisory Group has been invited to participate in the review to input the passenger perspective. The importance of GAL contacting all airlines and business partners as part of the review about their experiences and the impact to their operations was highlighted. It was also suggested that David McMillan also consults the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign to gain a better understanding of the flooding impact in the local area.

1.4 The Steering Group acknowledged the extremely difficult circumstances that day and commended GAL for its honest reflection that there were areas where its response and resilience plan fell short. Members welcomed GAL's goodwill gesture of £100 of high street vouchers for all those passengers who had flights cancelled. It was suggested however that the goodwill gesture be extended to those passengers significantly impacted by the disruption and experienced delays in excess of 24 hours. GAL would consider this request.

1.5 Members looked forward to receiving the outcome of David McMillan's review, which was due to be completed in February.

2. THE CAPACITY DEBATE

Airports Commission Interim Report

2.1 Consideration was given to the key aspects of the Airports Commission's Interim Report insofar as it relates to Gatwick Airport for the short to medium term and also for the long term. For the short to medium term the Commission has recommended for immediate action to improve the efficiency of the UK's current aviation system a package of measures. Of key interest to GATCOM is the package of surface transport improvements which specifically includes the enhancement of Gatwick Airport Station and improvements to the Gatwick Express.

2.2 For the longer term, the Airports Commission announced its short list of two sites where the provision of new runways will be taken forward for further detailed study proposals for new runways – Gatwick and Heathrow. **More details about the Commission's Interim Report are given in a separate paper considered elsewhere on this agenda.**

GAL's Runway 2 (R2) Work

2.3 GAL updated the Steering Group on its work and the next steps. GAL has welcomed the Commission's decision to shortlist Gatwick as a site for further study and analysis.

2.4 GAL is continuing with its work on developing possible options for a new runway at Gatwick, which will include the option selected by the Airports Commission for local consultation in April/May 2014. It was pointed out however that GAL will still be undertaking local consultation at the time when it is required to submit refreshed proposals to the Airports Commission for consideration (9 May 2014). Nonetheless, GAL will consider the results of its local consultation during May/June and hopes to come to a conclusion on the best possible option for Gatwick by the end of June/beginning of July 2014. It was questioned whether GAL should drop its other possible options to help reduce anxiety amongst communities and blight around Gatwick. GAL explained that although the option included in the Commission's short list had the greater operational/capacity benefits it also had the greatest environmental impact. GAL was of the view that all its options should be subject to consultation locally to help determine the best option for Gatwick, the local community and the region.

2.5 GAL advised that it had some issues with some of the data (not provided by GAL) included in the vast suite of background documents published by the Airports Commission alongside the Interim Report. These would be discussed further with the Commission as it was important that GAL had a clear understanding and validity of all the assumptions that had been made about Gatwick's future.

2.6 In respect of blight, GAL has acknowledged the Airports Commission's recommendation that the Government and those promoting schemes should consider what steps can be taken to address blight concerns such as considering what mitigations could be put in place, be that through individual engagement with the property owners affected or through the introduction of targeted assistance schemes for those in immediate hardship. GAL is seeking further clarification on this recommendation but highlighted that GAL already has in place two schemes to offset property blight.

3. GATWICK AIRPORT STATION

3.1 The Steering Group welcomed the Government's inclusion in the December 2013 National Infrastructure Plan a project for a further £50m for a redevelopment of the Gatwick Airport station. The Airports Commission suggested that the Government works with Network Rail and Gatwick Airport to implement a significant enhancement of the airport station (circa £180 million) through the construction of a new concourse and ticket hall with enhanced access to platforms, subject to the airport providing an appropriate contribution to the costs of the scheme. GAL is to meet the DfT mid-January to commence the process of developing a cost sharing agreement which was likely to include a number of partners/commercial interests.

3.2 GAL/Network Rail will use the Transport Forum's Steering Group, which brings together all the key stakeholders, as well as GATCOM/PAG, to input to the development of a scheme. The Office of the Rail Regulator will also need to support the scheme.

3.3 Members considered it important that a scheme was developed to transform the station into a world class transport interchange to provide a seamless transfer between all transport modes for all users (airport users, commuters, local people) as well as having the ability/space to accommodate future growth in the event of a new runway being constructed at Gatwick. GAL confirmed that an initial examination of the site options confirmed that the current station site was in the right place, the new platform 7 provided platform capacity for the long term and there was scope to provide the right capacity for the concourse. GAL will keep GATCOM informed as the scheme proposal progresses.

4. LONDON AIRSPACE CONSULTATION

4.1 The Steering Group considered and agreed on behalf of GATCOM a response to the NATS/GAL consultation on proposed changes to London airspace.

4.2 Following the last meeting of GATCOM when it was agreed that the Committee had a role in making strategic observations about the concepts under consideration, the Secretariat sought comments from all members for possible inclusion in GATCOM's response. The comments received from members related to:

- A need for a second round of consultation on the detail of proposed flight paths

- Noise impact studies and the need for research to assess and weigh positive noise and air quality impacts and reductions that would be achieved for areas currently overflowed
- A need for research into the impact of noise and annoyance
- The design of flight paths should, as a high priority, avoid areas not previously overflowed. Also consideration of avoiding high ground where noise impact is greatest
- A need for compensation/mitigation for those newly overflowed
- The need to preserve AONBs and areas of tranquillity and avoidance of sensitive areas should take precedence up to 7000 ft
- Support for the consideration of respite options
- Point Merge Arcs and the impact from concentration of routes needed to be considered such as a number of routes
- Point Merge Arcs should be located over the English Channel
- The need to be consulted in later phases of London Airspace Management Programme, particularly that for Heathrow as its departure routes have implications for the height of Gatwick's traffic to the north of the airport.

4.3 All these points were included in GATCOM's response which is appended to this report.

5. NIGHT FLYING RESTRICTIONS AT HEATHROW, GATWICK AND STANSTED STAGE 2 CONSULTATION

5.1 Initial consideration was given to the draft GATCOM response to the DfT's Stage 2 consultation on night flying restrictions for Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports. Some members regretted that the DfT had proposed not to make any significant changes to the current regime before the Airports Commission had completed its work and the Government has had time to consider its recommendations. The next regime which will last until October 2017 which means there will have been little or no change to the regime since that of 2006-2012. Nonetheless, the Steering Group recognised that with the many uncertainties arising from pending policy decisions in the intervening period, the proposal is now probably the least disruptive approach.

5.2 GATCOM is asked to consider and agree its response to the consultation (**see separate paper considered elsewhere on this agenda**).

6. DFT REVIEW OF GUIDELINES FOR AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

6.1 The DfT is consulting interested parties on the reviewed draft Guidelines for Airport Consultative Committees (ACCs). The Steering Group gave initial consideration to the changes proposed and issues for inclusion in GATCOM's response to the consultation. There was general support for the DfT's proposals to include five principles for ACCs – Independent, Representative, Knowledgeable, Transparent and Constructive and a Member Code of Conduct. In respect of the latter it was felt that the issue of regular non-attendance by members at meetings should be addressed.

6.2 The Steering Group was pleased to note that the DfT has reaffirmed its desire to ensure that the Guidelines remain non-prescriptive and flexible and that it does not wish to upset the existing good governance and working arrangements. Members had concerns about the emphasis placed on community groups in draft guidelines and hoped that this would not lead to pressure from "single issue" groups gaining membership of ACCs which could upset the existing balance of interests and good working arrangements on ACCs. Whilst the importance of ensuring engagement with local community interest groups was recognised, it was felt that there was a need for greater clarification in the guidelines for this category and how ACCs should determine requests or develop criteria for membership bearing in mind the need to keep the size of committees manageable and balanced.

6.3 It was also disappointing that there was an absence of a specific focus or reference to passenger interests.

6.4 The views of the Steering Group have been included in **the draft GATCOM response set out in a separate paper considered elsewhere on this agenda**.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL CHARGING – CAA REVIEW OF IMPACT OF NOISE AND NOX LANDING CHARGES

7.1 Consideration was given to a paper giving details of the CAA's review of the impact of noise and NOx landing Charges at airports ([click here](#) to see report). The CAA's main finding overall was that although differential environmental landing charges have some incentive effects, they were unlikely to be the main financial driver for using quieter and less-polluting aircraft. It felt that more

effective charging schemes could be developed which drive improvement through the setting of more appropriate charge differentials, and by earlier introduction of the higher charges for categories of aircraft that exhibit poor noise and NOx performance relative to emerging standards.

7.2 The Steering Group discussed the key findings in respect of Gatwick which found that Chapter 4 category aircraft (newer, quieter aircraft) charges did not have differentials in the same way as the Chapter 3 category aircraft (older noisier aircraft) to reflect the reducing noisiness of aircraft in this category. Also, Gatwick offered the worst noise value for money for the use of the quieter Chapter 4 aircraft, with the best value offering for the noisier Chapter 3 aircraft. The CAA felt this model may disincentivise airlines from using these quieter aircraft. The Steering Group was pleased to learn that GAL was considering introducing differentials for aircraft groups in the Chapter 4 category. As these groups of aircraft make up approximately 98% of the fleet at Gatwick, members felt it important that the environmental charges were effective and incentivised continued improvement. The Steering Group requested that as part of its review GAL also consider extending the same incentive principles applied to night flights in the summer to the winter season.

7.3 As regards NOx landing charges, the CAA found that Gatwick and Heathrow were the only airports to provide some incentives to airlines to use best-in-class aircraft in terms of levels of NOx emission. The CAA felt the scheme in place offered the right incentives.

7.4 In view of the fact that GAL was considering introducing differentials for aircraft groups in the Chapter 4 category, the Steering Group agreed that there were no matters requiring the attention of GATCOM or NATMAG at the present time.

8. END NOISE ACTION PLAN

8.1 GAL provided an update following the consultation with members of GATCOM on the draft revised plan. GAL thanked members for their comments and confirmed that all the points raised by GATCOM, individual members and other interests have been taken into account and will be reflected in the NAP to be submitted to Defra and the DfT. The Steering Group commented on the short timeframe for the consultation and questioned whether GAL had the right level of resource given the significant number of issues and consultations the Noise Team currently had to address. GAL confirmed that extra resource had been allocated in the summer to help the team meet correspondence response targets.

9. IMPLEMENTATION OF P-RNAV

9.1 Consideration was given to a paper informing the Steering Group about the rate of uptake of P-RNAV Standard Instrument Departures since the procedures were introduced at Gatwick in November 2013 - [click here](#) to see report.

9.2 At a recent NATMAG meeting NATS presented data that showed that 21.33% of all departures since the November 2013 operational implementation date had flown P-RNAV SIDs (up from 5%) and that one airline was operating almost 90% of its departures in this manner. Gatwick's Flight Operations, Performance and Safety Committee (FLOPSC) had therefore requested that support be given to the roll-out of P-RNAV SID departures as expeditiously as possible.

NATMAG has referred the matter for GATCOM's consideration and support on the basis that:

- Concentration of tracks within NPRs would improve the noise climate for the majority of the population overflown and that the option to withdraw a P-RNAV SID – reverting to a conventional SID - in the event of difficulty remained.
- Where the concentration of tracks brought issues to light, the sooner these were identified the earlier options such as respite routes or SID re-design could be addressed via the London Airspace Consultation.
- There were operational benefits for both airlines and NATS.

9.3 The Steering Group endorsed FLOPSC's request on behalf of GATCOM and agreed that FLOPSC be advised that:

- FLOPSC be commended for the increased rate of uptake of P-RNAV departures and endorsed its request for continued expedition
- GAL and DfT be reminded of GATCOM's request for research into and action to improve the conditions of those suffering from greater concentration of aircraft tracks

10. REVIEW OF RESIDENTIAL NOISE INSULATION SCHEME

GAL reported on the progress it has made in its review of the noise insulation scheme for residential properties. Members will recall that GAL sought comments from members and officers on how the

current scheme could be enhanced back in 2010. The feedback received from that exercise has been taken into account in the review of the scheme. GAL has periodically updated the Steering Group on progress being made on the review of the scheme and that it was considering a much more generous scheme which has been discussed with the airlines. GATCOM will therefore be pleased to note that GAL hopes to be in a position to launch the new scheme in January.

11. NIGHT TIME ARRIVALS RESPITE TRIAL

GAL is considering the outcome of the trial. GAL/NATS are still in discussion with a university to provide independent expert analysis of the trial data and results. While it was disappointing that this had still to be taken forward, it was acknowledged that it was a very specialised area of expertise. GAL advised that EUROCONTROL who had undertaken work on behalf of the DfT and GAL previously had expressed a willingness to help in analysing the data results.

12. COMMUNITY NOISE DISTURBANCE ISSUES

12.1 The Steering Group noted the continued high number of complaints associated with Seaford 08 departure route in the vicinity of East Grinstead. It was also noted that there has been an increase in the number of "go arounds" as a result of the recent stormy weather.

12.2 GAL has also advised that it is to undertake an operational trial of flight separation over a period of 6 months to gather data for analysis.

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21 January 2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

LONDON AIRSPACE CONSULTATION

Thank you for providing us with the opportunity to comment on the important matter of changes to airspace across south east England and in particular around Gatwick Airport.

GATCOM (the Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee) is the statutory advisory body for Gatwick Airport and comprises representatives from local authorities, the aviation industry, passengers, business, environmental interests and other users of the airport. We provide a forum for informed discussion leading to the provision of advice to the Government, Gatwick Airport Ltd and other organisations on a range of matters concerning the operation and future development of Gatwick. As GATCOM represents a broad church of interests and local communities, GATCOM has agreed that its response should only relate to the process and comments providing a strategic overview on concepts rather than on specific routes/areas.

Whilst GATCOM is not in a position to provide detailed responses to the questions posed in the consultation document we offer the following points for NATS/GAL and the CAA to take into account in further developing the final routes:

Consultation Process

While GATCOM supports the early consultation on the concepts being considered, there has been a significant level of concern expressed across our membership about the consultation process and, particularly the lack of detail about the final proposed routes to be flown. A delegation from GATCOM comprising our Chairman, Vice-Chairman, GATCOM's Lead Member for Noise, GATCOM's Independent Technical Adviser and the Secretariat, have discussed this in more detail with Andy Taylor, NATS and Tom Denton, Gatwick Airport Limited. While GATCOM acknowledges the principle of the approach to the consultation and has, to a degree, been reassured that the consultation on "routes" (swathes) is consistent with the CAA's CAP 725 (which has been formally confirmed to GAL in writing from the CAA) provided the suggested approach as set out below is taken on board prior to any submission to the CAA for approval.

Once the detailed routes have been designed, particularly in relation to those below 7000 ft, NATS/GAL give public notification of the outcome of the consultation and of the final route design to be submitted to the CAA for approval and at the same time undertake a separate consultation on proposals for respite on those final proposed routes.

As P-RNAV will enable aircraft to fly more precisely resulting in a concentration of overflight along a certain route, there is a vital need to explore options to provide some form of respite for those living under the flight paths for both arrivals and departures. GATCOM therefore urges GAL/NATS to identify forms of respite and the use of multiple paths within the detailed design of the routes which should be subject to a further separate consultation, to include other organisations and individuals

who may represent people living underneath the proposed flight paths up to 7000 ft. This will enable affected communities to feedback on the way in which proposed routes are to be used rather than on the location of the proposed final design of a specific route. This would be consistent with the advice given in the DfT's Guidance to the Civil Aviation Authority on Environmental Objectives Relating to the Exercise of its Air Navigation Functions.

In respect of the detailed design of routes at lower altitudes, GATCOM also strongly suggests that a second round of consultation be undertaken particularly in respect of changes to the NPRs and SIDs as required by the CAA's CAP 778.

If, in the event that GAL/NATS decides that this suggested notification and consultation on the use of routes should not be pursued, GATCOM is of the view that the current consultation exercise does not satisfactorily fulfil all the requirements of CAP 725 or CAP 778.

Location of Point Merge Arcs and use of airspace over the sea

It is acknowledged that it is proposed to replace conventional holds or stacks with a new design concept, Point Merge which will change the spread of flight paths across South East England. While the potential environmental benefits of this concept compared with the existing holding/stack arrangements are recognised, a number of our members have questioned whether greater use could be made of the airspace over the sea, particularly in respect of the future location of the Point Merge Arcs, to further reduce the impact of overflight on local communities. It is understood that in the later phases of redesign Heathrow's airspace there may be potential options to further explore the location of Point Merge Arcs over the sea at a much higher level as the barriers that currently exist as a result of the Heathrow/Gatwick traffic will have been resolved. GATCOM therefore requests that NATS gives further consideration to this point but only if it does not result in a concentration of flights at low altitudes over greater distances over the land.

Design of final routes

GATCOM urges NATS/GAL to avoid wherever possible designing flightpaths over areas not previously overflowed or that will increase overflight significantly over areas that currently experience little overflight.

Preserving the noise climate for AONBs and areas of tranquility

GATCOM fully supports the principle of designing routes that avoid densely populated areas and improves or preserves the noise climate for AONBs and areas of tranquility where the ambient noise levels are lower and over other sensitive areas. It is hoped therefore that in developing the final design of routes the advice contained in the DfT's Guidance to the Civil Aviation Authority on Environmental Objectives Relating to the Exercise of its Air Navigation Functions is taken into account together with the key aim of reducing the overall impact for communities.

Respite

GATCOM fully supports the concept of providing respite or identifying the use of multiple tracks within a route. As part of this and as mentioned above, GATCOM urges NATS/GAL to avoid wherever possible designing flightpaths over areas not previously overflowed or that will increase significantly overflight of areas that currently experience little overflight.

Mitigation/compensation

While it is acknowledged that there is no legal requirement to pay compensation to people who feel they may be disadvantaged by airspace changes, GATCOM urges NATS/GAL to consider forms of compensation/mitigation for those people not previously overflowed (or to be significantly overflowed) that will be impacted by the proposals.

Noise impact studies and the need for research

At the time of the operational introduction of P-RNAV departures at Gatwick Airport in 2012 GATCOM highlighted the need for there to be a positive take up of the procedure by airlines so that the monitoring of implementation over the next few years could provide meaningful data on which to base decisions for the future. GATCOM believes it important that a full assessment of the noise and disturbance impact is measured and explained to those under the NPRs so that an informed decision can be made on the future NPRs and what mitigation or amelioration schemes are required for those who suffer the negative impacts.

In order to demonstrate that noise and other impacts have been taken into account in the final design of routes as part of this consultation and to give confidence to affected communities that the

right routes have been identified, GATCOM urges NATS/GAL to undertake noise impact studies into the likely effects of noise on a range of route options overflying rural and urban areas and different topographies to ensure that the negative impacts on sensitive areas (urban or rural) can be minimised. It is also hoped that the data being collected from the operation of P-RNAV on departure routes at Gatwick is also considered.

In addition to this, there needs to be research to assess and weigh the positive noise and air quality impacts of reducing the area currently over-flown against the negative noise and air quality impacts of intensification in frequency of flights along a single path. This should additionally include full consideration of appropriate respite and other feasible mitigation measures.

GATCOM has also highlighted to the Government and the CAA the urgent need for research to be commissioned into the effects of aircraft overflight on communities looking beyond the effects of noise and examining the causes and costs of annoyance. GATCOM believes there is a need to improve understanding of how people become annoyed by aircraft noise and hopes that NATS/GAL can through the results of this consultation urge the CAA to work with the industry to support independent research to improve understanding to enable the industry to respond and communicate its work.

Finally, GATCOM would like the opportunity to be consulted again in the later phases of LAMP when the departure routes for Heathrow are being examined as there may be implications for the altitude of Gatwick's aircraft.

Yours faithfully,



Assistant Secretary