

GATCOM

19 JULY 2012

GATCOM STEERING GROUP – MATTERS CONSIDERED

REPORT BY VICE-CHAIRMAN

1. P-RNAV DEPARTURE ROUTES CONSULTATION

1.1 At the last meeting of GATCOM, members received a report on the P-RNAV trials that were being undertaken on departure routes at Gatwick. The Steering Group has now had the opportunity to consider GAL's draft consultation paper on a proposed way forward in seeking the interim implementation of the P-RNAV departure routes and the proposed consultation process. (The implementation at Gatwick is termed "interim" since there will be a London-airspace-wide implementation of P-RNAV Standard Instrument Departures (SIDs) under the NATS London Airspace Management Programme (LAMP) after 2018. This, too, will be subject to consultation).

1.2 The Steering Group generally supported the interim proposal. However, as a very small percentage of flights are currently following P-RNAV departures, it is unknown at this stage what the impact will be on the populations overflowed. As the take up of P-RNAV flights increases over the interim period (the next 4-5 years), GAL, NATS and NATMAG (the latter on behalf of GATCOM) will be able to monitor and evaluate a range of impacts. GAL emphasised to the Steering Group that if it becomes evident that populations under the P-RNAV routes are significantly impacted there would be scope to revert to the use of conventional SID(s) during the interim period. The benefit of the interim implementation will be that, before P-RNAV SIDs are implemented nationally on a permanent basis from 2018, GAL and NATS will be well placed to influence decisions on the routes to be flown as the interim proposal will provide the evidence of what has worked well and not so well locally.

1.3 Members emphasised the importance of the consultation paper being presented in layman's terms as it was a complex subject to understand. GAL noted a number of comments to improve the document's content, to better clarify the proposed interim arrangements and what it means for the longer term. In particular, the Steering Group asked that the consultation paper include a more comprehensive glossary of terms, a non-technical summary, clearer maps showing the routes and areas of population and concise details of the process for the interim and longer term implementation arrangements.

1.4 Members noted that GATCOM's role in the process was that of a consultee, to offer views on the proposed interim proposal. GATCOM would therefore be one of the formal consultees along with the affected county, district, borough, and parish councils. It was important that GATCOM representatives ensure that all such affected communities were informed of the consultation. Members also emphasised the need for the consultation to be open and transparent including the eventual submission of the application to the CAA/DAP, who would make the final decision.

1.5 The consultation paper and covering report from the Secretariat is considered later on the agenda.

2. GATWICK MASTER PLAN

2.1 GAL updated the Steering Group on the progress made on finalising the Gatwick Master Plan. A number of substantial changes had been made to the document that

took into account the comments raised by respondents to the public consultation exercise. These included more information on surface access, particularly the work on better promoting the use of public transport, the impact of the airport's operation and mitigation measures, revised economic benefits assumptions and revised forecasts. GAL aimed to launch the new Master Plan at GATCOM on 19 July.

Gatwick's economic benefits

2.2 As requested at the last meeting of GATCOM, the Steering Group received an update from GAL's consultants, Optimal Economics, on its work on re-examining the assumptions relating to the economic benefits of Gatwick to be included in the final Master Plan. Member noted all the factors and comparisons that had been taken into account. In 2011/12 Gatwick's impact on employment in London and the South East was 41,700 jobs, contributing £1,972 million of GVA, the revised assumption is that when the airport reaches 40 million passengers per annum, Gatwick's impact will be 43,300 jobs and £2,051 million of GVA. Main reduction is in the forecast of "on-airport" employment (e.g. greater productivity, more operational efficiencies such as self service check-in), and that 40 mppa would be reached later than previously assumed. A copy of the presentation slides are available on GATCOM's website at: <http://www2.westsussex.gov.uk/ds/cttee/gat/gat190712i5pres.pdf>

2.3 GAL confirmed that Optimal Economics report would be made publicly available when the Master Plan was published in July.

2.4 The Steering Group was pleased that the revised figures appeared more realistic than had been included in the consultation draft Master Plan.

3. LOCAL AIR QUALITY MONITORING – ANNUAL REPORT 2011

3.1 Reigate and Banstead Borough Council and GAL reported on the results of the 2011 air pollution monitoring undertaken on and in the vicinity of Gatwick Airport. Mr. Hibbs, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council reported that there had been no breach in the annual air quality average standard for nitrogen dioxide or the air quality standards for other pollutants under the local authority air quality management regime. Members will be pleased to learn that the trend analysis of the nitrogen dioxide concentrations at properties most at risk of breaching the air quality objective show a continued downward trend. However, passenger numbers and aircraft movements at Gatwick increased by 7.3% and 4.4% respectively in 2011 compared 2010, the first increase in three years but still remain below the 2007 peak by 4.4% and 6.% respectively which has helped to reduce nitrogen dioxide concentrations at the worst affected properties. Traffic flows on the M23 spur also remain 12% below the 2006 peak. The Steering Group noted therefore that it was important to keep a watching brief.

3.2 In respect of ozone, although the airport is not responsible for local ozone pollution, ozone is important in the formation of nitrogen dioxide which is the main pollutant of concern around Gatwick. Ozone concentrations in the vicinity of the airport did not meet the UK air quality standard for the sixth consecutive year but the low ozone levels help to contain nitrogen dioxide levels at the airport.

3.3 A copy of the report is available on the GATCOM website at <http://www2.westsussex.gov.uk/ds/cttee/gat/gat190712i5air.pdf>

4. ECONOMIC REGULATION OF GATWICK

4.1 The Steering Group gave initial consideration to a consultation that GATCOM has received from the CAA on the policy update for the next regulatory period which will take effect from April 2014. It was noted that the next regulatory period would be based on the new powers and requirements of the Civil Aviation Bill that was currently going

through Parliament. There were seven key questions on which the CAA welcomed comments but members agreed that only four of the questions were appropriate for GATCOM to consider and comment upon. Members also noted that the Vice-Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Passenger Advisory Group, together with the Secretariat were to meet representatives of the CAA on 9 July to discuss the new focus on the passenger in the regulation of airports and the way in which GATCOM can input to the new process.

4.2 One of the key consultation questions was on the rationale for economic regulation at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports. GAL set out its case for the economic de-regulation of Gatwick. GAL is of the view that under new ownership Gatwick now competed with the other London airports for routes and services and believes that it did not have substantial market power. Accordingly GAL is questioning whether it should continue to be subject of economic regulation. The Steering Group noted that the CAA's initial view is that there is a case for some form of "lighter touch" regulation at Gatwick for a time beyond April 2014 (the end of the current regulatory period Q5). The airlines are similarly of this view particularly as they had little choice at the capacity constrained London airports.

4.3 The Steering Group discussed the question of whether regulation hindered or helped the efficient and sustainable operation of the airport. GAL's view was that the regulatory process was slow and distorted competition. The company felt that competition rather than regulation was a better way forward as it encouraged more timely investment, better relations with airlines, faster, proactive growth and connectivity as well as offering a better passenger experience.

4.4 Members considered the current schedule of landing charges at Gatwick and specifically questioned whether regulation hindered or aided environmental improvement through the charges that could be levied. GAL has clarified that the current structure of charges incentivised the efficient use of the runway and it was noted that regulation only capped the overall yield rather than having an influence on the structure of charges which could provide scope for greater incentives for airlines to use cleaner, quieter aircraft.

4.5 Even if Gatwick were de-regulated it would still remain subject to the Airport Charges Directive which came into effect on November 2011.

4.6 It was agreed that the Steering Group would submit any further comments to the Secretariat so that a form of response to the CAA could be prepared for GATCOM's consideration and approval (to be considered later on the agenda).

5. GATWICK'S INITIAL BUSINESS PLAN TO 2020

5.1 GATCOM's response to GAL's Initial Business Plan to 2020 was noted (copy [attached](#)). The Steering Group sought clarification on the allocation in the draft capital plan for runway safeguarding. GAL advised that it was possible that as part of the Government's forthcoming consultation that GAL might be asked to undertake some evaluation of options for the future and the allocation was to cover any associated consultants or legal costs. Reference was made to Mr. Wingate's interview that featured in an article in the Sunday Telegraph which had caused some anxiety in local communities. GAL assured members that it was committed to the 1979 legal agreement that prevented the construction of a second runway at Gatwick until 2019 and reiterated that the position as set out in the Master Plan that there were no current plans for a second runway but that GAL would continue to safeguard land for the future.

6. DfT CONSULTATION ON THE COMBINED THAMESLINK, SOUTHERN AND GREAT NORTHERN FRANCHISE

6.1 Initial consideration was given to the suggested draft response to the DfT's consultation on the new Thameslink "super" franchise.

6.2 It was felt that the suggested response needed to set out more explicitly the need for the Government to have a joined up approach between its aviation policy and rail policies which better recognised the need for efficient and passenger friendly rail-air connectivity especially at the UK's international gateways.

6.3 GAL is to host a further rail event on 20 July to discuss the Thameslink franchise to which all GATCOM members would be invited to attend.

7. COMMUNITY NOISE DISTURBANCE ISSUES

7.1 GAL reported that overall there had been less noise complaints compared with the same period the previous year. There was a new developing trend in relation to the overflight of areas to the west of East Grinstead. The disturbance suffered has coincided with the routine upgrade of an airline's flight system which changed the way in which the aircraft flew one of the departure routes. This had resulted in the airline's overflight being moved away from the Three Woods area (Domewood, New Domewood and Furnace Wood) further towards East Grinstead. Aircraft are however still flying within the permitted swathe of the noise preferential route (NPR).

7.2 Since the change noise complaints from the East Grinstead area had increase from 5 callers the previous year to 31 enquiries over the past few months all of which related to the same issue.

NEIL MALTBY
Vice-Chairman
GATCOM