

## **GATCOM**

**23 OCTOBER 2014**

### **GATCOM STEERING GROUP – MATTERS CONSIDERED**

#### **REPORT BY CHAIRMAN**

This paper summarises the matters considered by the GATCOM Steering Group at its meeting on 2 October 2014.

#### **1. AIRPORTS COMMISSION UPDATE**

1.1 The Airports Commission is aiming to launch its national consultation on the three shortlisted options for a new runway (two Heathrow options and the Gatwick option) in the autumn (end October/beginning November 2014). It is expected that responses will be invited by the end of January 2015, which will enable the Steering Group to give initial consideration to GATCOM's suggested response for recommendation to GATCOM on 29 January.

1.2 Since the last meeting, Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) has submitted responses to the Airports Commission's discussion papers on:

- **Utilisation of UK Airports Capacity** –GAL recognised the critical importance of this subject and that there is a clear need for the UK to make best use of the capacity available within the UK airport system, and that air connectivity is vitally important for the rebalancing of the UK economy
- **Delivery of New Runway Capacity** which looked at the various processes needed to deliver new capacity. GAL's view is that, so long as the choice remains between Gatwick and the two Heathrow options, the most appropriate route would be via a Development Consent Order (DCO) process with a site-specific National Policy Statement (NPS). GAL believes the DCO provides the most appropriate route for infrastructure that is being sponsored by a private investor, as well as providing the most appropriate level of stakeholder engagement.

#### **2. RUNWAY 2 (R2) WORK AND COMMUNITY PLEDGES UPDATE**

2.1 GAL continues to meet the Airports Commission on a frequent basis. The Commission is considering in detail the evaluations and assumptions made by GAL in its submission documentation. Many of the Commission's questions have focused on cost and financeability, surface access, noise, competition and delivery.

2.2 GAL has made a number of community pledges which were outlined at the last GATCOM meeting. Since that time, GAL in its response to the Commission's discussion paper on Delivery of New Runway Capacity put forward a further pledge. In order to provide assurance that Gatwick will maintain and implement its pledges and commitments, it has suggested that consideration be given to the 'monitoring trustee' model. Under such an arrangement, Gatwick would, with the approval of the relevant bodies, appoint an independent trustee at its expense to oversee compliance with its pledges and commitments.

2.3 The Steering Group highlighted that, in the event that it is decided that the Gatwick option should proceed, it will be important to ensure that any monitoring arrangements are agreed with all the Gatwick local authorities in a similar way to that of the 2008 Section 106 Agreement through the local authorities' Memorandum of Understanding. Members have been assured there was no reason why there could not be similar agreement in respect of obligations that flow from a new runway. Assuming that any new runway was granted permission under a DCO, a new agreement could form part of that approval process. Such an agreement would be binding on the current and any future owners of the Airport.

### **3. GATWICK AIRPORT STATION**

3.1 Work on the Gatwick Station project is progressing. Four options of varying scope and cost ranging between £106 million and £186 million are under consideration. The project will provide for a new concourse and improved vertical access to the platforms. The business case for all options is robust and GAL is working closely with partners to secure the necessary funding contributions. As GATCOM is aware, the Government has pledged £50 million towards the scheme and GAL has said it will match that contribution. GAL is confident that the necessary funding will be secured in the next few weeks. It was emphasised that the station enhancement scheme is separate from the decision on the second runway and is one of those schemes that the Airports Commission has recommended for implementation in the short term in its Interim Report. The full transport interchange "Gatwick Gateway" project forms part of the option for a second runway.

### **4. THE NEW THAMESLINK FRANCHISE**

4.1 The DfT awarded the new franchise to Go Via Thameslink Railways (GTR). The first part of the new franchise (the former First Capital Connect franchise) was launched on 14 September 2014 and the South Central franchise (operated as Southern and Gatwick Express) will be merged in July 2015 when the current franchise expires on 26 July 2015.

4.2 Go Via has organised a series of stakeholder forums. At a forum in July it was confirmed that new trains for Gatwick Express would be introduced by 2016 specifically designed for the service (air passengers) including free wi-fi and on board hosts for a number, but not all, Gatwick Express services following success of recent trial. The Gatwick Express and Southern brands will be retained. It was confirmed that GTR had no plans to stop the Gatwick Express at Clapham Junction although the extension of two Gatwick Express services to Brighton in each hour in the off peak will be introduced from December 2015.

4.3 GTR will conduct a full consultation on the key timetable changes in the near future (autumn 2014).

4.4 GTR is committed to stakeholder and community engagement and will put in place partnership working arrangements with Gatwick. An invitation has been sent to GTR to attend the next Steering Group meeting in January.

### **5. LONDON AIRSPACE CHANGE**

5.1 GAL reported that in view of the significant feedback and complaints received from local communities about the impact of the proposed changes to airspace, agreement has been reached with National Air Traffic Services (NATS) to defer putting forward airspace change proposals around Gatwick Airport to the CAA for decision at this time.

5.2 As GATCOM is aware, changes to Gatwick's airspace were at the forefront of the London Airspace Management Programme and deferment will mean that Gatwick is now at the back of the queue for implementation. The delay in taking forward the proposals for Gatwick will mean that greater consideration can be given to the impacts of routes and options for respite, particularly in respect of the use of a number of aircraft tracks within the swathe of a route.

5.3 The Steering Group welcomed the deferment and emphasised the need for all routes to be carefully examined and the importance of retaining wherever possible existing noise preferential routes (NPRs). The Steering Group also discussed the impact of the Government's policy of concentration on communities and the implementation of new navigation technology. Whilst the intention to minimise the number of people overflown was to be welcomed there was a need for the Government and the CAA to seriously consider the significant impact on those communities situated under flightpaths where traffic is concentrated in terms of noise, frequency of overflight, health, mitigation and compensation. The DfT has indicated that NPRs were designed in the 1950s and may no longer be fit for purpose given the new types of aircraft capabilities and new navigation

technology available. The DfT is working with the CAA and GAL through its Aircraft Noise Management Advisory Committee (ANMAC).

5.4 The implementation of P-RNAV on Gatwick's flightpaths in November 2014 was also discussed in detail. As a result of the implementation of the new precision based navigation technology across airline fleets, the Steering Group emphasised that the impacts on those communities under the tracks used within the NPRs are now becoming apparent. GAL has confirmed that the deferment of the London Airspace Changes does not affect the already implemented P-RNAV procedure on departure routes as these were subject to a separate airspace change consultation and decision in 2013.

5.5 As part of the P-RNAV implementation process the CAA is to review the use of the new technology and its impacts. We have reminded GAL that at the time of the formal consultation on P-RNAV a commitment was given that if the implementation of P-RNAV was deemed to be of such a detrimental effect that the procedure could be withdrawn and the traffic reverted back to the conventional procedure. GAL acknowledged members' concerns that the public perception is that P-RNAV has also been withdrawn and that there is a need for the airport to communicate the current situation. Members also enquired to whom communities should write to feedback on the impacts of P-RNAV. The address is:

Email: [airspace.policy@caa.co.uk](mailto:airspace.policy@caa.co.uk)

Postal: Airspace Policy Directorate, CAA, CAA House, 45-59 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6TE.

## **6. ADNID DEPARTURES SEPARATION TRIAL – UPDATE**

6.1 The ADNID trial concluded on 8 August 2014. GAL provided an overview of the number of aircraft movements along the trial route and frequency of movements – the [presentation slides](#) will be available on GATCOM's website. The formal analysis of the data collected is currently under way and is being considered by GAL, NATS and the CAA alongside the data collected from trials at Heathrow.

6.2 The complaints received as a result of the use of the ADNID trial route have now significantly declined but complaints are now being received from those communities that benefitted from the trial. The Steering Group will be kept informed of the results of the trial.

## **7. AIRCRAFT OVERFLIGHT AND AVIATION NOISE – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

7.1 GATCOM has received a number of requests for membership from the wider communities and local authorities around Gatwick as they feel their voice is not being heard and therefore wish to be engaged with the work of the Committee. However, it is important that the balance of interests is maintained and size of the Committee's membership kept manageable to ensure the continued success and effectiveness of the GATCOM.

7.2 In addition to this, the current issue of the way in which airspace is used now and in the future affects a significant area around Gatwick which means that the way in which the airport, CAA, NATS and GATCOM engages with communities further afield needs to be considered to ensure that it is effective and inclusive. Also, in the event that the Airports Commission should recommend that a new runway should be provided at Gatwick there will be a need for the airport to consider appropriate mechanisms to engage with communities as proposals, commitments and pledges develop.

7.3 The Steering Group has therefore given some thought as to how the wider communities without direct representation on GATCOM can be best engaged and involved. Several ideas were discussed and these are to be looked at in more detail with GAL. A report developing some of the ideas will be presented to the next meeting of the Steering Group in January.

## **8. OPERATIONAL RESILIENCE PLANNING**

8.1 As part of the new regulatory framework for Gatwick, GAL is required to produce and review annually its resilience plan for the airport. GAL has given an overview of the draft Operational Resilience Plan which has been developed and subject to consultation with key stakeholders. There are a number of other plans flowing from the overarching resilience plan including the Passenger Welfare Plan and the Adverse Weather Plan.

8.2 All the plans embrace the recommendations of David McMillan following the severe flooding and power outage at Gatwick last Christmas Eve. The Steering Group was given an update on the good progress made in delivering McMillan's 27 recommendations.

8.3 The Operational Resilience Plan will be reviewed early next year to embrace learning from the coming winter period and operational readiness for the peak summer traffic and winter 2015.

**DR JOHN GODFREY DL**  
**Chairman**