

## **GATCOM**

**17 OCTOBER 2013**

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

#### **REPORT BY VICE-CHAIRMAN**

This paper summarises the matters considered by the GATCOM Steering Group at its meeting on 26 September 2013.

#### **1. THE CAPACITY DEBATE**

##### **GAL's update**

1.1 Kyran Hanks, Strategy and Regulation Director, GAL updated members on GAL's work in respect of responding to the Airports Commission and the consideration of options for a second runway at Gatwick. He advised that, assuming Gatwick was one of those options shortlisted to phase 2 of the Airports Commission's work, GAL was preparing an indicative programme to take forward the development of options, impact and sustainability assessment work and local consultation/engagement processes. GAL was anticipating undertaking local consultation in April 2014 on its concepts for expansion at Gatwick. The Airports Commission had identified Autumn 2014 for its national consultation on possible schemes, detailed business cases and sustainability assessments.

1.2 GAL had invited local authorities in the Gatwick region to engage with GAL and its consultants, Farrells, on taking forward the development of options, irrespective of whether those councils supported, opposed or had yet to determine a position on expansion at Gatwick as it was important to take into account local views and concerns. Members were anxious to ensure that all local authorities were given the opportunity to meet with GAL to discuss the runway options. The joint local authority officers' group had agreed to work with GAL in identifying the issues that needed to be addressed and would share/contribute to the database of forecasts and assessments. This will enable all parties to have access to the same information but to draw their own conclusions on the development options for Gatwick. GAL will be writing to county/district/borough councils in West Sussex, Surrey, Kent and East Sussex on its proposed local engagement strategy. The Steering Group emphasised the importance of engaging with other interest groups such as environmental groups, airlines and business community as GAL's work proceeded.

##### **Airports Commission – Gatwick's Long Term Options – GATCOM's response**

1.3 On 7 August, the Airports Commission published [all the long term proposals](#) submitted for new runways, airports and infrastructure changes designed to strengthen the UK and London's air connections with the world. The Steering Group considered whether GATCOM should inform the Airports Commission of those high level matters of greatest importance and interest to GATCOM so that they can be taken into account by the Airports Commission at this early stage in the process and to assist the Commission in developing its draft appraisal framework for its next phase of work.

1.4 Following consultation with all GATCOM members, nominated substitutes and the Passenger Advisory Group on the suggested form of GATCOM's response, a number of comments of support for the suggested response and a few suggestions for improvement were received and reported to the Steering Group for detailed consideration. The Steering Group felt the suggested draft response represented a fair balance of views across the membership of the Committee highlighting the key issues to be addressed in the consideration of runway options at Gatwick. A couple of minor amendments to the wording of the key recommendations were agreed to reflect the fact that there were some organisations that had not reached a decision at this stage in the process on whether there should be a second runway at Gatwick. ([See agenda item no. 6\(c\) for GATCOM's response](#)).

#### **2. GATWICK AIRPORT 2012 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT VERIFICATION REPORT AND 2013 PROGRESS**

##### **Verified Annual Monitoring Report 2012**

2.1 Tom Denton, Head of Corporate Responsibility, GAL provided an update on the production of the Verified Annual Monitoring Report for 2012. GAL hoped to be in a position to publish the verified annual monitoring report in the near future. The report will include the verifiers' recommendations

and GAL's response to them. The Steering Group noted that the vast majority of the commitments and obligations verified were found to be on track although there were a few obligations that were neither on track nor behind schedule in relation to air quality, noise and water. All these matters are being addressed by GAL.

2.2 The Steering Group was pleased that Crawley Borough Council (CBC) and West Sussex County Council (WSSC) were content with the report's findings and that there were no issues that needed to be brought to the attention of GATCOM.

2.3 The Steering Group was also advised that the current Section 106 agreement between GAL, CBC and WSSC ran until 31 December 2015 but provided for the process of re-negotiation to start by the end of 2013. An initial meeting has been held between GAL, WSSC and CBC at which it was agreed, a decision later endorsed by member representatives of the local authorities affected by the Airport, that there was little point in embarking on such a major exercise at this time with so much uncertainty about the future shape of the Airport.

2.4 If Gatwick's long term option proposals are not selected to go forward to the second phase of the Airports Commission's consideration then there will still be time to review the agreement. If the Gatwick options are shortlisted by the Airports Commission then a "rolling forward" of the existing agreement will be undertaken pending a final decision by Government on the basis for achieving additional runway capacity in the South East.

### **Action Plans Progress in 2013**

2.5 GAL has an extensive capital programme which embraces GAL's Decade of Change sustainability targets across a wide range of projects as well as those contained in the Section 106 agreement action plans. GAL is on track to meet its obligations and targets.

2.6 Energy consumption reduction of 37% is on track to be achieved by 2014/15. For example, GAL's newly installed LED lighting on the airfield and runway has achieved a 43% energy consumption reduction compared with the former lighting.

2.7 In respect of the Noise Action Plan (NAP), GAL has received from Defra revised guidance on the review of the Environmental Noise Directive NAP. Only a "light touch" review of the NAP will be required. GAL aims to issue the first draft of the reviewed NAP at the end of November for GATCOM members to comment upon. The reviewed NAP will take into account those matters that remain outstanding from the Hever, Edenbridge and Marsh Green Working Group's 20 point plan. Reference was made to the DfT's recent publication of the 2012 noise contours for Gatwick and the change in the areas covered by the contours. GAL explained that the unusually high number of easterly operations in summer 2012 had resulted in noise contours shifting a little further to the east of the airport, with a reduction to the west.

2.8 Behavioural changes for waste management are being promoted, particularly in respect of recycling across the airport. GAL is reviewing the locations of recycling facilities to ensure they are in the right places. GAL is recycling 100% of construction and airlines' waste.

2.9 Air quality on and around the airport continues to be monitored and good performance is being achieved with no breaches in the air quality standards within Reigate and Borough Council's Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). GAL is in discussion with the Borough Council about the reductions achieved in pollution level resulting from efficiencies gained on the airfield, which also improves ground noise levels, and consideration is being given to reducing the size of the AQMA.

2.10 The issue of recording and monitoring ultrafine particles (UFP) which are not currently subject to any regulation was discussed. This class of air pollutant are far smaller than the regulated PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> pollutants and the health effects of UFPs are unknown. UFP research is still in its early stages and the international debate on whether to regulate these pollutants continues. However GAL is keen to participate in developing greater understanding of these pollutants and is looking at what equipment is available to capture and record levels of UFPs around the airport. However once the data is available the health impacts will still not be known. The Steering Group was pleased to learn that the aviation industry is keen to develop greater understanding of the issues and the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) Assembly is to receive a paper on UFPs this month the outcome of the meeting is available on ICAO's website at: [http://www.icao.int/Meetings/a38/Documents/WP/wp429\\_en.pdf](http://www.icao.int/Meetings/a38/Documents/WP/wp429_en.pdf) (see paragraphs 17.2.13 14). The

Secretariat would ask Reigate and Banstead Borough Council to cover the issue of UFP in its annual report to GATCOM next year.

### **3. NEW THAMESLINK FRANCHISE**

3.1 The DfT has issued the Invitation to Tender (ITT) to prospective bidders for the new 'super' Thameslink franchise which combines the Thameslink, Southern and Great Western franchises including the Gatwick Express. The new franchisee will be required to provide a four train per hour service between London Victoria and Gatwick Airport. However, bidders for the franchise are being given the flexibility to propose changes to current Gatwick rail services, which could include the introduction of stops to the current Gatwick Express service pattern, but any such changes must have the support of GAL.

3.2 In addition, although not a requirement, bidders also may choose to use different rolling stock that is better suited to the needs of airport passengers. GAL continues to discuss with the prospective bidders its requirements as part of the bidding process. Bids are required to be submitted by 24 December 2013.

### **4. USE OF TERMINALS/ FORECOURTS**

4.1 Julia Gregory, Head of Surface Transport, GAL gave a presentation on the use of the airport's forecourts for passenger pick-up following the implementation of the Approved Operators' Scheme in July.

4.2 It was explained that the changes to the use of the forecourts were a component of the targets included in Gatwick's Surface Access Strategy (GSAS) which had been consulted upon and agreed with the Transport Forum Steering Group. There was also an urgent need to tackle severe congestion on the forecourts and the airport's roads caused by excessive dwell time on the forecourts.

4.3 The key targets of GSAS are:

- to introduce a preferred traders scheme for authorised off airport car parks
- reducing the proportion and number of passengers who are dropped off/ picked up by private car
- effectively manage the forecourt drop off areas to ensure efficient use of capacity for drop off of passengers
- Build a strong environmental, health and safety culture through joint working and cooperation with surface transport stakeholders.

4.4 Since the introduction of the approved operators scheme and changes to the use of the forecourts queuing on the forecourts had reduced by 75%, the average dwell time reduced from 10 mins to 2 mins, a 50% reduction in the number of near miss accidents and 8 companies had signed up to the Approved Operators' Scheme. GAL has however received a number of complaints from users and off airport parking/taxi operators. GAL has therefore introduced some changes to the arrangements and 1 hour free park and ride from the long stay car park has been introduced, a holding area provided for off airport taxis and a liaison group established with off airport taxi groups. GAL is also continuing its discussions with GATCOM's PAG.

4.5 Whilst welcoming many elements of the overall scheme and the changes GAL has made to date, members remained concerned about the high cost imposed for local people picking up friends and relatives from the airport and the railway station, particularly in respect of those people from rural areas where there was no public transport available. Dwell time for those passengers was often minimal. It was emphasised that local people, many of whom suffered the negative impacts of the airport are being penalised under the new arrangements. GAL was asked to reconsider the pick up arrangements (see also the report of the [Passenger Advisory Group at agenda item 12](#)).

### **5. LONDON AIRSPACE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME (LAMP)**

5.1 NATS En Route Limited (NERL) is currently defining an extensive programme to modernise UK airspace. The London Airspace Management Programme (LAMP) will affect, to a greater or lesser degree, almost the whole of the airspace above southern England. The LAMP project will introduce new airspace designs in a phased approach between 2015 and 2020 and the first phase will affect aircraft operating into and of Gatwick.

5.2 At a recent stakeholder briefing NERL highlighted that it was looking at:

- Continuous climb operations wherever possible
- Preservation of tranquillity wherever possible
- Reductions in the number of people overflown
- Reductions in carbon emissions

5.3 NERL is planning a consultation later this year for which a dedicated website will be set up. The consultation will highlight possible swathes for aircraft routings rather than the specific line of routes to enable local feedback on the concepts to help inform more detailed designs.

5.4 All county and district/borough councils around Gatwick will be formal consultees. The dedicated website will enable a postcode search facility to target the area, swathes and ideas of interest, of concern to individuals and organisations. The consultation documents will only be available in electronic form with an on-line response form. However we have been advised that hard copy responses would be acceptable or even hybrid electronic/hard copy submissions.

5.3 In association with NERLs' redesign of southern airspace, because of its links to the local airspace, GAL is taking the opportunity to take a fresh look at Gatwick's airspace below 4000ft at the same time. GAL plan to commence an extensive public consultation under the auspices of the LAMP consultation in mid October 2013 on the options and opportunities in the redesign of the airspace around Gatwick with a view to implement changes in 2015.

5.4 GAL explained that the feedback received to the LAMP consultation on swathes/concepts will help inform more detailed designs for Gatwick's airspace which will be subject to a further consultation at a later date. The redesign of Gatwick's airspace will provide an opportunity to take a fresh look at Gatwick's flightpaths for both departures and arrivals and to try to address a number of the concerns raised by local communities over the years.

5.5 The Steering Group emphasised the importance of ensuring that all local communities around Gatwick, both close to the airport and further afield, were invited to engage in the process. It was essential that GAL and NERL had a comprehensive consultation communication programme in place to raise public awareness of the potential changes to the flight paths and likely impacts both positive and negative.

5.6 It was agreed that a presentation on the two elements of the consultation would be given by NATS/GAL at the next GATCOM.

## **6. AIRCRAFT OVERFLIGHT AND NOISE**

### **Night Time Arrivals Respite Trial - Update**

6.1 The 90 days (night) trial commenced at the end of August. Early feedback and monitoring of track maps have revealed that aircraft are flying in the areas identified and at the recommended height. However it was difficult to determine impacts to date due to the changes in the direction of runway usage since the trial started.

6.2 GAL/NATS are still in discussion with a Cambridge university to provide independent expert analysis of the trial data and results. The trial would continue until the end of October.

### **Community Noise Disturbance Issues**

6.3 This summer has been the warmest since 2006 and due to more outdoor activities and open windows means that aircraft overflight is more obvious and intrusive resulting in more noise complaints.

6.4 A high number of complaints from East Grinstead continue to be received, including from the Town Council. There is a perception that aircraft are flying off track but aircraft are still operating within the permitted swathe.

6.5 Complaints from the Tunbridge Wells area have highlighted issues concerning the pitch of noise/tone of certain aircraft. Although these aircraft types have the quietest noise classification, GAL has raised the issue with the engine manufacturers. The DfT also advised that the tone of noise created by A320 aircraft was being examined by the CAA. This matter would be referred to the DfT's Aircraft Noise Management Committee (ANMAC) for consideration.

6.6 The overflight of Horley is regularly discussed by the Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG). The AIP stipulates that populated areas should not be overflown but due to Heathrow traffic in the area there are a number of instances where overflight of Horley occurs. The issue has been raised with the DfT as the AIP, which was published many years ago, may need to be reviewed. There was some concern expressed by members that if the wording of the AIP was relaxed it could result in an increase in overflight of populated areas. It was felt that as safety is always the overriding factor if overflight of Horley needs to occur in order to avoid Heathrow traffic safety would be the only reason for non-compliance.

## **7. GAL'S NOISE SEMINAR 2013**

7.1 GAL is to host its next Noise Seminar on 22 November 2013. In response to feedback from last year's event GAL has reviewed the start time of the event, would use a facilitator and would reduce the number of presentations. Attendance at the event will be by invitation only.

**Neil Maltby**  
**VICE-CHAIRMAN**