

**GATCOM**

**18 OCTOBER 2012**

**GATCOM STEERING GROUP – MATTERS CONSIDERED**

**REPORT BY CHAIRMAN**

This paper summarises the matters considered by the GATCOM Steering Group at its meeting on 27 September 2012.

**1. GATWICK AIRPORT LIMITED'S PEOPLE AGENDA**

1.1 GAL outlined its People Agenda which has been developed in conjunction with GAL staff and working with the unions. The Steering Group was pleased to learn that GAL is dedicated to delivering the highest possible standards for passengers and business partners. Having a motivated, skilled and friendly workforce across the airport was key to achieving that aim. "The Rhythm of Gatwick" sets out the vision and values of staff supported by comprehensive training and up-skilling initiatives such as training in languages including deaf awareness and sign language. As a result of this major focus on improving the passenger experience, GAL's staff now have a better understanding of passengers' needs and requirements which has resulted in passenger compliments rising and passenger complaints decreasing over the past year.

1.2 The Group Steering welcomed GAL's work in this important area and was pleased to note that the induction arrangements offered to new GAL staff were also offered to other companies working at the airport.

**2. GOVERNMENT AVIATION POLICY**

**Draft Aviation Policy Framework**

2.1 The Steering Group gave initial consideration to the suggested GATCOM response to the Government's consultation on the draft aviation policy framework. It was agreed that the following changes would be made to the draft response:

- Inclusion of an introductory paragraph(s) emphasising the importance of Gatwick to the local and regional economy but also highlighting the need for Gatwick to grow sustainably recognising the impacts this has on local communities and the environment
- Emphasise that the support in principle for extending Fifth Freedoms policy is on the basis conditions are imposed to address the problem of distortion in competition that would be created for UK based airlines and that reciprocal arrangements are put in place in other countries
- Revise the suggested responses relating to noise contours
- Recognition to be given to the role that voluntary arrangements in the management and mitigation of aircraft noise and that these need to be developed to give greater incentives to airlines
- the need for research into the causes of annoyance to assist in defining the "onset of significant community annoyance" and to help determine future noise measurements
- Include support for pre-immigration clearance for USA bound passengers
- Include reference to the need for the DfT to revise the guidelines for ACCs at the earliest possible time

2.2 The revised draft response is to be considered at [agenda item no. 7\(c\)](#).

**House of Commons Transport Committee Inquiry – Airport Capacity in the UK**

2.3 The Steering Group considered the Transport Committee's call for evidence for its Inquiry into airport capacity in the UK. Members felt it important for GATCOM to submit a response to some of the questions posed by the Transport Committee based on

previous responses to Government consultations and the draft responses contained in the suggested GATCOM response to the Government's draft aviation policy framework.

2.4 The response which has subsequently been drafted is considered at [agenda item no. 7\(d\)](#).

### **3. P-RNAV DEPARTURE ROUTES CONSULTATION**

3.1 The suggested draft response to GAL's consultation on the implementation of P-RNAV departure routes at Gatwick Airport was considered. With the exception of the representative from the Environmental and Amenities Groups, there was general support for the implementation of the P-RNAV departure routes at Gatwick ahead of the 2018 national roll out when the London Airspace Management Programme would start to be implemented.

3.2 Members commented on the small percentage of departures that currently used the P-RNAV flight procedure. In order for more aircraft to fly P-RNAV, the procedure needs to be adopted in an airlines flight management plan. It was important therefore that GAL encouraged airlines to adopt P-RNAV flight procedures in flight management plans at the earliest possible time so as to make the trial over the next few months as well as after the implementation (if agreed by the CAA) more meaningful. Members will be pleased to learn that GAL has already raised the matter at the Flight Operators' Performance and Safety Committee and is being considered by airlines.

3.3 Members also felt it important that consideration was given to mitigation and amelioration schemes for those who suffer the negative impacts of P-RNAV.

3.4 NATMAG's response to GATCOM's request for more monitoring during the P-RNAV trial was also considered. The Steering Group noted the monitoring arrangements that would be put in place.

3.5 The revised draft response is considered at [agenda item no. 8](#).

### **4. GATWICK AIRPORT 2011 ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT VERIFICATION REPORT AND 2012 ACTION PLANS PROGRESS**

4.1 Crawley Borough Council's Planning Officer reported the monitoring results of GAL's performance in delivering its sustainability commitments and legal obligations. The Annual Monitoring Report for the year 1 January to 31 December 2011 was subjected to external verification and audit by SKM Enviros. Although the verification process has been completed and the consultants have discussed their draft report with GAL, WSCC and CBC, a finalised verification statement has yet to be issued.

4.2 Twelve commitments and obligations were selected for audit of which ten were found to be on track with one found to be neither on track nor behind schedule and one to be behind schedule. These were:

- Obligation 5.3: relating to the collation and spending of the car parking levy (neither on track nor behind schedule)
- Obligation 10.1: on Crawley Borough Council to arrange meetings to discuss long term airport parking (behind schedule)

4.3 It was felt that these findings did not raise any causes for concern for GATCOM and they are being addressed by the parties.

4.4 As regards SKM Enviros assessment of GAL's Action Plans, GAL's Noise Action Plan and the Surface Access Action Plan were found to be fit for purpose in identifying priorities for action. However in respect of the action plans for air quality, water, waste and energy, the consultants have recommended that in order to be fit for purpose, the action plans needed to be supported by more detailed implementation plans. GAL is currently revising the action plans and strategy implementation plans.

4.5 A copy of the [report](#) considered by the Steering Group is available on the GATCOM website at <http://www.gatcom.org.uk/> .

## **5. GATWICK'S FLY QUIET AND CLEAN PROGRAMME AND NOISE SEMINAR**

5.1 GAL informed the Steering Group of its proposed Fly Quiet and Clean Programme which it aims to launch at a Noise Seminar to be held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2012 to which members of GATCOM would be invited to attend. Members welcomed the arrangements that were being made for the event.

## **6. NATMAG MEMBERSHIP**

6.1 NATMAG has considered GATCOM's request to increase the Committee's representation by one more seat to 8 members (members will recall that GATCOM's representation was increased by an additional seat as recently as May 2012). However NATMAG's view was that increasing GATCOM's representation further would make the Group unbalanced to the community side. NATMAG felt however the Group would benefit greatly from increased representation (and more regular attendance) from the industry side as the knowledge airlines bring is key to both a complete understanding of the issues and respect for NATMAG's recommendations. The Steering Group noted the position and asked the Secretariat to review GATCOM's appointing process and report to a future meeting.

## **7. COMMUNITY NOISE DISTURBANCE ISSUES –UPDATE**

### **Hever, Edenbridge, Marsh Green Noise Issues Working Group**

7.1 GAL provided an update on the progress made on taking forward some of the actions suggested by the Hever, Edenbridge and Marsh Green Noise Issues Working Group. The Steering Group was pleased to note that from the 20 point wish list, there were 5 matters that remained outstanding but were being progressed. Members highlighted the need to communicate the progress that had been made to the wider community. It was agreed therefore that GAL would provide to GATCOM a written summary reporting the progress made (to be discussed at agenda item no. 12). The Steering Group agreed that this would conclude GATCOM's consideration of the residents' 20 point plan.

### **Overflight of areas west of East Grinstead**

7.2 GAL reported on the continued increase in the number of noise complaints received from residents west of East Grinstead which had coincided with an airline routinely updating its flight management system. This had resulted in aircraft flying a slightly different path at the edge of, but within, the noise preferential route (NPR). The Steering Group noted that this had meant that residents from the Three Woods area were not being overflown so regularly by that particular airline but it had had a negative impact on areas west of East Grinstead. While it was recognised that the slightly different path now being flown was still within the permitted swathe of the NPR, members highlighted that if P-RNAV was adopted by aircraft using that route then it would mean that aircraft would fly more closely the centreline of the NPR. If this was the case it would enable GAL and NATS to monitor the impacts of P-RNAV and help determine the P-RNAV flight path which would cause the least annoyance in the future.

**John Godfrey**  
**CHAIRMAN**