

GATCOM

26 APRIL

GATCOM STEERING GROUP - ISSUES CONSIDERED

REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

This paper summarises the matters considered by the GATCOM Steering Group at its meeting on 29 March 2012.

1. P-RNAV DEPARTURE ROUTES

1.1 Andy Taylor of National Air Traffic Services (NATS) updated the Steering Group on the P-RNAV trial which is being undertaken on the departure routes at Gatwick and options being considered for implementation of P-RNAV departure routes for the longer term. The CAA's policy is that precision area navigation should be the standard applied in terminal airspace and accordingly P-RNAV procedures are expected to be mandated in the future for flight in the London Terminal Airspace by 2018. To aid members' understanding of the complexities of the need for P-RNAV procedures and the implementation of International Civil Aviation Organisation's (ICAO) "One Sky" vision, the Independent Technical Adviser gave an overview of the various planning documents and projects associated with the implementation of harmonised procedures affecting UK airspace now and in the future.

1.2 The purpose of the trial at Gatwick has been to determine the operational benefits of using P-RNAV to fly Standard Instrument Departures (SIDs) from Gatwick. The objective of the trial included various assessments to establish whether the procedures could be accommodated safely within the busy terminal airspace around Gatwick. The trial to date has revealed that there have been no adverse effects on air traffic management for either ATC or airlines/pilots. There has been significantly better track keeping when analysing P-RNAV routes flown (in line with the centreline of the conventional SID upon which the P-RNAV SID is based) with the exception of one of the routes out of Gatwick which requires a tight right turn where more work is required to ensure alignment within the NPR.

1.3 The Steering Group was informed of the ways in which the P-RNAV procedure could be implemented on a permanent basis ahead of the wider London Terminal Airspace change procedures, which are due to be implemented in 2018. Members had a full and detailed discussion and it was recognised that if the changes were to be made permanent there was a need to look objectively at the wider benefits and disbenefits of implementing P-RNAV on a permanent basis.

1.4 The current trial is due to end mid April 2012. Members felt that more information and evidence needed to be gathered on the use of the P-RNAV SID routes, such as whether it was best to concentrate flight paths along the centre line of the NPR, whether more than one route could be used within a swathe of a NPR or whether the centre-line was the most appropriate route in terms of the population overflowed and that would cause the least annoyance. The Steering Group emphasised the importance of gaining this information prior to any public consultation being undertaken and decisions made for the longer term (2018 onwards). Members agreed that it would be beneficial to continue the trial and that GAL and NATS should seek a one-year extension to the current trial from the CAA.

1.5 The Steering Group also felt it important that NATMAG closely monitors the impacts of the trial to ensure that the results will be meaningful on which robust decisions can be made to influence longer term developments (2018 onwards).

1.6 The Group discussed the issue of causes of annoyance and it was highlighted that there was little scientific evidence about the impact of different noise patterns/frequencies on disturbance suffered and annoyance. There was a need therefore for the Government and the industry to investigate this further. It was also commented that there was a need to review the way in which noise was measured as there had been an increase in the number of complaints from a larger geographical area despite aircraft being quieter.

1.7 It is therefore **recommended** that:

- (1) GATCOM supports the extension of the P-RNAV trial for a further year; and
- (2) GATCOM requests that NATMAG closely monitors the impacts of the trial, including the density of the population overflow on each of the P-RNAV routes, the number of noise complaints received attributable to the trial and whether the route(s) being flown within a swathe is/are the one(s) that cause least annoyance for local communities.

2. CAA AND THE ENVIRONMENT – IMPROVING AVIATION’S SUSTAINABILITY NOW AND FOR THE FUTURE

2.1 Consideration was given to a [paper](#) prepared by the Independent Technical Adviser, Ros Howell, giving details about the CAA’s consultation document “CAA and the Environment” which sets out how the CAA plans to meet its strategic environmental objective. Mrs Howell had attended the CAA’s stakeholders’ day to discuss the content and scope of its draft environmental strategy and provided feedback on the key issues that had been raised. The Steering Group noted that the CAA was exploring ways in which it could help facilitate airports and communities working together to explore options to mitigate noise. Stakeholders had commented that as the CAA was to advise the Government on aviation policy it could be seen as part of the problem rather than a facilitator of a solution.

2.2 Members noted the current position and agreed that no response was required on behalf of GATCOM. A copy of the Technical Adviser’s paper is available on the website at <http://www.gatcom.org.uk/>

3. LOCAL NOISE DISTURBANCE ISSUES

3.1 GAL updated the Steering Group on the various groups of local residents and communities to the east of the airport where aircraft overflight was causing disturbance and issues had been escalated to local MPs. GAL informed members of a particular issue of concern to the Three Woods Action Group.

3.2 The Three Woods Action Group, comprising residents from Domewood and Dormansland, held a meeting with Sam Gyimah MP for Surrey East, GAL and easyJet. GAL highlighted that one of the actions from the meeting related to GATCOM’s effectiveness and responsiveness to residents’ concerns. Members were most concerned about the comments made by the Action Group particularly as the Group had not formally approached GATCOM to consider their concerns. However, over the past few months GAL and GATCOM’s lead member for noise, Alan Jones, had kept GATCOM informed of the progress made by GAL/NATS in considering the residents’ concerns.

3.3 The Steering Group considered GATCOM’s role in addressing concerns of individual residents’ groups and agreed that the Committee’s aim was to ensure that the airport management, NATS and the CAA adopted a proactive approach to noise management and to try to identify ways of improving the noise climate for all communities around the airport wherever possible. There was an established process whereby GATCOM referred matters to NATMAG for in depth consideration with the key parties where this was felt necessary. Members felt it was important for residents’

groups to be aware of the need to make representations through the right governance structure.

3.4 Requests from individual residents' groups for GATCOM to meet them to discuss their issues of concern was also considered. It was agreed that it was important for the Committee not to accord any special treatment to a particular area, or any other special interest group by meeting them individually. However, this did not prevent individual groups meeting their nearest elected councillor serving on GATCOM, or the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign (GACC) to discuss the issues of concern to them and to ask that they raise the matter at GATCOM.

4. DRAFT AVIATION POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 The Government has delayed the publication of its consultation on the draft aviation policy framework and the call for evidence on maintaining effective UK hub airport connectivity until the summer.

4.2 Members commented on the Chancellor's statement that he wished to explore all options as to where airport expansion could take place with the exception of a third runway at Heathrow. The Steering Group was of the view that a third runway at Heathrow should not be excluded from the options being considered and suggested that GATCOM write to the Secretary of State for Transport urging the Government to ensure that in the consideration of and consultation on options for airport expansion included the option of a third at Heathrow.

4.3 The Steering Group considered an invitation from the Chairman of the Aviation All Party Group of MPs calling for evidence on "maintaining the competitiveness of the UK in global aviation". GAL advised that it was participating in the Inquiry. It was agreed that there was no need for GATCOM to submit evidence at this stage in the policy development process.

4.4 **It is recommended that** GATCOM writes to the Secretary of State for Transport urging the Government to ensure that options for airport expansion included the option of a third runway at Heathrow.

5. NIGHT FLYING RESTRICTIONS

5.1 The Government has announced that the consultation on the next night flying regime has been delayed so that the general policy on night noise in the aviation policy framework can be developed and used to inform the next regime for the night flying restrictions. The current night noise regime ends on 28 October 2012 and the Government has decided to extend the existing regime for two years until the end of summer season 2014, when a new regime will come into force.

5.2 The Government's consultation on the next night flying regime would take place in two stages. The first stage consultation is due to be published in the Autumn 2012 to include consideration of the costs and benefits of night flying and the effectiveness of the current regime. The second stage consultation is due to be published in Summer 2013 which will include proposals for the new regime which will take into account the Government's overall night noise policy to be contained in the new Aviation Policy framework to be published in Spring 2013.

6. SURFACE ACCESS REVIEW

6.1 GAL provided an update on the review of its Surface Access Strategy and the timetable for launching the new Strategy. There is a need to demonstrate the importance of surface transport links to airports as well as improving the passenger experience. GAL is to host on 20 April a vision workshop with members of the Transport Steering Group and key stakeholders on 19 April, to help inform the development of the

new Strategy. Consultation with key stakeholders on the draft Strategy is planned for June 2012 prior to the launch of the final Strategy at the Transport Forum on 19 October 2012.

6.2 GAL also reported on Arup's rail study results which is available on the Gatwick website <http://www.gatwickairport.com/rail/>. The study has highlighted that there are possibilities to unlock capacity on the Brighton Mainline. GAL has presented the results of the study at two events in March and was now hoping that the local authorities around Gatwick would endorse a Joint Vision Statement to help to influence, support and raise the profile of the need to ensure Gatwick's rail links are maintained and improved in discussions/correspondence with the Government and the rail industry. The Steering Group felt that GATCOM should endorse the joint vision statement (considered elsewhere on the agenda).

6.3 GAL is now undertaking a study into coach and bus links to the airport.

7. THAMESLINK FRANCHISE

7.1 The Steering Group received an update on the tender process for the new Thameslink franchise. The new franchise will include:

- All services that are currently operated by the First Capital Connect franchise from September 2013
- Some services operated by Southeastern railway (at some point between April and December 2014)
- All services operated by the current Southern franchise which includes the Gatwick Express (at some point between July 2014 and July 2017)

7.2 Passenger Focus, the national consumer body for rail passengers, invited GATCOM to share its aspirations for the new Thameslink franchise to assist in its understanding of the challenges that the DfT's specification must address. The Steering Group agreed a response on behalf of GATCOM (considered elsewhere on the agenda). It was also agreed that the aspirations highlighted in the response be used in any future correspondence with the DfT relating to the specification for the franchise and prospective bidders for the franchise.

8. GATWICK SECTION 106 AGREEMENT AND ACTION PLANNING – PROGRESS REPORTING 2011

8.1 The monitoring results of GAL's performance in delivering its sustainability commitments and legal obligations were considered. Members were encouraged to note that of the 205 live obligations, commitments and action plan actions, 197 are on track to be achieved within the stipulated timescale (96%). GATCOM will be pleased to note that there are no major issues that need to be brought to its attention. A copy of the [report](#) considered by the Steering Group is available on the GATCOM website at <http://www.gatcom.org.uk/>

9. DRAFT GATWICK MASTER PLAN

9.1 GAL has now published its summary report of the public and community consultation on the draft Gatwick Master Plan. A copy of the summary report is available on Gatwick's website - <http://www.gatwickairport.com/masterplan> GAL will report on the results of the consultation at the GATCOM meeting together with the management's action plan to take forward the issues raised by respondents.

9.2 GAL intends to publish the final master plan in the summer.

JOHN GODFREY
Chairman