

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

28 June 2016
EIR Reference: E0002795

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing in respect of your recent request of 31 May 2016 for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Your request:

1. *What precisely does the CAA regard as an "Airspace Change" that will trigger the implementation of the procedures referred to in CAP725?*
2. *How does the CAA determine whether a request from a sponsor of an "Airspace Change" requires CAP725 to be implemented?*

Our response:

Having considered your request in line with the provisions of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, we are able to provide the information below.

The term "airspace change" or the "airspace change process" refers to the process under which a change is proposed to a notified feature of airspace (notified in the UK Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP)). From the perspective of the CAA's airspace regulatory role (as opposed to its safety oversight role), the important distinction is between a change to notified airspace structure (which requires the agreement of the CAA) and a change to Air Traffic Control (ATC) operational procedures (which does not).

Quoting from Civil Aviation Publication (CAP) 725 – CAA Guidance on the Application of the Airspace Change Process:

APPLICATION OF THE AIRSPACE CHANGE PROCESS

7. *An airspace change is normally characterised by one or more of the following conditions:*
1. *Changes to the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) airspace classification either through the creation of a higher classification than currently exists, or in some cases through the removal of existing controlled airspace of Classes A, C, D¹ or E;*
 2. *Changes to the lateral or vertical dimensions of existing Controlled Airspace (CAS);*
 3. *The introduction of, or changes to, Standard Instrument Departure routes (SIDs), Standard Arrival Routes (STARs) or Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs) within controlled airspace. Standard Departure Routes (SDRs) and NPRs where they exist outside controlled airspace are not covered by this Process. However, aerodrome operators are strongly recommended to adopt the same principles when considering the need for new or amended SDRs and NPRs under these circumstances;*
 4. *Introduction of, or significant changes to existing², Holding Patterns;*
 5. *Changes to Area Control Centre (ACC) arrangements resulting in modifications to the existing published ATS route structure. Changes to ACC sector boundaries that have no additional environmental impact over that currently experienced are not normally subject to the Airspace Change Process, unless one of the characteristics described here occurs as a direct consequence of the revised arrangements;*
 6. *Delegation of Air Traffic Services (ATS) to an adjacent State;*
 7. *Changes to the lateral or vertical dimensions of Danger Areas, Restricted or Prohibited Airspace, Temporary Reserved Areas or significant changes in their operational use, other than emergency situations or matters of National Security;*
 8. *Changes to existing published terminal patterns and procedures where the net effect results in changes to the lateral dispersion or lowering in altitude of traffic within controlled airspace; and*
 9. *Significant changes to the hours of operation of existing airspace structures.*

The Airspace Change Process is not invoked for certain other activities such as Operational Airspace Trials, which are covered under a separate CAA [policy](#) reflecting the Government's [Air Navigation Guidance](#)³, and changes to operational air traffic procedures not published in the UK AIP that do not require the CAA's approval and which do not change the notified airspace structure.

¹ In the UK, controlled airspace will normally be classified as ICAO Classification A, C or D. The normal default background classification will be Class G, unless flight safety or ATM management reasons indicate a requirement for a higher classification. A full description of the ICAO Airspace Classifications as they are applied in the UK can be found at AIP ENR 1.4.

² In this context, 'significant' is determined as a complete re-alignment or re-orientation of the hold or a lowering of the minimum holding altitude. Changes due to magnetic variation do not need to be addressed by means of an airspace change.

³ Guidance to the Civil Aviation Authority on Environmental Objectives Relating to the Exercise of its Air Navigation Functions

If you are not satisfied with how we have dealt with your request in the first instance you should approach the CAA in writing at:-

Caroline Chalk
Head of External Information Services
Civil Aviation Authority
Aviation House
Gatwick Airport South
Gatwick
RH6 0YR

caroline.chalk@caa.co.uk

The CAA has a formal internal review process for dealing with appeals or complaints in connection with requests under the Environmental Information Regulations. The key steps in this process are set in the attachment.

Should you remain dissatisfied with the outcome you have a right to appeal against the decision by contacting the Information Commissioner at:-

Information Commissioner's Office
FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
SK9 5AF

<https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

If you wish to request further information from the CAA, please use the form on the CAA website at <http://publicapps.caa.co.uk/modalapplication.aspx?appid=24>.

Yours sincerely



Rihanne Stephen
Information Rights Officer

CAA INTERNAL REVIEW & COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- The original case to which the appeal or complaint relates is identified and the case file is made available;
- The appeal or complaint is allocated to an Appeal Manager, the appeal is acknowledged and the details of the Appeal Manager are provided to the applicant;
- The Appeal Manager reviews the case to understand the nature of the appeal or complaint, reviews the actions and decisions taken in connection with the original case and takes account of any new information that may have been received. This will typically require contact with those persons involved in the original case and consultation with the CAA Legal Department;
- The Appeal Manager concludes the review and, after consultation with those involved with the case, and with the CAA Legal Department, agrees on the course of action to be taken;
- The Appeal Manager prepares the necessary response and collates any information to be provided to the applicant;
- The response and any necessary information is sent to the applicant, together with information about further rights of appeal to the Information Commissioners Office, including full contact details.