



Ministry
of Defence

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Inclusion of FJAs into UK AIP (ACP-2020-092) – Airspace Change Proposal Stage 1B Engagement

Dear UK Airspace User,

The MoD has identified a requirement for a suitable and safe airspace in the UK to facilitate Exercise Joint Warrior, the largest military exercise in Europe, allowing for modern military air systems to train to their full capabilities in a joint operating environment. The current airspace structures that we use, Fast Jet Area (FJA) North and Fast Jet Area South will cease to exist at the end of this year and no other current airspace will provide the MoD viable airspace to facilitate this essential Defence and wider NATO training. In order to make sure we have appropriate airspace, an airspace change proposal (ACP) ACP-2020-092 has been submitted, under CAP 1616, to deliver a permanent solution.

You may be aware that the Interim Solution for use of FJAs (ACP-2021-051) is currently ongoing. Further engagement will be sent out regarding that ACP in due course. This engagement is in respect to the ACP-2020-092 **only** and is in accordance with the procedures laid down in CAP1616.

As part of the proposal, the MoD seeks your views on the design principles for this proposal. These will allow us to understand and consider how our proposal may affect your operation and minimise any impacts where possible.

Statement of Need

The submitted Statement of Need is below:

‘In order to meet the complex training objectives of Defence during Ex Joint Warriors, a large scale multi-national military exercise, segregated airspace is required that:

- Is within reach of Navy Forces, more specifically a Carrier Strike Group (with embarked 5th generation air systems) operating within Deep Water, which through the development of the scenario is likely to span hundreds of miles.

- Provides a sufficient mixture of overland and overseas areas which offers exercise planners flexibility to create more complex scenarios across both environments, for necessary littoral operations.
- Crucially caters for kinetic and non-kinetic ranges within the area, which allows for necessary Air Land integration.
- Is of large enough size to accommodate representative operational numbers.

In order for UK Danger Areas to comply with both the UK's Airspace Modernisation Strategy and incoming Free Route Airspace (FRA), every danger area requires a "parent" danger area in the UK AIP in order for Flight Buffer Zones to be applied and thus enable FRA. In an increasingly busy UK airspace, segregated airspace of a large enough size and in a suitable location will not exist after FRA is implemented and current solutions are untenable to deliver the required needs of Defence.'

Explanation of Requirements

The introduction of Free Route Airspace at the end of 2021 makes current solutions untenable to deliver the required needs of Defence during Ex Joint Warrior, as the Fast Jet Areas will cease to exist. Using alternate airspace would diminish required training objectives for Defence and increase the risk to all air users to an unpalatable level.

ACP-2020-092 is for large scale joint military exercises, which will only be activated intermittently during Ex Joint Warrior, to permit large-scale (up to 60 aircraft) tactical training. While existing areas allow a large number of daily smaller-scale training tasks, the ACP-2020-092 airspace will allow a small number of bi-annual large-scale joint military exercises. This is the reason why the core military requirements for ACP-2020-092 are quite bespoke, and the airspace request quite large.

Airspace structures at the end of 2021 will not fulfil these requirements. D323s, 513s and 613s are too far away from Maritime Forces operating in deep water in the Atlantic Ocean and too small for needs of Ex JW. Airspace structures in the North-West of the UK; namely D701 complex and D712 complex fall short of our requirement as well. The D712 complex is too small to accommodate representative operational numbers. D701 complex is used for a broad range of activities including trials and has significant limitations placed against it for its annual use, due to the impact on Oceanic routing for general air traffic. Therefore it cannot be relied upon to regularly meet our bi-annual needs. Notwithstanding, it doesn't have suitable areas of land beneath it for effective joint operations training.

Key Principles / Requirements for the Airspace

The key principles and requirements for the airspace are:

- The airspace design must be safe, with any hazards identified and risks mitigated such that they are as low as reasonably practicable and tolerable.
- The design will provide a suitable training area to meet the following core requirements:
 - Is within reach of Navy Forces, more specifically a Carrier Strike Group (with embarked 5th generation air systems) operating within Deep Water, which through the development of the scenario is likely to span hundreds of miles.
 - Provides a sufficient mixture of overland and overseas areas which offers exercise planners flexibility to create more complex scenarios across both environments, for necessary littoral and amphibious operations.
 - Crucially caters for kinetic and non-kinetic ranges within the area, which allows for necessary Air Land integration.
 - Is of large enough size to accommodate representative operational numbers.
- Safe, efficient and standardised management, notification and activation of airspace, utilising Flexible Use of Airspace (FUA) principles.
- Will be FL 245 and above and suitable dimensions to minimise impact on other airspace users and the network, where possible.
- Minimise noise and environmental impacts, where relevant.

Timeline

We aim to have implemented this ACP by Ex Joint Warrior 222, which commences on 1 October 2022. Below is a provisional timeline, which is still to be confirmed by the CAA:

- Define Submission: 17 September 21
- Define Gateway: 24 September 21
- Develop, Assess and Consult: 14 January 22
- Develop, Assess and Consult Gateway: 28 January 22

- Formal submission to the CAA: 10 February 22
- CAA decision: 16 June 22
- AIRAC submission date: 21 July 22
- AIRAC publication date: 8 September 22

We understand this is an ambitious timeline with only allowing 4 weeks for initial engagement. However, because our initial proposal is the same dimensions as existing airspace (FJA N and S), and is FL245 and above, stakeholders will be familiar with the airspace, therefore we feel 4 weeks engagement is appropriate.

Area of Interest

The potentially affected area has been identified and highlighted in Fig.1 below.

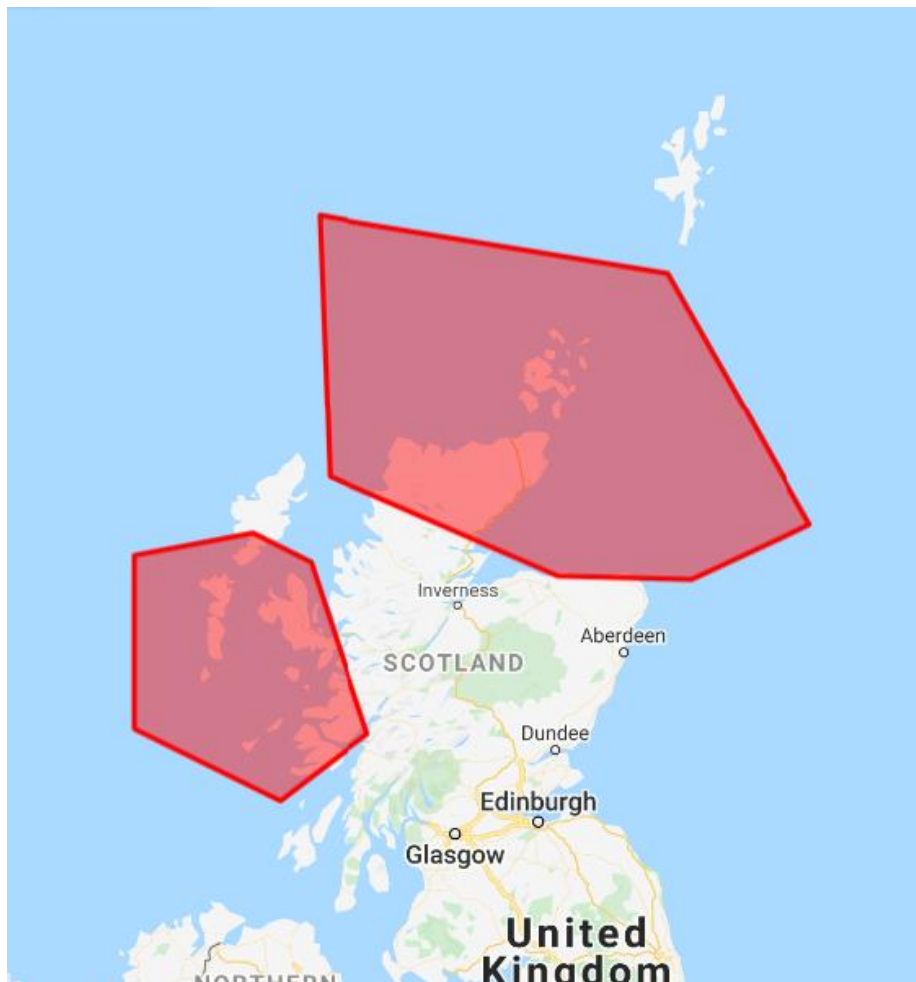


Fig. 1 – Potential area to be affected by ACP-2020-092 as identified by the MoD

Next Steps

As a potentially affected stakeholder we will be engaging with you throughout the ACP and will welcome your comments and feedback throughout. **We invite you to consider the design principles of this proposal and submit any views or comments you may have by completing the return at Annex A, or free text email, via the email address Air-FastJetAreasProposal@mod.gov.uk.** It is requested that any views you may have be submitted by **Fri 17 Sep 21.**

The feedback will inform the development of the airspace ahead of the further consultation period detailed in the timeline above.

We recognise that there may be concerns or questions within your organisation in relation to this ACP for permanent change. We would like to reassure you that we are very early on in the process and will continue to engage with stakeholders throughout, with opportunity for you to provide comment or feedback. We would be grateful if you could confirm the best POC and contact details for continued engagement throughout this process. If you have any specific or pressing concerns or questions, please include them with any response you wish to make, and we will endeavour to respond.

Joint Tactical Exercise Planning Staff

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Annex A to Inclusion of FJAs into UK AIP (ACP-2020-092) – Airspace Change Proposal Stage 1B Engagement

ACP-2020-092 Airspace Design Principle Engagement Response

Please complete the following short questionnaire providing feedback on the proposed design principles for ACP-2020-092.

Do you agree that these principles meet the Statement of Need?

Yes No

Do you have any observations or concerns about the design principles?

Yes No

Are there any omissions or additions you feel should be considered for inclusion?

Yes No

Detail

Please provide any further comments, suggestions or considerations in relation to this airspace proposal that we should be aware of.

Detail
