



FUTURE COMBAT AIRSPACE (FCA)

Develop & Assess Gateway Outcome - 17th December 2021

[STATEMENT]

As part of 'Stage 2 – Develop & Assess' of the CAP 1616 airspace change process, the UK Civil Aviation Authority has completed a Develop & Assess Gateway Assessment of the Ministry of Defence's airspace change proposal (ACP) – Future Combat Airspace (FCA) (ACP-2020-026).

In order for the CAA to allow an ACP to pass through the Develop & Assess Gateway:

1. the change sponsor must have produced a comprehensive list of airspace change design options;
2. the change sponsor must have engaged with relevant stakeholders to explore those options to the CAA's satisfaction against the requirements in Appendix C;
3. the change sponsor must have produced a design principle evaluation that the CAA has accepted, showing how its design options have responded to the design principles;
4. the change sponsor must have produced an Initial options appraisal (phase I);
5. the CAA must have produced and then published an assessment that the options appraisal is satisfactory against the requirements in Appendix E.

In our Gateway Assessment, the CAA concluded that the submission did not meet Criterion 2 and Criterion 5 above for the reasons set out below:

- **Criterion 2 (Engagement):**
 - Without fully assessing and understanding any consequential impact(s) of the design options below 7,000ft, it is not possible to determine whether all the relevant stakeholders have been engaged (CAP 1616 - Appendix C Para C9 & C10).
- **Criterion 5 (Initial Options Appraisal):**
 - The change sponsor omitted to adequately assess the consequential impact to civil aviation traffic, both above and below 7,000ft;
 - The change sponsor used TDA 597 as part of describing the Do-Nothing baseline. TDA 597 should not be used to describe the Do-Nothing Baseline as it is a temporary airspace structure;
 - The change sponsor omitted to assess the consequential impacts on tranquillity and biodiversity;
 - The change sponsor omitted to take into account the requirements of CAP 2091: Minimum Standards for Noise Modelling

The Civil Aviation Authority has informed the change sponsor of this decision. In line with CAP1616, the change sponsor is now able to reconsider its submission before resubmitting it for further review by the Civil Aviation Authority at a future Develop & Assess Gateway.

It is important to note that whether an ACP passes a gateway successfully or not does not predetermine the CAA's later final decision on whether to approve the airspace change proposal. This decision is not an explicit or implicit comment on the merits or otherwise of this ACP. This will come at the decision-making stage (Stage 5).

[END STATEMENT]