

### **CAP1616 ACP Restart: Sponsor Evidence & Justification for Restart of a Paused ACP**

**Sponsor:** Gatwick Airport Ltd

**ACP ID:** ACP-2018-62

**ACP Title:** London Gatwick – Reduced Night Noise Trial

**Link to CAA Policy Statement:** [Guidance for Sponsors](#)

#### **Introduction and background**

Trial planning commenced in 2018 and an Assessment Meeting was held with the CAA in March 2019. The Trial Pack was submitted to the CAA for review in September 2019. Uncertainty surrounding the extraordinary impact of the Coronavirus pandemic meant that trial planning was paused Q1 2020 whilst Gatwick Airport Ltd (GAL) and stakeholders considered the effects on the industry and the public, and could adapt plans accordingly.

The ACP was officially paused in December 2020.

Following the return of air traffic to more regular levels, the relaxation of travel restrictions and also the announcement in March 2021 by the DfT and CAA of Government financial support for the FASI programme (see statements below), GAL requests to restart this ACP in March 2022.

The trial is planned to assess the extent to which PBN (Performance Based Navigation) can deliver noise benefits to arriving aircraft (below 7,000ft) during the night. Trial outputs will inform FASI by providing objective information on the benefits and drawbacks of PBN arrival routes, and identify any unexpected consequences that may arise.

This proposal is for an Airspace Trial, for which a scaled airspace change process applies and a change level is not applicable. The detailed process requirements are published in Part 1b of CAP 1616.

#### **Sponsors ACP restart proposal**

<b>Q1) Have there been any changes to the issue or opportunity in the Statement of Need, the operating environment or geographical area in which the ACP is being developed?</b>		
1A) Changes to the issue or opportunity in the Statement of Need	No	<p><b>Confirmation statement</b></p> <p>There is no change to the issues and opportunities in the Statement of Need (SoN).</p> <p>The SoN identifies that PBN routes have the potential to reduce noise outliers. Gatwick intend to conduct a trial to explore the benefits of using PBN arrival routes at night to reduce the number of outliers and therefore improve the overall noise situation. The aim is to compare the noise environment of aircraft not flying PBN procedures to those flying PBN.</p> <p>Whilst the current pandemic has seen traffic levels of night traffic decrease, the expectation is for them to return to pre-COVID levels.</p> <p>Desired outcome:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To determine the extent to which PBN technology can deliver noise benefits for arriving aircraft during the night, by reducing the number of noisy 'outliers' that are significantly lower or noisier than most aircraft.</li> </ul> <p><b>Timescales</b></p> <p>There is a requirement for the trial output to feed into Gatwick Airport's FASI-S options development and route design criteria. The output of the trial becomes less useful the further into the FASI-S ACP process Gatwick advance. Feeding outcomes of the trial into the Full Options Appraisal is key. Gatwick's FASI-S ACP Stage 3 is currently planned for Q3/Q4 2023, but is subject to change based on a number dependent factors.</p> <p>There are a number of dependencies to consider when planning the trial including ATC system updates and the requirement to avoid trial commencement during the summer. It is essential that CAP1616 timescales are met to prevent the delay of any interdependent activities, and subsequently the trial start date.</p> <p>We propose the trial starts in January 2023. In order to meet this date, we require a CAA Submission date in June 2022, and a Decision date in September 2022. Please refer to the RNN Gantt Chart presented in <b>Annex A</b>.</p>
1B) Changes to the operating environment or geographical area	No	<p><b>Confirmation statement</b></p> <p>The geographical area in which the trial ACP is being developed has not changed.</p> <p><b>Traffic volumes</b></p> <p>Night time traffic levels changed significantly in 2020 and the exact recovery path for the aviation industry following the COVID-19 pandemic remains uncertain. Figures submitted in the Trial Pack focus on night arrivals in 2017, 2018 and 2019 (Jan-Jun).</p> <p>It is expected that night time traffic levels will increase through 2022/2023, and it is accepted that a smaller sample size would still be valid to draw sensible conclusions. Exact traffic figures are yet to be determined using GAL's latest traffic forecast.</p> <p>The trial is intended to last for a period of 6 months. If there was a significant reduction in traffic below expected levels due to extenuating circumstances (i.e. another lockdown), then GAL might apply to extend the end date of the trial. This will be addressed in the final Trial submission pack.</p> <p><b>PBN Route location</b></p> <p>The current PBN routes are placed within the 2017 arrivals swathe to meet the trial principles. During the pandemic, the shape of the Gatwick arrivals swathe may have changed due to the highly unusual situation. However, now that traffic is increasing the swathe is expected to return to the historical norm. It is therefore appropriate to keep routes in the positions designed in 2017.</p> <p><b>PBN Route Designs</b></p>

		<p>The new Low Noise Arrivals Metric (LNAM) CAA CAP document (CAP 2302) was published in January 2022. This report recommends that for modern aircraft types and current operational speed constraints, optimum noise is achieved for intermediate approach angles around 2.5 degrees. The current routes are designed close to the 'ideal 3 degree' descent angle. Consideration should be given to the current route design and whether this should be updated to address the new criteria.</p>
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**Q2) Have there been any changes to law, government policy or CAA requirements that would affect the development of an ACP or parts of an ACP?**

2A) Changes to law or government policy	No	<p><b>Confirmation statement</b></p> <p>GAL understands there have been no changes to Section 70 of the Transport Act 2000 or the Air Navigation Guidance which would affect the work carried out to date in reaching Stage 2a.</p> <p>In October 2020 the CAA released an airspace modernisation policy statement which outlined the following:</p> <p>"...as of October 2020, we do not believe there are any policy changes in the last 12 months that by themselves would require an airspace change sponsor to revisit materials submitted as part of an airspace change".</p> <p>There has been no further communication from the CAA to affect the validity of this statement.</p>
2B) Changes to CAA requirements	No	<p><b>Confirmation statement</b></p> <p>GAL is not aware of any changes to CAA requirements since this proposal has been paused which would impact the restart of this ACP.</p> <p>The CAP1616 process was up-issued on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 (Version 4), and GAL do not believe this impacts the work carried out to date.</p> <p>In addition, CAP2091, Policy on Minimum Standard for Noise Modelling, published in January 2021, will have no impact.</p>

**Q3) Have there been any changes to the list of identified stakeholders?**

3A) Stakeholder changes	No	<p><b>Confirmation statement</b></p> <p>GAL have not identified any changes to external stakeholder groups that have been engaged on this ACP to date. However, it would be prudent to undertake some re-engagement with stakeholders in preparation for the trial plans restarting.</p> <p>GAL expects this to include engagement events with local and industry stakeholders - including a specific RNN briefing for industry stakeholders and engagement through the Flight Operations Performance &amp; Safety Committee, and GAL's Noise Management Board - the aims of which include</p>
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		improving stakeholder understanding of the process and to inform the engagement plan going forward.
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**Signed for and on behalf of Gatwick Airport Ltd**

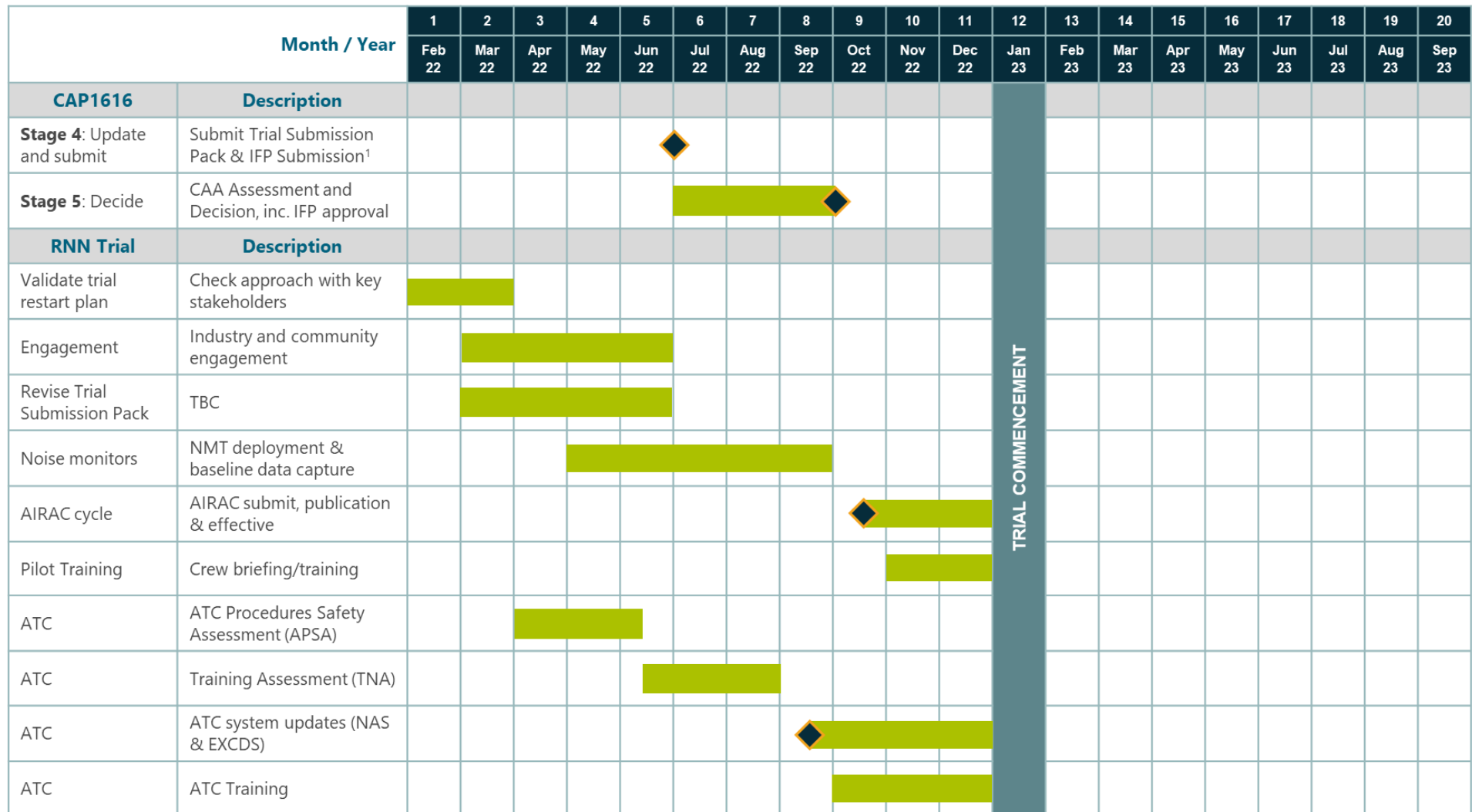
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ASinclair'.

Andy Sinclair  
Head of Noise and Airspace Strategy  
Gatwick Airport Ltd

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### Annex A – RNN Gantt Chart



<sup>1</sup> Assumes that the current procedures are adopted for the trial.