


**MINUTES OF ACP-2022-002: RAFAT (RAF SYERSTON) TEMPORARY DANGER AREA (TDA) NOTTINGHAM AIRPORT STAKEHOLDERS MEETING AT ARCUS HELICOPTERS ON 13 JULY 2022**

13 July 2022

Distribution List:  
All attendees

<b>Present</b>	<b>Appointment</b>	<b>Representing</b>
	Chair/TDA Lead	MOD
	TDA Support	MOD
	Local Airspace User	
	Local Airspace User	
	Local Airspace User	Arcus Helos
	Local Airspace User	Arcus Helos
	Local Airspace User	Arcus Helos
	Local Airspace User	Arcus Helos
	Local Airspace User	
	Local Airspace User	

Meeting Opening Statement

The purpose of this meeting was to pass a consistent narrative of the proposal across to local aviation stakeholders and provide a better understanding of why RAF Syerston is being considered whilst also offering an opportunity for local aviation stakeholders to engage directly with the project officers.

	<b>ACTION</b>
<p><b>Item 1 – Introduction</b></p> <p>The <b>Chair/TDA Lead</b> welcomed all attendees, introduced himself and the team.</p>	
<p><b>Item 2 – Background to RAFAT Basing &amp; Caveat removal</b></p> <p>The <b>Chair/TDA Lead</b> provided a detailed brief on the history of the proposed sale of the RAF Scampton site, highlighting the removal of caveats to the sale and the consequent impact that this has on the future availability of EG R313.</p> <p>Since R313 may be unavailable from 1 April 2023, the <b>Chair/TDA Lead</b> explained the RAFAT feasibility study that was carried out including the Risks, Reputational Impact, Costs and Recommendations.</p> <p><b>RAF Syerston Specifics</b></p>	

The **Chair/TDA Lead** explained the likely transit route and height for the RAFAT Hawks which would depart RAF Waddington and transit between 500' and 1000' AGL south of Newark into the proposed TDA.

- This raised concern from the attendees, particularly since most rotary activity was conducted at around 1100'.
- The **Chair/TDA Lead** suggested that the RAFAT Hawks could instead transit at 500' AGL to provide some element of separation combined with a traffic service from RAF Waddington.

The **Chair/TDA Lead** presented slides to highlight the current situation and likely funneling of General Aviation traffic influenced by the proposed TDA at RAF Syerston. This included images of HEAT maps of GA and Glider activity. The **Chair/TDA Lead** welcomed any comments on current traffic patterns and what impact the TDA would have.

- The general opinion amongst the attendees was that most of the traffic flow was to the northeast side of Syerston. Typically, many rotary wing (RW) users transit East along the A46 then north toward Mansfield, climbing up to 2500' toward Doncaster.
- Since RW aircraft cannot fly over the built-up areas at their normal operating altitudes, their already limited airspace to the west of Syerston was compressed even further. This issue was compounded by the proximity of both EMA airspace and Langar parachute activity.
- Most PPL (RW) training activity is conducted within the southern edge of the proposed TDA between Newton (disused) and Bottesford. Newton (disused) was also the only suitable location for RW autorotation training. Although student pilots rarely transited as far north as Newark, they consider Bottesford and Newton (disused) as reference points to turn south (both within the proposed TDA).
- From a fixed wing (FW) perspective, aircraft historically operate either side of RAF Syerston up to 4000'. Based on the geographic dimensions of the TDA and routine flight profiles, navigation exercises could be severely limited with some further impact on circuit flying. One comment suggested was that when the TDA was hot, student PPL (FW) activity would need to be ceased.

There was a general agreement from all attendees that the proposed TDA could lead to infringements by GA users and that they would have to curtail their activity or be extremely careful to prevent any encroachments.

The **Chair/TDA Lead** made it clear that although using RAF Syerston would be kept to an absolute minimum, it was appreciated that the funneling effect caused by the TDA could be limiting to both RW and FW activity and could prove a challenge to local users and businesses.

The **Chair/TDA Lead** explained the proposed time period that the TDA would be utilised as follows and that potentially all 3 slots, 5 days a week could be utilised:

- Mon-Fri only, slots (deconflicted with Syerston flying programme):
  - 0830-0915 (45 mins)
  - 1200-1245 (45 mins)
  - 1450-1530 (40 mins)

It was also highlighted that in the event of a future ACP to make annual use of RAF Syerston permanent, the nominated time period of use would likely be limited to a maximum of 8-12 weeks, but that this would have to fall within a 5-month period between Oct-Feb. This is necessary to allow deconfliction with any international out of season deployments by RAFAT that affect the Teams training season, but as much prior notification of the exact dates required would be given as part of the ACP prerequisites.

Whilst discussing the proposed slot times, the **Chair/TDA Lead** asked the attendees which of the slots would have the greatest impact on their activity along with any specific days of the week.

- There was a general consensus amongst the attendees that Slot 1 would have no impact on local users since they were never usually airborne before 0930-1000. Slot 2 would have the greatest impact since this was the busiest period of the day, particularly for PPL training for both RW and FW. Slot 3 would also cause impact to RW and FW activity however not to the magnitude of slot 2.
- As far as days of the week were concerned, Monday was generally free of flying and therefore RAFAT activity during all 3 slots would have no impact on local users. The attendees agreed that Saturday was the busiest day followed by Friday.

The attendees asked whether the TDA would go cold the moment that RAFAT departed the airspace. The **Chair/TDA Lead** explained that the Danger Area Control Authority would be RAF Waddington ATC who would communicate the status of the TDA both when RAFAT taxi prior to its use (HOT) and when on recovery (COLD). In the event that any NOTAM'd slots were no longer required, the message would again be communicated. It was also explained that a Letter of Agreement (LOA) was being drafted between local Airfield participants including RAF Waddington, Nottingham Airport and EMA. The LOA would include a process whereby the status of the TDA would be communicated by RAF Waddington as and when the TDA changed HOT/COLD.

The attendees agreed that effective and timely communication were critical to enable appropriate messaging and relaxing of airspace limitations imposed on their activities.

The question was asked as to why RAF Akrotiri could not be used for Synchro training. The **Chair/TDA Lead** emphasised that there were various

factors that precluded this option, including operational commitments at RAF Akrotiri and RAFAT engineering limitations amongst other factors, although this may change in the future.

During the meeting, all attendees agreed that having as much notice as possible of RAFAT activity and TDA activation would assist in reducing the impact on their activities and businesses. Although NOTAMs would be issued at least 24 hours in advance, a 3-day warning of proposed activity would dramatically improve their ability to deconflict. For instance, Arcus Helicopters often book students a week in advance for their training so would ideally like some advance notice beyond the NOTAM period. The **Chair/TDA Lead** suggested that a weekly RAFAT flying programme could be issued to an email mailing list so that all airspace users could plan ahead. This was welcomed by the attendees and the **Chair/TDA Lead** confirmed they would investigate this option.

With regard to mitigating the impact of the limited flow options either side of the proposed TDA, the **Chair/TDA Lead** discussed amending the top height of the TDA from the original 9500' to 5000' allowing airspace users to transit overhead. This was met with negativity from the attendees since they would be unable to routinely climb to 6000' in this airspace, especially rotary wing who operate in a much lower height block.

With regard to DACS and traffic avoidance, the **Chair/TDA Lead** explained that the RAFAT aircraft would be under a traffic service from RAF Waddington Radar and that other airspace users could receive traffic updates, TDA updates and where necessary a Danger Area Crossing Service (DACS) from RAF Waddington on their LARS frequency (to be confirmed). There was a general concern amongst the attendees that it was often difficult raise RAF Waddington Radar on the LARS, particularly on Friday afternoons.

The **Chair/TDA Lead** explained that RAF Waddington Radar would always be staffed during slot activation since they would in turn be providing a Traffic Service to RAFAT, however he would raise these potential issues regarding GA users and LARS availability with RAF Waddington ATC. The aim would be of ensuring the frequency was permanently manned and that enough RAF resource would be committed to enabling this. The **Chair/TDA Lead** also explained that any traffic under the control of EMA to the West could also be provided with TDA status and RAFAT positional updates. Furthermore, where necessary and especially if there are any priority movements then RAFAT will cease their activity and avoid any conflicting traffic.

### **Threats/Objections Addressed**

In addition to the points already covered, the **Chair/TDA Lead** summarised the following threats and objections that had been received regarding the proposed TDA:

- Slots would be front loaded during the first 4-8 weeks of the TDA whereby RAFAT will only fly the minimum to achieve

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<p>Synchro initial training after which could move to Donna Nook.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If any airspace users have a special activity or request that would otherwise be prevented by activation of the TDA, for instance a time sensitive transit, if they were to contact RAFAT Ops direct then they would likely be able to accommodate and train elsewhere/cancel for that period.</li> <li>• Whilst airborne and for an extreme reason you have to enter the RAF Syerston TDA, ask RAF Waddington Radar and Synchro can stop their training and deconflict, for example if and when Helimed29A (Air Ambulance) requires transit.</li> <li>• It was made clear that should the CAA refuse the proposed TDA, RAFAT have no plans to use the airspace at RAF Syerston under a RA(T) and will have to find alternate provision or lose this capability.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Item 6 – Next steps</b></p> <p>The <b>Chair/TDA Lead</b> concluded the presentation and meeting having highlighted all the concerns regarding the proposed TDA and its impact on local airspace users, population and business. It was highlighted that mitigation was being made as far as possible and that RAFAT activity at RAF Syerston could be safely achieved, but only with the understanding and support of the GA community.</p> <p>The attendees were unanimous in stating that communication is critical in regard to both confirming when RAFAT plan on using the airspace (at least 3 days prior) and when airborne with the provision of accurate and timely updates from a reliable LARS and DACS service from RAF Waddington.</p>	
<p><b>Item 7 – Any other business</b></p> <p>The <b>Chair/TDA Support</b> thanked everybody for attending and confirmed that everything had been covered. Minutes covering the detail of the meeting would be written and uploaded onto the CAA ACP-2022-002 portal.</p>	<p><b>MOD</b></p>

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<b>Subject</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
RAFAT Flying Programme	TDA Lead/Support	Investigate the ability for RAFAT Programmers to issue a flying programme to a local airspace users email contact list.	27 July 2022
Meeting Minutes	TDA Lead/Support	Write draft minutes within two weeks of meeting.	27 July 2022

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