

MINUTES OF ASSESSMENT MEETING FOR ACP-2023-022 Enabling RPAS Ops Out of RAF Leuchars

18 Oct 2023

All present

Present	Appointment	Representing
[REDACTED]	Airspace Account Manager	CAA
	Airspace Regulator (Technical)	CAA
	Airspace Regulator (Engagement & Consultation)	CAA
	Airspace Regulator (Engagement & Consultation)	CAA
	Airspace Regulator (Environment)	CAA
	Airspace Regulator (Economist)	CAA
	Hd Airspace Integration DLOD & Capability Acceptance (Protector)	MOD
	SO2 Airspace	DAATM
	ACP ATM Team	MOD
	ACP ATM Team	MOD

Airspace Change Assessment Meeting Opening Statement

CAA noted that the Agenda and Presentation were received in advance of the Assessment Meeting and confirmed that the documents must be published by the sponsor, together with minutes of the meeting, on the Airspace Change Portal page. CAA explained the purpose of the meeting and confirmed that the meeting was an Assessment Meeting and not a Gateway. The CAA reinforced that the sponsor was required to provide a broad description of their proposed approach to meeting the CAA's CAP 1616 requirements, but the CAA was not deciding whether the proposed approach met the detailed requirements of the CAA's process at this stage. The purpose of the Assessment Meeting (set out in detail in CAP 1616) was broadly:

- for the Sponsor to present and discuss their Statement of Need,
- to enable the CAA to consider whether the proposal concerned falls within the scope of the formal airspace change process, including determining whether the proposal falls within the scope of a scaled CAP 1616 ACP for the introduction of RNP Instrument Approach Procedures (IAPs) without an Approach Control as described in CAP 1616 Part 1C, to enable the CAA to consider the appropriate provisional Level to assign to the change proposal.

Additionally, the sponsor was required to provide information on how it intended to proceed to fulfil the requirements of the airspace change process and to provide information on timescales. Lastly, the sponsor was required to provide information on how it intended to meet the engagement requirements of the various stages of the airspace change process.

	ACTION
<p>Item 1 – Introduction</p> <p>All attendees were introduced.</p>	

Item 2 –Statement of Need (discussion and review)

The MOD brought attention to the title of the ACP, which identifies RAF Leuchars as a specific location for Protector ops. Leuchars is no longer a suitable location; therefore, an amendment to the title was presented for consideration to better reflect the present circumstances:

‘RPAS operations to/from a nominated diversion airfield’

The suggested title was agreed as appropriate for this ACP.

The MOD introduced the Statement of Need (SON) as published on the CAA ACP portal as follows:

- When the large Remotely Piloted Air System (RPAS) Protector RG Mk1 comes into service it will require a diversion aerodrome for the eventuality that the RPAS is unable to be recovered to its main operating base at RAF Waddington; **RAF Leuchars has been selected to fill this function.** Pursuit of an ACP optimises an approach to establish suitable airspace to enable safe and efficient access to **RAF Leuchars** in the event that a diversion is required. Given the anticipated performance of on-board systems and the surrounding airspace classification, this approach will support the safe integration of Protector further into the national airspace structures and in accordance with current military flying regulation.

Since publication, the situation had changed in that the Protector Programme had been notified that the surveillance radar at Leuchars Diversion Airfield (LDA) would be withdrawn in Jun 2024. As a result, LDA is no longer suitable as a nominated diversion airfield for Protector. A revised SON was proposed and agreed; this will be uploaded to the ACP portal as below:

- When the large RPAS Protector RG Mk1 comes into service it will require a diversion aerodrome for the eventuality that the RPAS is unable to be recovered to its main operating base at RAF Waddington. Pursuit of an ACP optimises an approach to establish suitable airspace to enable safe and efficient access to a **nominated diversion airfield** in the event that a diversion is required. Given the anticipated performance of on-board systems and the surrounding airspace classification, this approach will support the safe integration of Protector further into the national airspace structures and in accordance with current military flying regulation.

Item 3 – Issues or opportunities arising from proposed change

The MOD outlined the following items for background information and further discussion:

- Limited Detect and Avoid (D&A) capability; Hd of Airspace Integration DLOD & Capability Acceptance (Protector) explained that Protector would be equipped with a Traffic Collision Avoidance System II (TCAS) and Automatic Dependent Surveillance–Broadcast (ADS-B), but would not have the full suite of D&A and therefore, it requires segregated airspace.
- Initial planning identified RAF Marham as preferred location;

<p>As part of a previous scoping exercise, RAF Marham emerged as one of the most suitable locations for diversion in the event that LDA was ruled out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible use of airspace in a busy airspace environment; It was noted that the airspace around RAF Marham was busy Class G. 	
<p>Item 4 – Options to exploit opportunities or address issues identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intention is only for use as a real time operational diversion requirement (and to maintain currency); Hd of Airspace Integration DLOD & Capability Acceptance (Protector) stressed that use of the airfield would be restricted as much as possible, but confirmed that the airspace proposed in this ACP would need to be activated each time Protector is airborne after phase 3 of test and evaluation (T&E); this is currently anticipated to commence Jan 2025. A Danger Area Crossing Service (DACS) would be necessary during these periods. • Aspirational timeline: airspace implementation In-Service Date (ISD) of Jan 2025; The proposed timelines are discussed at Item 6. • Trials airspace under ACP-2023-047 to be used in support of this ACP; The sponsor intends to use some of the evidence from ACP-2023-047 for this ACP and if the trial is successful, will likely mimic the airspace design. • Using same naming convention for ACP-2023-047 will reduce workload for system changes at Swanwick. Early discussions with NATS have established that they currently consider this airspace will require publication via a major Aeronautical Information Regulation and Control (AIRAC). Using the same naming convention as ACP-2023-047 would reduce equipment modifications and the long lead period to the amendment. The Airspace Regulator (Technical) advised the sponsor to make it clear at implementation of ACP-2023-047 that the name would endure, in order for allocation from the permanent list. 	
<p>Item 5 – Provisional indication of the scale level and process requirements*</p> <p>The CAA Regulators provided the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airspace Regulator (Technical): The CAA stated they would suggest this ACP is provisionally a level M1, due to potential for consequential impact to communities and re-routing of civil traffic below 7000' (the scaling of the process within the allotted level would depend on evidence-based justification and largely dependent upon the levels of traffic and consequential impact). • Airspace Regulator (Engagement & Consultation): Evidence will be required of effective engagement, including identification of the right audience, whilst understanding their needs and demonstrating how that has informed the ACP, with clear records of all engagement with the stakeholders. 	

It was understood that due to the overlap with the trial ACP-2023-047, the evidence from the trial engagement will also inform some of the engagement for this ACP. The CAA highlighted that it was important for the sponsor to be transparent to stakeholders regarding the relationship between the ACPs, the timescales involved and how the trial ACP will inform this ACP.

For stages 1 and 2, directly affected local aviation stakeholders, all National Air Traffic Management Advisory Committee (NATMAC) members, relevant aviation/non-aviation national organisations, and representatives of impacted communities should be engaged, with rationale provided for inclusions and omissions. All stakeholders must also be informed of how their feedback will be used in the ACP.

At Stage 3, consultation must be in line with the Gunning principles. Notably, for the consultation to be meaningful, stakeholders must still have the potential to influence the outcome despite the overlap with ACP-2023-047.

An engagement strategy was not mandatory, but considered useful, and a consultation strategy is required at Stage 3 of the process. A template could be provided by the CAA if required.

12 weeks is the standard period of consultation, but a rationale may be provided by the sponsor if they consider a reduced period could be effective.

The CAA brought attention to the fact that a revised version of CAP 1616 will be published in the near future. This would not contain significant changes to the process, but should make the document easier to follow. Of note was the change to Stage 1, whereby the current day scenario must be described and shared with the stakeholders.

- **Airspace Regulator (Environment):**
Environmental impacts that are a direct result of military aircraft/ops are not required to be considered. However, consequential environmental impacts from other airspace users must be assessed. CAP1616 Appendix B paragraphs B42, B43 and page162, refers to the requirements in terms of assessment of environmental impacts e.g. noise, air quality etc.

As the airspace will affect users below 7000' there is a requirement to present data for civilian aviation activity and how they are impacted. It may be possible to scope out some aspects of the environmental requirements, depending on the anticipated impact. Rationale and supporting evidence to justify this must be presented.

The CAA brought attention to the fact that there is no 'M' in the level allocation within the revised version of CAP 1616, so this would just be a 'Level 1'.

- **Airspace Regulator (Economist)**
At Stage 2 a qualitative assessment of the environmental impact would be required and built on for Stages 3 and 4. Table E2 at Annex E refers.
- **Airspace Account Manager**

<p>An updated version of the SON must be submitted by the Change Sponsor as version 2 and uploaded to the airspace ACP portal.</p> <p>The CAA will update the title of the ACP and the change sponsor should update the geographic area on the ACP portal.</p> <p>Action: Change Sponsor to upload the updated version of the SON and amend the geographical area on the ACP portal, together with the agenda and presentation for this meeting (as per the opening statement).</p> <p>Action: CAA to update the title of the ACP on the ACP portal.</p> <p><i>* When the sponsor submits their gateway materials for each Gateway at the agreed submission deadline, the period between this and the gateway decision will be an analysis by the CAA Airspace Regulatory team (Airspace Regulation) of the documentation submitted, for the purposes of making a recommendation to the CAA Gateway decision maker(s). In conducting the gateway assessment, the CAA is assessing the process employed and its compliance with the guidance stipulated within CAP 1616. It is not an assessment of the merits of the submission itself, which is reviewed at Stage 5 - Decision. We may request documentation from the sponsor that is referred to in the gateway submission but has not been provided as part of the Gateway submission materials. We may also request the sponsor to provide information by way of clarification relating to statements or assumptions made in the submission. Any further information sought by Airspace Regulation at this stage is for clarificatory purposes and is only for determining compliance with the CAP 1616 process.</i></p> <p><i>In any instance where a sponsor has not met the requirements of the process, we will inform them after the gateway decision and advise of next steps.</i></p>	<p>Change Sponsor</p> <p>CAA</p>
<p>Item 6 – Provisional process timescales*</p> <p>The MOD provided the following timescales for consideration*:</p> <p>Stage 1 Define Gateway - 26 Jan 2024 Stage 2 Develop and Assess Gateway - 23 Feb 2024 Stage 3B Consult Gateway - 29 Mar 2024 Stage 3C Consult - 30 March to 24 May 2024 (8 weeks) Stage 3D Collate and Review submission - 31 May 2024 Stage 4 Update and Submit - 12 Jul 2024 Stage 5 Decide - 20 Sep 2024 (10 weeks) AIP Submitted - 27 Sep 2024 AIP Publication date - 14 Nov 2024 AIP Effective Date - 26 Dec 2024</p> <p>The CAA stated that the Stage 3B Gateway would need to be 22 Mar 2024, due to Easter holidays, if the timeline is accepted.</p> <p>The Change Sponsor informed the meeting they intended to host an online webinar/Q&A during consultation for ACP-2023-047 to inform stakeholders of the overlap between the two ACPs. It was also likely the Change Sponsor would propose a reduced consultation period due to this overlap.</p> <p>The CAA will take away the proposed timelines for analysis and provide comment to the Change Sponsor week commencing 23 Oct 2023.</p>	

<p>Action: CAA to provide feedback regarding proposed timeline week of 23 Oct 2023.</p> <p><i>* The timeline agreed may become subject to change by the CAA. As outlined in CAP 2541 it is not the CAA's intent to conduct a re-prioritisation of all ACPs currently in progress, but only to prioritise when we believe this is required. Such prioritisation will be conducted on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with the principles outlined in CAP 2541. Should it be considered necessary to reprioritise an ACP a member of the Airspace Regulation team will contact the sponsor directly.</i></p>	<p>CAA</p>
<p>Item 7 – Next Steps</p> <p>A draft copy of the minutes of this meeting should be sent to the CAA by 25 Oct 2023 for return of comment. A complete version was to be agreed and presented to the CAA, whilst a redacted version was to be placed on the ACP portal by 1 Nov 2023.</p> <p>The CAA would update the ACP portal to reflect that this meeting had taken place and that the ACP thus far is in line with CAP 1616.</p> <p>Action: Change Sponsor to provide draft minutes to CAA for internal review by 25 Oct 2023.</p> <p>Action: Change Sponsor to submit a redacted version of the minutes by 1 Nov 2023.</p> <p>Action: CAA to update ACP portal to record that this meeting took place.</p>	<p>Change Sponsor</p> <p>CAA</p> <p>CAA</p>
<p>Item 8 – Any Other Business</p> <p>Nil.</p>	

ACTIONS ARISING FROM TDA FOR ACP-2023-022 ASSESSMENT MEETING

Subject	Name	Action	Deadline
Provisional indication of the scale level and process requirements	Change Sponsor	Upload the updated version of the SON and amend the geographical area on the ACP portal, together with the agenda and presentation for this meeting.	1 Nov 2023
Provisional indication of the scale level and process requirements	CAA	Update the title of the ACP on the ACP portal.	1 Nov 2023
Provisional Process Timescales	CAA	Provide feedback regarding proposed timeline week of 23 Oct 2023.	23 Oct 2023
Next Steps	Change Sponsor	Provide draft minutes to CAA for internal review by 25 Oct 2023.	25 Oct 2023
Net Steps	Change Sponsor	Submit a redacted version of the minutes by 1 Nov 2023.	1 Nov 2023
Next Steps	CAA	Update the ACP portal to record that this meeting took place.	1 Nov 2023

MOD
ACP Sponsor