

19 March 2024

ACP-2020-026 FUTURE COMBAT AIRSPACE - DECISION CONDITIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

CONDITIONS

The following condition must be met prior to the first activation of the Danger Area:

1. Finalise the Letter of Agreement. A copy of the final version must be provided to the CAA along with evidence of the agreement of all parties (either through signatures on the document or alternative information that confirms acceptance by all parties).

The Sponsor has provided a finalised and signed version of the Letter of Agreement.

CONDITION MET.

The following condition must be observed by the Change Sponsor, otherwise the CAA may be required to revoke approval to use the Danger Area until potential impacts can be assessed:

2. Amendments to the airspace management and operational procedures in the Letter of Agreement may alter the impacts of the airspace design; these must therefore be discussed with the CAA in advance of any proposed modifications to assess if an airspace change may be required.

The Sponsor has accepted this condition; the MOD will discuss any relevant matters through existing forums, such as the Airspace Management Steering Group.

CONDITION MET.

The sponsor must fulfil the following conditions (before or after implementation).

3. Confirm whether the airspace design also facilitates a decrease in fuel burn and CO₂ emissions over entire flight trajectories (including those outside the London/Scottish FIR boundaries) in cases where the Oceanic Entry/Exit Points to the London/Scottish FIR are different from those in the original flight plan.

The Sponsor has confirmed that the Oceanic Entry/Exit Points to the London/Scottish FIRs were maintained in the simulation modelling for the baseline and design option scenarios. The Final Options Appraisal also confirmed that flight trajectories modelled in the Simulated Region had entry and exit points matching those from the initial flight plans. However, the simulation modelling results for differences in track miles, fuel burn and CO₂e emissions caused due to the ACP were only presented as impacts (benefits) within the London/Scottish FIRs.

CONDITION PARTIALLY MET: The PIR should state whether the ACP facilitates benefits in track miles, fuel burn and CO₂e emissions when flight trajectories extending beyond the London/Scottish FIR boundaries are considered.

4. Provide an explanation for the split of traded and non-traded sector emissions considered in the TAG Greenhouse Gases Workbook.

The Sponsor has explained that the split of traded and non-traded sector emissions considered in the TAG Greenhouse Gases Workbook is 45% (traded) and 55% (non-traded) based on flight information from the representative traffic samples and aligning with the definition for UK ETS.

CONDITION MET.

5. Update the TAG Greenhouse Gases Workbook using tCO₂e input values that are based on 55 activations of FCA.

The Sponsor has presented an updated TAG Greenhouse Gases Workbook using tCO₂e values that are based on 55 activations of the Future Combat Airspace DA. The recalculated impacts (benefits) are higher by an average of 11% than those previously estimated in the Final Options Appraisal. This is likely due to differences in input data assumptions and calculation methodologies.

CONDITION MET: However, the PIR should check whether the actual benefits from the implemented ACP are as anticipated and within this calculated range.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. References to Fast Jet Areas in the Letter of Agreement should be updated to include the new identifications that define them as Danger Areas (ie EGD713 and EGD901).
2. The terminology in the Letter Of Agreement should be amended to remove reference to Managed Danger Areas (MDAs) as this term is no longer in use.
3. The Letter of Agreement glossary reference to 'USAFE' should be amended to the correct meaning of 'United States Air Forces in Europe'.

The CAA notes that the Sponsor made changes to the Letter of Agreement adopting the ACP recommendations.