



## CAA Decision Log

Airspace Change Proposal Title	E-7 Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning (AEW) Mk 1 Orbit Areas Change
Airspace Change Proposal Reference	ACP-2020-24
Change Sponsor	Ministry of Defence
AIS Submission Target Date	14 Mar 25
CAA Decision Target Date	7 Mar 25
<p><i>Instructions</i></p> <p>In providing a response to each question and/or status, the following colour coding should be used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COMPLIANT/NOT APPLICABLE</li> <li>• NOT COMPLIANT/ACTION REQUIRED</li> <li>• ISSUE/CONCERN TO HIGHLIGHT</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Executive Summary</b></p> <p>This proposal from the MOD is to enable airborne surveillance missions in the UK by E-7 Wedgetail aircraft. The aircraft, about to enter service with the RAF, will replace the capability previously provided by the E-3D. Whilst the UK no longer operates E-3 aircraft, variants are still used by NATO forces, and the operating areas established for these flights remain in place. The E-3 operating areas have been used for many years – this proposal introduces new operating areas for E-7 sorties in similar areas, with the same operating procedures employed through airspace sharing agreements between the MOD and NATS.</p>	



The E-7 requires racetrack orbit areas (with approximately 100NM legs), whereas the E-3s require circular areas (nominally 15NM radius). As such, 21 new areas have been developed within the Scottish UIR and London UIR through engagement with NATS. The locations have been chosen to best support Defence tasks, principally routine training activities and exercises, whilst minimising the impact on the ATS Network. The E-7s would operate between FL270 and FL350 under non-deviating status, under the control of 78 Sqn (Swanwick Military) or a UK Air Surveillance and Control Systems unit. Neither the existing E-3 areas or proposed new E-7 areas are considered as airspace structures – more that they are pre-defined areas where airspace sharing arrangements apply, with integration of OAT and GAT achieved through routine coordination methods.

## PART A – Airspace Change Process – GATEWAYS

<b>A.1</b>	<b>Airspace Change Portal</b>	
A.1.1	<a href="#">Airspace change proposal public view</a>	
<b>A.2</b>	<b>CAA SharePoint site</b>	
A.2.1	<a href="#">E-7 Wedgetail AEW Orbit Areas - Project - All Documents</a>	
<b>A.3</b>	<b>Stage 1 DEFINE Gateway</b>	N/A

A.3.1	Not applicable. This is a Level 3 change.	
<b>A.4</b>	<b>Stage 2 DEVELOP AND ASSESS Gateway</b>	N/A
A.4.1	Not applicable. This is a Level 3 change.	
<b>A.5</b>	<b>Stage 3 CONSULT Gateway</b>	N/A
A.5.1	Not applicable. This is a Level 3 change.	
<b>A.6</b>	<b>Chronology</b>	
A.6.1	<p>17/03/2020: Statement of Need received.</p> <p>09/07/2020: Assessment Meeting held.</p> <p>26/02/2021: Stage 1 Gateway passed. (under CAP1616 V4)</p> <p>06/04/2023: Stage 2 Gateway passed. (under CAP1616 V4)</p> <p>12/12/2023: Email sent to sponsor advising change of ACP Level from 2a to 3, effective as of CAP1616 V5 effective date</p> <p>02/01/2024: ACP transitioned to Level 3 and proceeding under CAP 1616 V5</p> <p>29/11/2024: Stage 4 Final Submission received.</p>	
<b>A.7</b>	<b>Are there any additional process requirements of the Civil Aviation Authority (Air Navigation) Directions 2023 (the “Air Navigation Directions”) and/or the Air Navigation Guidance 2017 which apply to this airspace change, and have they been complied with?</b>	N/A
A.7.1		

PART B – Airspace Change Process – STAGE 5				
<b>B.1</b>	<b>Was a Public Evidence Session required for this proposal?</b>		N	
B.1.1				
<b>B.2</b>	<b>Were any requests made for this decision to be called-in by the Secretary of State?</b>		N	
B.2.1				
<b>B.3</b>	<b>Does the Secretary of State call-in criteria apply to this proposal?</b>		N	
B.3.1				
<b>B.4</b>	<b>Has the Secretary of State decided to call-in this proposal?</b> NOTE: if 'Yes' the content of this log concerns the recommendations linked to the 'minded-to' decision that has been presented to the Secretary of State.		N	
B.4.1				
<b>B.5</b>	<b>Subject Matter Expert (SME) Regulatory Assessments</b> NOTE: this captures RAG status only – full details contained within each of assessment:			
	<b>ATM Safety</b>	N/A	<b>Environmental</b>	COMPLETE
	<b>Economic Assessment &amp; Statement</b>	N/A	<b>Instrument Flight Procedure</b>	N/A
	<b>Engagement</b>	COMPLETE	<b>Operational</b>	COMPLETE
B.5.1	<i>Is there any other information outside of the regulatory assessments above which should be brought to the attention of the decision maker (e.g. outstanding Letters of Agreement)?</i> YES			

B.6	Other Relevant Documents (title and hyperlinks to be inserted)		
B.7	<p>Has the relevant legal and policy framework to the airspace change process been taken into account, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Air Navigation Directions;</li> <li>• the Airspace Modernisation Strategy;</li> <li>• section 70 of the Transport Act 2000;</li> <li>• the Air Navigation Guidance 2017; and</li> <li>• CAP 1616 and associated publications?</li> </ul>		Y
B.8	<p>CAA consideration of whether the proposal is in accordance with the Airspace Modernisation Strategy (Air Navigation Directions, direction 5(1)).</p> <p><u>NOTE:</u> the left column captures RAG status only and the right column captures the rationale – full details will be contained within the SME Regulatory Assessments. Reference should be made to the AMS characteristics (<a href="#">CAP 1616f</a>, 6.61). For more information on the AMS strategic objectives, see <i>Airspace Modernisation Strategy 2023-2040 Part 1: Strategic Objectives and Enablers</i> (<a href="#">CAP 1711</a>).</p>		
Safety	<p>The aims of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy are to deliver quicker, quieter, and cleaner journeys and more capacity for the benefit of those who use and are affected by UK airspace, whilst maintaining/improving safety, integrating diverse users, simplifying airspace design, and considering environmental sustainability.</p> <p>This proposal maintains the current levels of safety by utilising existing procedures for shared access to controlled airspace and standard rules for the safe separation of aircraft. Any ATC matters needing to be considered within the NATS safety management system will be overseen by the Air Traffic Services inspector prior to implementation as part of the routine change management processes.</p>		

<p>Integration of diverse airspace users</p>	<p>This proposal does not introduce any changes to the current airspace classification or access arrangements but enables military activities in areas where shared access procedures are already in force.</p>
<p>Simplification of airspace system</p>	<p>This proposal does not introduce any changes to the airspace system but enables military activities in areas where shared access procedures are already in force.</p>
<p>Environmental sustainability</p>	<p>The AMS environmental sustainability strategic objective states that: “environmental sustainability will be an overarching principle applied through all airspace modernisation activities. Airspace modernisation should deliver the Government’s key environmental objectives with respect to air navigation as set out in the Air Navigation Guidance.”</p> <p>The ANG 2017 sets out the Government’s environmental objectives with respect to air navigation. These environmental objectives are ‘designed to minimise the environmental impact of aviation within the context of supporting a strong and sustainable aviation sector’. The objectives are, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• limit and, where possible, reduce the number of people in the UK significantly affected by adverse impacts from aircraft noise;</li> <li>• ensure that the aviation sector makes a significant and cost-effective contribution towards reducing global emissions; and</li> <li>• minimise local air quality emissions and in particular ensure that the UK complies with its international obligations on air quality.</li> </ul> <p>The airspace change is above 7,000ft and therefore there is no anticipated impact in terms of noise, local air quality, tranquillity or biodiversity. The change sponsor has provided a qualitative assessment and supporting evidence to demonstrate that the anticipated impacts on greenhouse gas emissions will be nil/negligible.</p>
<p><b>B.9</b></p>	<p><b>CAA consideration of factors material to our decision whether to approve the change (section 70, Transport Act 2000).</b></p> <p><u>NOTE:</u> the left column captures RAG status only and the right column captures a summary of the rationale – full details will be contained within the SME Regulatory Assessments. Reference should be made to the Section 70 characteristics (<a href="#">CAP 1616f</a>, 6.80).</p>



<p>Maintain a high standard of safety in the provision of air traffic services section 70(1)(a)</p>	<p>The UK CAA's primary duty is to maintain a high standard of safety in the provision of Air Traffic Services, and this takes priority over all other duties.</p> <p>This proposal maintains the current levels of safety by utilising existing procedures for shared access to controlled airspace and standard rules for the safe separation of aircraft. Any ATC matters needing to be considered within the NATS safety management system will be overseen by the Air Traffic Services inspector prior to implementation as part of the routine change management processes.</p>
<p>Secure the most efficient use of airspace consistent with the safe operation of aircraft and the expeditious flow of air traffic section 70(2)(a)</p>	<p>The UK CAA has a duty to secure the most efficient use of the airspace consistent with the safe operation of aircraft and the expeditious flow of air traffic. The UK CAA considers the most efficient use of airspace to mean securing the greatest number of movements of aircraft through a specific volume of airspace over a period of time so that the best use is made of the limited resource of UK airspace. The UK CAA considers the expeditious flow of air traffic to involve each aircraft taking the shortest amount of time for its flight. It is concerned with individual flights.</p> <p>This proposal enables military activities through shared access to controlled airspace. The number of military flights is expected to be low, and the design of the areas has taken into account the ATS Network.</p>
<p>Satisfy requirements of operators and owners of all classes of aircraft section 70(2)(b)</p>	<p>The UK CAA has a duty to satisfy the requirements of operators and owners of all classes of aircraft.</p> <p>This proposal enables military activities through shared access to controlled airspace.</p>
<p>Take account of the interests of any other person (other than an operator or owner of an aircraft) in relation to the use of any particular airspace or the use of airspace generally section 70(2)(c)</p>	<p>The UK CAA has a duty to take account of the interests of any person (other than an owner or operator of an aircraft) in relation to the use of any particular airspace or the use of airspace generally.</p> <p>There are no changes to the airspace affecting the interests of any other person.</p>
<p>Take into account the Secretary</p>	<p>The UK CAA has a duty to take account of any guidance relating to spaceflight activities (within the</p>

<p>of State's guidance relating to spaceflight activities section 70(2)(ca)</p>	<p>meaning of the Space Industry Act 2018) given to the CAA by the Secretary of State. There are no changes to the airspace requiring consideration of the guidance relating to spaceflight activities.</p>	
<p>Take into account the Secretary of State's guidance on environmental objectives section 70(2)(d)</p>	<p>The airspace change is above 7,000ft and therefore there is no anticipated impact in terms of noise, local air quality, tranquillity or biodiversity. The change sponsor has provided a qualitative assessment and supporting evidence to demonstrate that the anticipated impacts on greenhouse gas emissions will be nil/negligible. Based on the evidence provided by the change sponsor, the ACP is assessed as meeting the Secretary of State's guidance on environmental objectives, section 70(2)(d).</p>	
<p>Facilitate the integrated operation of air traffic services provided by or on behalf of the armed forces of the Crown and other air traffic services section 70(2)(e)</p>	<p>The UK CAA's duty is to facilitate the integrated operation of Air Traffic Services provided by or on behalf of the armed forces of the Crown and other Air Traffic Services. There are no changes to the airspace affecting the integrated operation of air traffic services provided by or on behalf of the Crown or other Air Traffic Services. The MOD is the sponsor of this proposal; military services (from ATC and Air Surveillance and Control Systems units) are required to support this activity, which will be achieved through existing agreements for the shared use of controlled airspace.</p>	
<p>Take account of the interests of national security section 70(2)(f)</p>	<p>The UK CAA's duty is to take account of the impact any airspace change may have upon matters of national security. The CAA is satisfied that the proposal has no detrimental impacts on national security.</p>	
<p>Take account of any international obligations notified to the CAA by the Secretary of State section 70(2)(g)</p>	<p>No such international obligations have been notified to the CAA under section 70(2)(g) of Transport Act 2000.</p>	
<p><b>B.10</b></p>	<p><b>Are there any other associated publications relevant to the proposal and, if so, have the requirements</b></p>	<p></p>



	<p><b>of those publications been met?</b></p> <p><u>NOTE:</u> associated publications include Airspace Policy Statements listed <a href="#">here</a>.</p>	
B.10.1		
<b>B.11</b>	<p><b>Conclusions in respect of requirement to ensure that the amount of controlled airspace is the minimum required to maintain a high standard of air safety and, subject to overriding national security or defence requirements, that the needs of all airspace users is reflected on an equitable basis.</b></p> <p><u>NOTE:</u> this section only applies if the CAA is classifying or amending the classification of UK airspace.</p>	
B.11.1		

PART C – Stage 5 Recommendation		
<b>C.1</b>	<b>Taking the above information into account, what is your recommendation to the decision-maker for this proposal?</b>	
C.1.1	It is recommended that this ACP is Approved with Conditions.	
<b>C.2</b>	<b>Are there any Recommendations and/or Conditions for the change sponsor to address prior to implementation (if approved)?</b>	<b>Y</b>
C.2.1	<p><b>CONDITION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All associated LoAs to be finalised, agreed and signed by relevant parties and submitted to the CAA prior to implementation, including an LoA that describes the air traffic management procedures required to support the airspace sharing arrangements.</li> </ul>	
<b>C.3</b>	<b>Are there any specific requirements in terms of the data to be collected by the change sponsor for the Post Implementation Review (if approved)?</b>	

C.3.1	<p>The change sponsor is required to collate related stakeholder observations (enquiry/complaint data) and present it to the CAA. Any location/area from where more than 10 individuals have made enquiries/complaints must be plotted on separate maps displaying a representative sample of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aircraft track data plots; and</li> <li>• traffic density plots</li> </ul> <p>The plots should include a typical days-worth of movements from the last month of each standard calendar quarter (March, June, September, December) from each of the years directly preceding and following implementation of the airspace change proposal.</p>		
C.4	<p><b>Are any other consents and approvals needed in order to permit the intended operation (title and hyperlinks to be inserted)?</b></p>		
C.5	<p><b>Are there any other comments/observations for the decision maker?</b></p>		
C.5.1			
C.6	<p><b>Regulator's Signature</b></p>		
Account Manager			5 Mar 25

PART D – Draft Regulatory Decision – Comment (for Level 1 Airspace Change Proposal's only)			
D.1	<p><b>Was a Draft Regulatory Decision published for this proposal?</b></p>		
N/A			
D.2	<p><b>Was any feedback received in relation to the Draft Regulatory Decision?</b></p>		
N/A			

<b>D.3</b>	<b>Has the Draft Regulatory Decision been amended in light of feedback received?</b>	
N/A		

<b>PART E – Final Regulatory Decision – Comment/Approval</b> <b>[Delete signatory rows below dependent on Decision Maker]</b>			
<b>Airspace Regulation Principal comments and recommendation:</b> This proposal should ensure that a new MOD aircraft type can be safely flown in airspace with minimal impact when compared to current operations. It recognises that other airspace users must share the airspace and as such LoAs will be required in order to efficiently manage the operation. The airspace change proposal is approved subject to the conditions relating to the completion of the relevant LoAs being met.			
Airspace Regulation Principal	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	5 Mar 25