

Safety and Airspace Regulation Group

Airspace Change Process

Post Implementation Review Data Request (Scaled)

ACP Project Reference:	ACP-2017-049		
Title of Airspace Change:	London Heathrow – Arrival Procedures		
Change Sponsor:	Heathrow Airport		
CAA Decision Document:	https://airspacechange.caa.co.uk/documents/download/3531		
CAA Decision Date:	26 August 2021	AIRAC Date(s):	12/21 02 December 2021
PIR Data Submission Requested:	15 July 2025	PIR Data Submission Required by:	13 August 2025

Introduction

1. The CAA's airspace change process is a seven-stage mechanism that is set out in detail in CAP 1616. Stage 7 of this process is a Post Implementation Review (PIR) that normally begins one year after implementation of the change. The PIR is an assessment of whether the anticipated impacts and benefits in the approved change and published decision are as expected and where there are differences, what steps (if any) the CAA requires to be taken.
2. Irrespective of whether the CAA decision to approve the change was made under the previous process (set out in CAP 725), all PIRs should normally be in accordance with the process requirements of CAP 1616. However, when assessing the expected impacts against the actual impacts, the methodology adopted at the time of the original CAA decision should be used.
3. Airspace Change Proposals can vary in size, scale and complexity, which has led the CAA to scale the PIR process appropriately. A PIR of Level 2 changes will be undertaken when it is proportionate to do so. For some changes, the CAA may proportionately reduce the extent of evidence and data required from the change sponsor or allow more flexibility in the format of the data required¹.
4. This data request form sets out that list of data required for the CAA to complete the assessment for a scaled PIR. On receipt of this data request form, the change sponsor should provide qualitative statements against each of the general observations listed below. The date on which the CAA requires the data to be submitted is stipulated at the top of this document.

¹ CAP 1616 – Para 294, 295 & Appendix H
APR-AC-TP-041

Safety and Airspace Regulation Group

General Observations

1. The following general observations are to enable an overview of the effectiveness of the airspace change.
2. The change sponsor is required to submit a qualitative statement against each data request which supports the conclusion reached in each case.
3. The CAA will review the analysis of the data submitted to ensure the anticipated impacts and benefits in the approved change were as expected.

- a) An overview statement on whether, in the change sponsor's view, the original proposal met the intended objectives as described on the CAA's decision to approve the change.

The objective for this airspace change was to introduce 3.2° RNAV Slightly Steeper Approaches (SSA) at Heathrow Airport, as part of our ongoing commitment to reducing our noise footprint.

As stated in the CAA Decision, the proposal maintains a high standard of safety, supports environmental objectives and does not introduce any discernible negative impacts to the interests of any other person. This is still true today, as it was from first day of implementation.

- b) An overview statement on whether, in the change sponsor's view, the original proposal met any conditions described on the CAA's decision to approve the change (if applicable).

There were no conditions to fulfil prior to implementation.

Heathrow has regular engagement with Airlines through various forums. It will continue to promote the use of SSA, highlighting the greater environmental benefits, whilst also noting the continued availability of the 3° ILS approach.

- c) Confirm that implementation occurred on the dates identified in the Decision Letter. If no implementation date was specified in the Decision, please state so.

Yes, implementation was notified through Aeronautical Information Regulation and Control (AIRAC) cycle (AIRAC12/21) effective from 02 December 2021, as identified in the CAA Decision Letter.

- d) If there was a significant delay between the planned and actual implementation date, please provide an explanation.

N/A

- e) Identify whether any other issues of significance have occurred during the period 12 months after date of implementation.

Since implementation, Heathrow has not experienced any issues of significance through the use of 3.2° RNAV SSA. No negative trends or safety related issues have been highlighted during this period.

- f) Other than normal promulgation activity (e.g. NOTAM, AIC etc.), identify what steps were undertaken to notify local aviation stakeholders that the airspace change was about to be implemented.

Safety and Airspace Regulation Group

Through regular engagement with the Airline Community (emails and briefings via Flight Ops Performance and Safety Committee (FLOPSC) and Capital Governance and technical engagement forums), Heathrow was able to notify relevant parties of the airspace change (the procedure, implementation date, etc.). During these sessions, it was highlighted that the 3.2° RNAV SSA procedure is elective, and the alternative 3° ILS approach remains available.

g) Feedback/complaints received from stakeholders, aviation stakeholders or the Ministry of Defence by the change sponsor in the period between implementation and post-implementation review (including feedback/complaints received via an FCS 1522 Form (UK Airspace Access or Refusal of ATS Report)).

None received.

Other information of relevance (if appropriate)

h) Arrival Statistics

Since implementation in Dec 2021, Heathrow Airport has managed over 810,000 arrivals. Of those, 2783 have performed a 3.2° RNAV SSA (approx. 0.34%), with only 3 aircraft having executed a missed approach due to an unstable approach (0.11% of all RNAV approaches, which is less than traditional 3° ILS missed approach stats).

	2021*	2022	2023	2024	2025**	Total to date
Total arrivals	12,186	190,084	228,296	238,120	142,048	810,734
RNAV approaches	30	705	752	749	547	2,783
Go arounds (RNAV)	0	1	2	0	0	3

* 2021 figures 02 Dec - 31

Dec

** 2025 figures 01 Jan - 5

Aug

Due to the minimal number of go arounds, no trends are available to date. Heathrow continues to monitor the practice (through Heathrow's Airport Noise Monitoring System (ANOMS) and NATS Monthly Go-Around database) to identify if any trends were to materialise.

No safety related issues have been identified through the use of 3.2° RNAV SSA.

Safety and Airspace Regulation Group

For CAA use only

In providing a response for each general observation, please ensure that the 'status' column is completed using the following options and that they are colour coded accordingly:

YES • NO • PARTIALLY • N/A

A summary of any issues arising should be provided against each question in the appropriate text box.

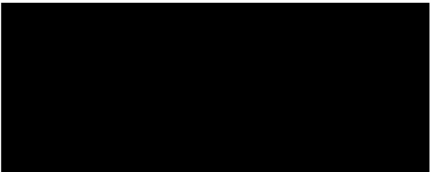
General Observations	Status
a) Has the change sponsor indicated that the original proposal met the intended objectives as described on the CAA's decision to approve the change?	Yes
The sponsor has indicated that the objectives were met and there is no evidence to suggest otherwise.	
b) Has the change sponsor indicated that the original proposal met any conditions described on the CAA's decision to approve the change (if applicable)?	Yes
There were no conditions in the CAA Decision Publication.	
c) Did the implementation occur on the date(s) identified in the Decision Letter?	Yes
Yes the change was implemented as planned and identified in the Decision CAP.	

General Observations	Status
d) Was there a significant delay between the planned and actual implementation date?	No
No the change was implemented as planned.	
e) Has there been any other issues of significance that occurred during the period 12 months after date of implementation?	No
Nothing reported or any evidence gathered via other channels.	
f) Other than normal promulgation activity (e.g. NOTAM, AIC etc.), were there any steps undertaken to notify local aviation stakeholders that the airspace change was about to be implemented?	Yes
Yes and the steps were appropriate and proportionate using the relevant forums.	
g) Were there any feedback/complaints received from stakeholders, aviation stakeholders or the Ministry of Defence by the change sponsor in the period between implementation and post-implementation review?	No
Nothing reported between implementation and PIR.	

Safety and Airspace Regulation Group

Other information of relevance (if appropriate)	Status
h) Arrival Statistics	N/A
Arrival statistics show that only a small number of flights have used the 3.2° RNAV SSA and they have not resulted in any adverse impacts.	

General Summary and recommendation	
Based on the above, does the CAA Project Officer recommend that this concludes the PIR assessment for this ACP?	Yes
The airspace change has achieved its objectives as set out in the original ACP and no adverse impacts have been identified since the change was implemented. Implementation was as expected, and the new procedures continue to be monitored as part of the ongoing oversight of the airport. Therefore, I recommend that the PIR is concluded and that no further work is required.	

Decision and Sign Off	
Based on the above, does the Decision Maker conclude that the PIR assessment for this ACP complete?	Yes
On the basis of the information provided and assessed through the Post Implementation Review (PIR), the airspace change is considered to have achieved its intended objectives and the PIR is concluded.	
 Principal Airspace Regulator	
Date: 21/08/2025	