

BVLOS Trial in Unsegregated Airspace

Remotely Piloted Drone Flight Trial Documentation:
Engagement Strategy
ACP-2024-001

NATS

Document Version 2.1

Contents

1.	Introduction	3
1.1.	Background	3
2.	Audience	3
2.1.	Who NATS Are Engaging	3
3.	Approach	5
3.1.	How NATS Will Engage	5
4.	Materials	6
4.1.	Accessibility	6
4.2.	Engagement Presentation	6
5.	Length	6
6.	Post Engagement	6
6.1.	Response Categorisation	6

Change History

Issue	Month Year	Change in this issue (most recent first)
V2.1	July 2026	Minor corrections to stakeholder list / rationale
V2	July 2026	Changed to align with new engagement period, Phase 1 of the 3-year trial and changes to airspace design
V1	December 2024	Published on CAA airspace change portal

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

- 1.1.1. This document outlines the strategy for engaging with stakeholders as part of the CAP1616 Airspace Change Process for the BVLOS (Beyond Visual Line of Sight) Trial in Unsegregated Airspace (ACP-2024-001).
- 1.1.2. This document provides information about how NATS will undertake this engagement. NATS wants to provide relevant and appropriate information to the right people, in the right way, and enable them to provide informed responses to the proposed changes in a suitable timeframe.

2. Audience

2.1. Who NATS Are Engaging

- 2.1.1. In 2024 NATS generated a stakeholder list based on the following general categories:
 - Air navigation service providers and air traffic controllers potentially impacted by the change
 - Aviation organisations who operate in the area
 - Airports, aerodromes, airfields and air strips potentially impacted by the change
 - Public body for the nature conservation
 - Relevant members of the National Air Traffic Management Advisory Committee (NATMAC)
- 2.1.2. In May 2026 these were reviewed in line with the changes to the proposal, with some stakeholders removed and others added.
- 2.1.3. Subsequently, NATS categorised the stakeholders based on their level of impact:
 - 1. Those who are likely to be highly impacted by the change or whose direct involvement is vital for the correction of methods of operations.
 - 2. Other relevant parties who are likely to be interested in the change, but whose impact is expected to be less than Group 1.
- 2.1.4. Table 1 states the stakeholders as per this round of engagement, why they were included, and what stakeholder group they were in. Meanwhile, Table 2 states the stakeholders that had been previously engaged, but have since been removed from NATS' stakeholder list, and why.

Table 1 - Full Stakeholder List

Organisation	Justification for Engagement	Stakeholder Group
Aberdeen Airport	NEW Airport in proximity to trial	2
Air Task	Current North Sea operators	1
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA)	Relevant NATMAC member	2
Airfield Operators Group (AOG)	Relevant NATMAC member	2
Association of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems UK (ARPAS-UK)	Relevant NATMAC member	2
Aviation Environment Federation (AEF)	Relevant NATMAC member	2
Avinor	Large proportion of their operators are North Sea operators	2
Babcock Mission Critical Services Onshore	Helicopter operator	1
Bristow	Current North Sea operators	1
Bristow Search and Rescue	Supports maritime search and rescue	1
British Business and General Aviation Association (BBGA)	Relevant NATMAC member	2
British Gliding Association (BGA)	Relevant NATMAC member	2
British Helicopter Association (BHA)	Relevant NATMAC member	1
British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association (BHPA)	Relevant NATMAC member	2
British Microlight Aircraft Association (BMAA)	Relevant NATMAC member	2
British Skydiving	Relevant NATMAC member	2
CHC	Current North Sea operators	1
DAATM ¹	Military aviation activity	1
Drone Major	Relevant NATMAC member	2
Gama Aviation	Current North Sea operators	1
General Aviation Alliance (GAA)	Relevant NATMAC member	2
Guild of Air Traffic Control Officers (GATCO)	Relevant NATMAC member	2
Hatton Airstrip	NEW Airstrip in proximity to trial	2
Helicopter Club of Great Britain (HCGB)	Relevant NATMAC member	2
HeliOffShore	Forum of offshore helicopter operators	1
Honourable Company of Air Pilots (HCAP)	Relevant NATMAC member	2
Humberside Airport	Large proportion of their operators are North Sea operators	2
Joint Rescue Coordination Centre	Maritime and air emergency tasking organisation	1
Light Aircraft Association (LAA)	Relevant NATMAC member	2
Longside Airfield (Buchan Aero Club)	NEW Airstrip in proximity to trial	2
Maritime Coastguard Agency	NEW Maritime and air emergency tasking organisation	1

¹ NATS acknowledge the proximity of this trial to RAF Lossiemouth. However, NATS will engage with DAATM, who are responsible for engaging with and formulating a consultation response on behalf of all military representatives, to make sure that no impacts are missed.

Organisation	Justification for Engagement	Stakeholder Group
NatureScot	Organisation responsible for habitats and European registered biodiversity within Scotland	1
NHV	Current North Sea operators	1
Offshore Helicopter Services UK Ltd	Operating in proximity to proposed TRA	1
PDG Helicopters	Current North Sea operators	1
Scottish Ambulance Service – Special Task Desk	Coastal blue light operations	1
Sumburgh Airport	NEW Large proportion of their operators are North Sea operators	2
Whiterashes Airfield	NEW Airstrip in proximity to trial	2
Uni-fly	Current North Sea operators	1
2Excel Aviation	Current North Sea operators	1

Table 2 – Removed Stakeholders

Organisation	Rationale
Airports UK	Aberdeen and Humberside contacted directly. No other airport impacted.
Airspace4all	Organisation is no longer operational
BAe Systems	Contacted MOD directly
British Balloon and Airship Club	No longer a member of NATMAC, no balloon / airship sites in proximity to change, other NATMAC general aviation organisations being engaged
Dundee ATC	Out of scope due to change in design
Fetlar Airstip	Out of scope due to change in design
HIAL	Sumburgh Airport engaged directly
Hollym airfield	Located near Hull, no connection to Aberdeen
NATS NERL's North Sea Helicopter Advisory Service	This is part of Aberdeen ATC, not a separate stakeholder
Spaceport	Out of scope due to change in design
Sumburgh ATC	ANSP out of scope due to change in design
Tingwall Airport (non-HIAL)	Out of scope due to change in design

3. Approach

3.1. How NATS Will Engage

- 3.1.1. Stakeholders in Group 1 will initially be invited to a Teams meeting, where they can be taken through the proposal and the direct impacts on them and helped to build the method of operations for the trial.
- 3.1.2. All stakeholders will receive the engagement material via email and inviting response via Microsoft Forms (<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/xgEQSq5x5G>).
- 3.1.3. If further clarification is needed, by any stakeholder, NATS will assess the need for an online meeting and arrange one as appropriate.
- 3.1.4. A reminder will be sent at the mid-point, and near-end of our engagement period, to any targeted stakeholders who have not yet responded.

4. Materials

4.1. Accessibility

- 4.1.1. To make the engagement materials accessible to all stakeholders, technical terms will be avoided or will be briefly described.
- 4.1.2. Microsoft Forms is freely accessible to anyone with internet access, so is believed to be an appropriate and accessible platform.
- 4.1.3. All targeted stakeholders are professional organisations, who use internet regularly, therefore, this is considered an appropriate method of engagement.

4.2. Engagement Presentation

- 4.2.1. This will contain information which will enable stakeholders to make an informed response to the proposed trial, including:
 - Introduction to proposal: What, When, Where, and How,
 - Proposed airspace design, entry requirements and ruleset,
 - Trial objectives and outcomes,
 - The potential impacts of the proposal,
 - Information on the engagement process - how to respond; what happens next.
 - References to further sources of information.

5. Length

- 5.1.1. The stakeholder engagement will commence on 28th July 2026 and end at 23:45 on 25th August 2026.
- 5.1.2. Four-weeks has been selected as this aligns with the minimum recommendation as per CAP2989 (Temporary or Trial ACP for BVLOS – additional guidance).
- 5.1.3. This is a second round of engagement, and the impacts are considered the same or less than before. Therefore, a shorter duration could have been proposed. However, cognisant that the previous engagement was almost two-years ago, it is likely stakeholders may have forgotten and therefore will consider this like a new ACP. On reflection, four-weeks was considered a balanced approach.

6. Post Engagement

6.1. Response Categorisation

- 6.1.1. NATS will review all responses, identifying and extracting common themes and key concerns. These themes will then be considered when updating the final design to ensure stakeholders' viewpoints are considered in the final airspace design.

End of Document