

**Committee:** Stansted Airport Advisory Panel  
**Date:** 15 January 2009  
**Title:** NATS AIRSPACE MANAGEMENT  
CHANGES - UPDATE

**Agenda Item**

**4**

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Item for  
information

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### Summary

NATS recently held a stakeholder workshop for representatives of BAA Stansted, Cambridgeshire CC, Luton Airport, Essex CC and Suffolk CC to discuss holds over Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Essex and routes over Essex. This was part of its process of reviewing the response to consultation on its proposed airspace management changes, which took place between February and 19 June 2008. NATS has not yet determined whether to make any changes to its proposals and whether it will need to carry out any further consultation. It is clear that it has not yet completed its analysis of the proposals it included in its February - June 2008 consultation.

### Recommendations

That members note the report.

### Background Papers

NATS' initial feedback report for the Terminal Control North (TCN) consultation can be accessed on line at <http://www.consultation.nats.co.uk/>

### Impact

Communication/Consultation	NATS' consultation has concluded. It has yet to determine if it needs to carry out further consultation.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Finance	None
Human Rights	None
Legal implications	None

## Terminal Control North Airspace Management Changes - Update

### Stansted Airport Advisory Panel, Item 4

Sustainability	Noise and CO2 emissions
Ward-specific impacts	Varies by location of ward: positive and negative impacts
Workforce/Workplace	None

#### **Situation**

NATS published an initial feedback report on the response to consultation on 22 July. The Council's response, which is appended, was based on a comprehensive report and informed by extensive discussion at the Panel meetings held on 25 March and 9 June 2008, Full Council on 22 April 2008 and a presentation by NATS of its proposals to Members before the meeting on 25 March.

NATS has provided a record of the meeting it held on 26 November 2008 with representatives of county councils as part of the process of reviewing the response to consultation. It states that the alignment of the proposed routes in the following areas was discussed:

#### Holds over Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Essex

- Luton hold
- Luton P-RNAV arrivals over the Mordens
- Stansted western hold
- Stansted eastern hold
- Stansted P-RNAV arrivals over Sudbury and environs

#### Routes over Essex

- Stansted P-RNAV departures over Saffron Walden and surrounds
- Stansted P-RNAV arrivals over Central Essex
- Holding over Dengie peninsula
- London city departures

NATS' note confirmed that it "will investigate the feasibility of the proposed routes in terms of safety, technical feasibility, operational efficiency and environmental benefit. NATS is not in a position to commit to further options or consultation until this analysis has been completed. NATS will update [the stakeholder] group and the wider stakeholder group as soon as this work has progressed sufficiently to show a clear way forward."

The morning part of the workshop looked at proposed holds for both Luton and Stansted and P-RNAV arrivals over Sudbury and the surroundings. Neither the proposed Luton hold nor the proposed Stansted eastern hold pose issues for Uttlesford. In relation to the proposed Stansted western hold, NATS is considering how to respond to representations received during the consultation process, which

## Terminal Control North Airspace Management Changes - Update

### Stansted Airport Advisory Panel, Item 4

include strong views from the bloodstock industry in the Newmarket area seeking no overflying.

In the afternoon session, the main issue for discussion was the Stansted P-RNAV easterly departure route and its effect on Saffron Walden. NATS is aware of concerns about aircraft vectoring off over the town, including those expressed in the Council's response, and is considering increasing NPR compliance to 5,000 ft. In that situation, NATS feel that the only vectoring off that might occur would be if a faster plane were catching up a slower one, but then overflying of the town would be at least 5,000 ft. NATS does have to look at adding some route miles to this departure route in order to increase separation from Luton traffic, possibly involving some route variation in the area of Littlebury / Gt Chesterford. The Stansted P-RNAV easterly arrivals arrangements are also still under review.

NATS' representative has been requested to organise a presentation to the Council's Stansted Airport Advisory Panel about its ongoing work in response to the representations it has received. He has stated that NATS would consider giving a presentation if it decided that further consultation was necessary as part of the process.

### Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
NATS makes further changes to its proposals whose net effect would be to increase noise impacts on Uttlesford communities	2 Changes to the proposed Stansted western hold could increase overflying of the district	2 Such overflying would generally be at relatively high altitude	NATS' ongoing work will be monitored

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

## Appendix

### The Council's response to NATS' consultation

- I. This is the response of Uttlesford District Council to NATS consultation document on proposed changes to airspace in Terminal Control North.
- II. The Council is concerned about the principle of making changes to airspace management arrangements in a sector that NATS acknowledges is the busiest and most complex in the world, in order, in part, to enable the handling of even more movements. The Council considers that NATS should advise the CAA and the government that a cap should be placed on movements in the Terminal Control North zone and that, within that cap, the objectives should be limited to reducing intrusion from aircraft noise, minimising emissions of greenhouse gases and ozone depleting substances, and improving local air quality.
- III. In a rural area like Uttlesford, ambient noise levels are low and therefore aircraft even at 7,000 to 8,000 feet have the potential to be disturbing with adverse effects on the tranquillity of this attractive rural area rich in cultural and heritage assets. The routing of departure routes over the district, particularly those which currently do not overfly Uttlesford such as the proposed route for Luton Westerly departures to the South East with aircraft below 6000 feet, is therefore viewed locally as a detrimental development.
- IV. The following schools will be under or close to the departure swathes for the first time
  - Easterly departures : Wimbish Primary School, Radwinter Primary School and further out Chrishall Primary School
  - Westerly Departures: Farnham Primary School and further out Manuden Primary School, Clavering Primary School, and Chrishall Primary School.

There does not appear to be any consideration of the effect on schools in the appraisal methodology.
- V. Whilst appreciating the complexities of the potential interactions between arrangements, it is regretted that the proposals are presented as a set of measures that are near to finalisation, only with limited scope for adjustment to take into account local factors where circumstances permit. It is difficult to meaningfully engage with the development of the proposals when what NATS seeks, in effect, is endorsement. Some limited examples are given of why NATS dismissed options and chose a particular alignment. Those most relevant to Uttlesford are the Options for Stansted Easterly Departures to the South West figure G51. We have no way of gauging whether safety

## Terminal Control North Airspace Management Changes - Update

### Stansted Airport Advisory Panel, Item 4

considerations constrain choices in the way that the consultation document suggests. The potential for the proposed Stansted Easterly Departures to the north to overfly Saffron Walden below 4000 feet notwithstanding P-RNAV is a concern.

- VI. Significant weight should be attached minimising intrusion from aircraft noise, as some people are annoyed or highly annoyed where aircraft noise is below 57 dB 16 hour Leq. The government has acknowledged that the number of people experiencing that response for a given noise dose has increased over time. That point was accepted in its statement when it published the ANASE report. At the same time, the package of proposals must also contribute to minimising emissions.
- VII. It is acknowledged that the new arrivals arrangements are expected to result in arriving aircraft generally being at higher altitude over the district when descending to final approach than at present, but the benefit is lost with increased movements. The new stacks do not bring any reduction of air noise on final approach.
- VIII. Given that a high priority for the Council is to establish conclusively the environmental effects of BAA's G2 proposals, it is also of concern to learn that further changes would need to be introduced to handle the 495,000 ATMs BAA expects at 68 mppa, and that BAA's Environmental Statement is based on a "G2 Best Estimate Airspace Design supplied by NATS". Proposed changes would actually take place independently of the G2 proposals. It is understood from NATS that the holds and some of the routes would not need to change if a new runway was approved and that NATS expects most of the airspace design, particularly the low level arrival and departure routes, to remain effective well beyond 2015. It is unlikely, however, that mixed mode has been considered, although the proposed layout would enable such operations.
- IX. The extension of the consultation period by one month has not addressed the Council's concerns about community involvement in these major changes. NATS is formally requested to extend again the consultation period, this time for a significant period and to enter into full consultation on all options, including those already dismissed by NATS, the consultation to include public meetings and information provided directly to all affected households, and to make clear that comments by letter would be welcomed, and that a name and address for the receipt of these comments be published. The Council will communicate its concerns about the consultation arrangements to the Directorate of Airspace Policy at the CAA and ask it to direct NATS to extend the consultation.