

## **GATCOM Secretariat**

County Hall  
Chichester  
West Sussex  
PO19 1RQ

Telephone 0330 2222543

Website: [www.gatcom.org.uk](http://www.gatcom.org.uk)



---

## **GATCOM 21 JANUARY 2021**

### **KEY MESSAGES AND OUTCOMES FROM MEETING**

The agenda and papers considered at the meeting are available on GATCOM's website at <http://www.gatcom.org.uk/agendas-and-minutes/>

#### **INFLUENCING "BUILD BACK BETTER"**

- GATCOM's [letter](#) to the Minister for Aviation was sent on 2 December 2020. A response was awaited.
- Coast to Capital LEP's Stronger, Smarter, Greener Plan – the LEP's representative was unable to attend the meeting. Arrangements will be made for the LEP to present at a future meeting. In the meantime the LEP's video of a presentation on the Plan is available on YouTube – [click here](#) to see.

#### **REPORTS AND KEY MESSAGES FROM SUB-GROUP & OTHER MEETINGS**

##### **GATCOM Steering Group – Chairman's Report**

- The Steering Group's deliberations as set out in the report were noted.
- Membership vacancies for business/economic interests (x1 seat) and airlines interests (x1 seat) – GATCOM agreed that the Sussex Chamber of Commerce and BAR UK should be formally offered membership of the Committee with immediate effect.

##### **Passenger Advisory Group (PAG) – Chair's Report**

- The PAG's activities over the past quarter were noted.
- GATCOM supported PAG's role as critical friend to the airport and as the passenger advocate, and recognised its contribution to ensuring a positive passenger experience at Gatwick during the on-going COVID pandemic.
- GATCOM endorsed and commended GAL's continued effort to improving the special assistance service at Gatwick.
- GATCOM welcomed the COVID screening centre, operated by ExpressTest (a division of Cignpost Diagnostics Limited) located in the South Terminal's Long Stay Car Park which opened on 30 November. Members reported positive feedback on the use of the facility and commended GAL's efforts in supporting the community during a challenging time.

##### **Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group**

- Changes to the distribution of traffic over recent months due to lower number of aircraft movements and less conflicting traffic in the surrounding airspace was highlighted. For many communities the quieter airspace and changes in flight profile due to the COVID pandemic had brought a positive impact on noise levels they would normally experience. However, there were some complaints from areas where the distribution of traffic was different to the historic distribution albeit, particularly for departures, the aircraft were at higher altitudes. NATMAG will keep this under review.
- GAL's key monitoring indicators showed a slight decline in Continuous Descent Operations (CDO) achievement performance (for daytime and core night time) compared to the previous 12 months performance.

- NATMAG had agreed that Gatwick's Flight Operations Performance and Safety Committee (FLOPSC) should be used as a forum for addressing issues around the ILS minimum joining point.

### **Noise Management Board (NMB) – Chair of NMB Executive Group**

- The work of the NMB has restarted and the first meeting of the NMB Executive Group (NEX) took place on 21 October.
- The NMB work plan (referred to as the NMB Logical Framework) is being developed with input from the NMB Community Forum (NCF), NMB Delivery Group and NEX. There have been some initial responses from NMB and GATCOM members to the draft logical framework which include concerns around the format (which includes more data for transparency reasons and is therefore more complex); the priorities identified; and questions around target timing. A NMB Workshop is planned for 10 February to discuss and resolve the issues of concern and to seek a simpler format. Once the Logical Framework is agreed the NMB's focus is on making real progress on noise reduction as Gatwick builds back in 2021. Members highlighted the need for the Logical Framework to be a user friendly document which could be easily understood by the layperson.
- The linkages between the work of NMB and GAL's Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG) are being reviewed to ensure there is no duplication of effort.
- GAL's progress in developing an Airline Noise Performance Table was highlighted as an important step forward. The Table is to be launched in February 2021. The aim of the Table is to help drive improvement and maintain airlines' operational performance.
- The NEX Chair membership of, and input to (along with the NCF Chair), GATCOM is a very positive development. GATCOM will work closely with the NMB as it prepares and implements its work programme and will help support its work in other ways such as when it becomes necessary to lobby Government and other stakeholders on important policy and other issues.

### **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

The Chief Executive Officer's commentary on activity and performance of Gatwick over the previous quarter was discussed. GATCOM thanked GAL for the regular updates on the rapidly changing circumstances at Gatwick over the past few months. GATCOM also commended the work of GAL in continuing to support the response to the pandemic, supporting employment initiatives in the region and its best endeavours to keep the airport operational in extremely challenging times. Other key points to note are:

- **Traffic** – impact of COVID pandemic continues to significantly affect Gatwick's traffic and passenger numbers with many operations temporarily suspended or reduced to skeleton services during the national lockdown. The South Terminal remains closed with all flights operating out of the North Terminal. With such unprecedented low volumes of passengers only a limited number of facilities are available throughout the North Terminal.
- **GAL business re-structure** – was completed in November with the airport company's workforce reduced by almost 50% in order to protect the business. The on-going pandemic is creating much anxiety for all at the airport and immense impact on people's livelihoods as a result of job losses.
- **GAL's Capital investment** - has been significantly reduced with all but essential projects paused. As a result of the pandemic, reduced operations and lost revenues GAL has secured a combined amount of £550 million borrowing to maintain liquidity.
- **Norwegian** – has announced it will not resume its long-haul operation from Gatwick resulting in a further 1,100 job losses at the airport, although its short haul will continue.
- **COVID Testing and vaccinations** - GATCOM supported GAL's work in opening the COVID screening centre located in the South Terminal's Long Stay Car Park. GAL has also put forward an offer to utilise the South Terminal facilities as a vaccination centre for the area.
- **Northern Runway Project** – GAL has resumed work on preparing its application for Development Consent Order (DCO) to bring into routine use its northern (standby) runway for some aircraft departures. GAL has outlined to local authorities its indicative timetable leading to the launch of the formal consultation in late summer 2021

(August/September) with a view to submitting the DCO application to the Planning Inspectorate sometime in 2022. GAL is currently working on:

- a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with the local planning authority and local highway authority to help provide funding for project discussions. In addition to this GAL confirmed that all local authorities, including Kent, will continue to be invited to topic working groups. However, the aim was to enable PPA funds to be allocated at the discretion of the local planning and highway authority.
- habitat surveys in and around Gatwick including areas adjacent to the edge of airport, and to the north of the airport in the vicinity of the land reserved for the Reigate business park where a significant amount of tree loss has been seen. It also includes an assessment of fish and invertebrate habitats.
- cumulative growth impact assessment
- updating the strategic traffic model
- exploring best practice on ways to consult in view of the on-going pandemic and the use of virtual technology.
- **Supreme Court Judgment on Airports National Policy Statement (NPS)** – GAL highlighted that the key points to note are:
  - NPS now has legal status again which sets out national policy support for Heathrow's third runway
  - any planning application for growth would need to be judged against the prevailing climate change policy and targets in force at the time a planning application was made.
- **Forecourt Charging Proposal** – detailed design is almost complete and work is underway on the signage required to inform drivers of the new charges. GAL has engaged with a wide range of stakeholder and interested parties to build their comments and concerns into the final scheme. Blue Badge holders will be exempt from charges and GAL is developing a local Commuter Scheme for people living close to the airport in areas where there is very limited public transport access. The scheme is due to be launched in March 2021. GATCOM continues to have concerns about the introduction of the scheme particularly the impact this will have on people travelling with young families; those communities from areas east and west of the airport where public transport was non-existent and suffer the negative impacts from aircraft overflight who would be subject to a charge to access the airport; and the increased cost for local taxi services and courtesy transfer services offered by local guest houses. It was commented whether GAL should refer to the charge as "Forecourt Charge" and members asked that the fee charged should be kept under regular review.

## **DFT CONSULTATION: NIGHT FLIGHTS RESTRICTIONS AT GATWICK BETWEEN 2022 AND 2024 AND FUTURE NIGHT FLIGHT POLICY**

- The DfT [presented an overview of the consultation](#) which relates to the extension of the existing night flights regime for a further two years until 2024 including a proposal to ban the operation of QC4 rated aircraft in the night period, the review of the dispensations criteria and the future night flights policy beyond 2024.
- It was announced at the meeting that the DfT has extended the deadline for the second part of the Night Flight Restrictions consultation which will now close on 31 May 2021. This means that the deadline for:
  - responding to consultation questions 6-12 will still close on 3 March. This part of the consultation relates to the proposal to roll forward the current regime for two years and the proposed ban on QC4 rated aircraft; and
  - responding to consultation questions 13 onwards will close on 31 May. This part of the consultation relates to the review of the dispensations criteria and the night flights policy post 2024.
- GATCOM agreed the process for considering its response to the consultation as follows:
  - **22 January - 8 February** – Member organisation views sought on questions 6-12 via email to assist preparation of GATCOM response to that part of the consultation (consultation questions relate to the roll forward of current regime for 2 years and the proposed QC4 rated aircraft ban)

- **25 February (14:00 – 15:00)** Special Meeting of GATCOM - one item meeting to:
  - Receive GAL Presentation on usage over the period covered by the existing regime
  - consider and agree the Committee's response to the night flights stage 1 consultation questions 6-12.
 Followed by
  - **25 February (15:15 – 16:30)** – GATCOM Workshop "Future Night Flights Regime" for all GATCOM members and support officers to explore member organisations' views on their aspirations for a future regime at Gatwick, dispensations criteria review and identify common themes to help form the basis of a suggested GATCOM response to consultation Questions 13 onwards.
  - **3 March** – submission deadline for Consultation Questions 6-12 of the consultation (roll forward of current regime)
  - **1 April** – GATCOM Steering Group – initial consideration of proposed GATCOM response to Questions 13 onwards.
  - **22 April** – GATCOM – consider and agree final draft GATCOM response.
  - **31 May** – submission deadline for Questions 13 onwards
- Clarification was sought on whether the DCO proposals for the Northern Runway project will be factored into the DfT's consideration as part of the consultation on the future night flights policy beyond 2024. The DfT confirmed that it was alive to this issue and advised that if other night restrictions formed part of the planning process then the DfT would need to ensure that the two regimes and the future night flights policy were aligned and did not counteract each other.
- GATCOM acknowledged that there will be many differing and conflicting views about the need and benefits of night flights at Gatwick and that its response to the consultation would need to strike a fair balance between protecting local communities from excessive aircraft noise and the associated health impacts and the needs of the industry and businesses where they are of benefit to the regional and national economy.

### **CRAWLEY BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN UPDATE**

Crawley Borough Council [presented an update on the Council's current local plan](#) consultation and the key draft policies in relation to Gatwick. The key points to note are:

- The Borough Council's six weeks' [consultation](#) runs until 5pm on 17 February 2021.
- GAL confirmed that many of the comments it had raised in the first consultation on the draft Local Plan had been addressed. GAL particularly supports draft local plan policies DD5 and EC7. In respect of the revised policy GAT2 and new policy EC4, GAL was looking at this in detail to understand the implications of the change to the boundary of the safeguarded land and the impact the Gatwick Green Strategic Employment allocation would have on the safeguarded land for a possible future additional runway. In addition, the Council confirmed the 6 weeks period for consultation was an adequate period.
- Member organisations were asked to respond direct to Crawley Borough Council should they have views they wish to contribute to the review of the Local Plan.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE DIRECTIVE (END) NOISE ACTION PLAN (NAP) REVISED MONITORING REPORT, PROCESS AND WORK PLAN PRIORITIES 2021**

Following the outcome of a thorough assessment of GAL's reported status set out in its mid-year 2020 END NAP progress report by GATCOM's NATMAG members, instigated by the environmental and amenity groups' representative, GAL has put forward a proposed revised monitoring and reporting process as set out in the reports to GATCOM. The key points to note are:

- GATCOM endorsed GAL's proposed revised monitoring and reporting process.
- GATCOM agreed that as part of the new process a mid-term review of overall progress made by GAL in delivering the actions of the END NAP to be reported to NATMAG in September 2021, a "year four" review of actions still requiring attention during the last year of the period of the NAP be undertaken and a flow chart be produced showing the timeline for monitoring to be appended to the new process.

- GATCOM endorsed the list of END NAP actions for GAL to deliver in 2021 and the suggested timings of NATMAG's review of progress of those actions.
- GATCOM did not support the additional recommendations of the environmental and amenity groups' representative put forward in advance of and at the meeting.

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

- Thursday 25 February 2021 at 14:00 - Special Meeting of GATCOM – Response to Questions 6 to 12 of DfT Night Flights Consultation
- Thursday 22 April 2021 at 14:00.

**Paula Street  
Secretariat**