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GATCOM 22 APRIL 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/>

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.
- GATCOM agreed that:
 - GAL's new progress status rating methodology for the END Noise Action Plan (NAP) was welcomed
 - NATMAG's suggestion to include a sub-division of the rating status for the NAP progress reporting of "ongoing" two offer two options to reflect either "ongoing on track" and "ongoing off track" was supported;
 - GAL's draft NAP Progress Report 2020 was endorsed; and
 - GAL's Conditions of Use document, which includes airport landing charges and differentials agreed each year with the airlines, to be reported to GATCOM on an annual basis to provide the opportunity to consider and review the effectiveness of the differential charging structure.

Passenger Advisory Group (PAG) – Chair's Report

- The PAG's activities over the past quarter were noted.
- Three main areas of concern were:
 - the absence of a dedicated full time GAL lead on overseeing special assistance service and facilities at the airport;
 - the potential for increased queuing times for passengers at check-in, security and at the border given the additional paperwork checks required as a result of the pandemic. GATCOM agreed the need for GAL to liaise with partners to appropriately manage and mitigate potential delays and queuing issues at arrivals, check-in and security to ensure the safety of passengers and the efficiency of operations as passenger numbers return;
 - issues around the implementation of forecourt charging and the associated red route scheme. GATCOM encouraged GAL to continue engagement with PAG on the forecourt charging scheme to seek continuous improvement to the passenger experience;
- 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.

Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group

NATMAG's activities over the quarter and the key messages to GATCOM were noted as follows:

- NATMAG would continue during this period of low traffic but some reporting and administration would be reduced. This would include extending the noise complaints response time from 8 to 21 days.
- NATMAG would consider how to better educate and inform interested parties about the differential between the DfT noise abatement procedures and the minimum 8NM ILS joining point.
- Following the implementation of the change on 25 February to the Route 4 standard instrument departures GAL will report to NATMAG on flight tracks compared to historic performance once sufficient track data is available - the low numbers of flights are a constraint.

Noise Management Board (NMB) – Chair of NMB Executive Board (NEX)

The action notes and NMB work plan were noted.

The NEX Chair thanked all parties involved in developing and agreeing the NMB workplan which required commitment and compromise by all. Work is now underway on implementing the workplan. It is an iterative programme of work. GATCOM acknowledged that due to COVID uncertainties, with many staff across the industry on furlough, that this could have an impact on the timing of some activity.

It was highlighted that there was a need to ensure there was no duplication of effort between the work of NATMAG and that of the NMB. The Chair of NEX will liaise with GATCOM's Lead Member for Noise.

GATWICK'S GROWTH PLANS

Northern Runway Development Consent Order (DCO) Process

The Planning Inspectorate gave a presentation on the various stages of the DCO process and opportunities for interested parties to engage in the process. To see presentation slides – [click here](#). The key points to note and questions raised are:

- The DCO process looks for transparency from the applicant (in the case of the Northern Runway Project this is GAL) in what they are applying for, transparency in the process for all stakeholders, and to give a clear understanding and certainty of the various statutory timescales for each part of the process and at what stage in the process interested parties can get involved.
- **Pre-application Stage** of the process is key. The applicant needs to identify key consultees, engage with them early in the process and to share information as early as possible to allow consultees to be informed of what the application is for, what the likely impacts will be and help statutory consultees, other organisations and interested parties to influence and inform the development of the application. This is an important stage in the process as once an application is submitted to the Inspectorate it is extremely difficult to make a change or request a change.
- GAL lead on this part of the process and needs to ensure there is an understanding of the application, shares information, evolves the scheme design in response to feedback, has a full understanding the impacts, undertakes survey and assessment work, and engages and consults a wide range of stakeholders.
- The **Statement of Community Consultation (SOCC)**, which provides information on how to be involved in the consultation process, needs to be developed in liaison with local authorities to help guide the applicant in devising a programme of communication and ways to optimise the ability for other parties to get involved. The applicant has to have regard to responses received to the statutory consultation on the draft SOCC. Following consultation, the applicant needs to explain what changes to the scheme have been made and if comments are not taken on board then to explain why.
- GAL confirmed that discussions with the local authorities on a draft SOCC had resumed. GAL explained that the draft SOCC provided for the consultation to be a minimum of 8

weeks, which is greater than the prescribed 28 days period required. This was queried by a member who requested a 12 weeks consultation period for local authorities to consider this complex application. GAL referred to the 6 weeks period of consultation by the local authorities on their local plan consultation.

- The final SOCC is required to be advertised before the launch of the statutory consultation.
- PINS explained GATCOM does not have any prescribed status in the process. However, local authorities (Counties, Boroughs and Districts) have a prescribed and important role – see [Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 2](#). This provides another route for GATCOM to input comments and advice. In addition to their statutory functions, local authorities are the communities' champions.
- If interested parties feel that the consultation has not been carried out adequately or there are flaws in the consultation process, they should in the first instance raise those concerns with the applicant. If those concerns still remain, parties may be directed to local authorities as they will be invited to submit an adequacy of consultation representation to confirm whether or not the applicant's consultation requirements have been satisfactorily met.
- **Acceptance Stage** is when the applicant submits the application. The Inspectorate has 28 days to decide whether the application is accepted. The Panel will then be appointed (comprising between 1-5 inspectors depending on the scale of the development) to examine the application.
- **Pre-Examination and Examination Stage** – this part of the process is led by the Planning Inspectorate. Once the application has been accepted, the applicant must notify parties that the relevant representation period is open. This is another opportunity for interested parties to put their views forward to the Independent Panel of Inspectors by registering as an "Interested Party" to be kept informed of progress and opportunities to put forward views. Interested parties have rights and status in the process.
- Advice and guidance is available on the Planning Inspectorate [website](#). [Advice Note 8](#) gives an overview of the process and step by step guides for members of the public and interested parties.
- A Local Impact Report (LIR) is a document to be submitted to the Examination and is required to be a balanced and objective document. Local authorities will often be involved in the detail of how any planning requirements will be taken forward.
- **GAL's Baseline forecast throughput of 61 mppa** from which the DCO application would be seeking consent to grow to 74 mppa was queried. It was questioned what work needed to be undertaken to ensure that the baseline level of 61 mppa was correct or whether it should be set at a lower level so that a greater proportion of Gatwick's growth could be included in the scope of the DCO and whether the Inspectorate could potentially set a cap on Gatwick's growth below the baseline level of 61 mppa. The Inspectorate confirmed that this was a complex matter but would be an important focus of the examination process. The Inspectorate advised that detailed questions of this nature can be raised with the Inspectorate direct. Questions can be directed to gatwickairport@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Growth at Gatwick Airport

The [Secretariat's paper](#) setting out a "Statement of Facts" on Government aviation policy and the planning processes that relate to growth at Gatwick through making best use of the main runway and through the use of the Northern Runway was discussed.

The discussion evoked many strong views across GATCOM's membership about whether this was a matter for the Committee to address with Government, with some members wishing to see the Government put in place an alternative mechanism to ensure all growth at Gatwick was scrutinised and consented whereas on the other hand some members believed GAL was adhering to Government policy and followed all necessary planning legislation and should not be singled out from other airports. There was a need to preserve and protect the important role of Gatwick being at the heart of driving the region's economy.

The key points to note are:

- The DfT representative confirmed that:
 - GAL was following Government policy on airports making best use of existing runways and facilities.
 - Another Statement of Fact was that GAL was not in breach of any policy.
 - There are other UK airports that do not have any caps on passenger numbers or air traffic movements.
 - GAL has been very open about its growth plans and commended their openness and goodwill to work with stakeholders and its neighbours.

The outcome of the discussion was that:

- The "Statement of Facts" set out in the Secretariat's report were agreed.
- The questions posed by the environmental and amenity groups' representative and the answers were considered and it was agreed that:
 - GATCOM should write to the Secretary of State for Transport to build on the Committee's response to the Aviation Green Paper to reflect the concerns of members about how the impacts arising from incremental growth at Gatwick can be managed, mitigated and monitored. A copy of the draft letter will be circulated to all member organisations to ensure it strikes the right balance of the views expressed.
 - The importance of the Section 106 agreement capturing the impacts of forecast growth be reiterated to the parties to the agreement and that the Chair and Secretariat continue discussions with GAL, Crawley Borough Council and West Sussex County Council about the need to address the concerns of GATCOM in the review of the agreement.
 - GATCOM's Indicative Work Programme needed to include as part of its objectives the need to seek to influence the Section 106 agreement.
 - GAL report back to a future meeting on issues of common concern arising from its engagement with local authorities on the results of the technical work assessments being undertaken as part of the DCO pre-application process so that all parties have a clear understanding of the environmental, economic and social impacts and benefits of airport growth.
 - The draft Heads of Terms of the new Section 106 agreement be shared with GATCOM at the earliest possible time as part of the DCO process.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

The Chief Executive Officer's commentary on activity and performance of Gatwick over the previous quarter was discussed. Other key points to note are:

- **Traffic** – impact of COVID pandemic continues to significantly affect Gatwick's traffic and passenger numbers. In the first quarter of the year only 150,000 passengers travelled through Gatwick. The South Terminal remains closed with all flights operating out of the North Terminal and a reduced time window for operating aircraft departures.
- **Airline Update** – easyJet, Gatwick's largest carrier, remains committed to Gatwick and is expecting activity to increase as travel restrictions ease. BA is continuing its long-haul operation through the summer and winter season, but its short-haul services will continue through Heathrow at the current time. TUI also intends to operate a full schedule later in the year, depending on easing of travel restrictions. Norwegian is continuing to serve the Scandinavian capital cities. The former CEO of Norwegian is leading a consortium to create a new airline, Norse Atlantic, which intends to operate transatlantic flights to and from Gatwick later in the year.
- **Financial results** – in 2020 passenger numbers fell by 78% compared with the previous year. GAL announced a loss of £465m in 2020. It has, in partnership with its airlines, undertaken a strategic review of the capital programme and has deferred £280m of projects from 2020 and 2021 to future years. In terms of financial resilience, GAL secured a £350m loan in April 2020 to maintain liquidity but in view of the ongoing impact of the pandemic GAL has now accessed £275m of the Bank of England's CCFF grant. In addition to this, to help repay the short term loans GAL has

recently secured two new bonds with total value of £270m with repayment terms of 5 years and 9 years respectively.

- **Gatwick Station Redevelopment** – this GAL part funded project continues to make good progress.
- **Section 106 Agreement** – the annual monitoring process has commenced. The outcome will be reported to GATCOM.
- **Decade of Change 2020 Progress Report** - is due to be published during the current quarter.
- **Community Engagement** – GAL remains fully committed to its community engagement strategy and is continuing to engage with communities including through its “In Touch” e-news service. The “Learn Live” education programme has also recommenced.
- **Local economy** – GAL continues to actively engage with regional economic partnerships, business groups and local authorities, and is working in collaboration to plan initiatives and drive forward economic recovery to support local people and businesses to help bounce back from the pandemic.

RECOVERY OF OPERATIONS AND GLOBAL TRAVEL TASKFORCE

GAL presented an update on GAL’s work and engagement with the Government’s Global Travel Taskforce (GTT) – to see presentation slides [click here](#). The key points to note are:

- The GTT published its [report](#) to Government on 9 April 2021 which set out 14 recommendations for the safe return of international travel centred around a risk-based approach to opening international travel, readiness for international travel restart, consumer clarity and confidence and transition to future travel (including travel certification and global standards).
- GAL’s priorities are readiness for 17 May, the early identification of countries in each category of the travel corridors list, digitisation of paperwork and ensuring sufficient resources for border checks, testing on arrival – being lateral flow test rather than PCR as well as reducing the cost of PCR tests and the arrangements for those fully vaccinated / travel certification.
- Establishing a joint UK Government and industry working group to ensure border readiness is an important operational requirement for GAL in order to avoid large queues at the border when international travel resumes. GAL has a number of ideas to forward to Government to ensure the border check process remains efficient and as seamless as possible for passengers.
- The Government’s wish to introduce a passenger COVID-19 charter by 17 May setting out some of the consumer rights is key in building passenger confidence. GAL is seeking the input of GATCOM’s PAG on this.
- Airlines support the need for the digitalisation of paperwork to ease potential for queuing at check-in and at the border. The need for testing for passengers arriving from Green List countries was however questioned.
- The business community was anxious that due to other countries not being as advanced as the UK in their vaccination programme, this could continue to hinder recovery of international travel. The Government’s suggestion of a vaccine/health passport was also an issue of concern and could lead to discrimination issues as not everyone will have had a vaccine or wish to have a vaccine.

DFT CONSULTATION: NIGHT FLIGHT RESTRICTIONS

The Secretariat’s report was received but consideration of the suggested draft GATCOM response was deferred until the report on the industry’s commissioned study, by York Aviation, into the role of and societal and economic benefits derived from night flights was available (due early May). The industry and the business interests would then be better placed to contribute and comment on GATCOM’s suggested draft response.

GATCOM agreed that:

- an extension of time to respond to the consultation be sought from the DfT. [An extension has subsequently been granted to GATCOM until 30 June 2021]

- A special Meeting of GATCOM to consider the Committee's response to the consultation be arranged to take place on the same day as the next meeting of the GATCOM Steering Group. Note that the next GATCOM Steering Group meeting has been rescheduled to take place on Wednesday 16 June in the afternoon.

GATCOM INDICATIVE WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

The suggested draft indicative work programme 2021/22 is viewed as a living document to provide flexibility for the Committee to consider matters in a constantly changing environment. The timescale against each objective are indicative in acknowledgement that GAL and industry partners are operating in challenging and uncertain times with much reduced resource. The focus will be on recovery and "Build Back Better" is a theme to be considered across all topic areas. The following additional topics were suggested for inclusion in the workplan:

- The downturn in international trade and its impact on Gatwick's supply chain particularly in respect of the hardest hit sectors of including hospitality, catering, and other services to support the passenger experience.
- As part of Objective 4, to include consideration of growth in green innovation and technology and how Gatwick and the aviation sector can be used as a catalyst to become a UK centre for innovation into green technologies.

DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

- **NEW DATE** - Wednesday 16 June 2021 at 14:00 - Special Meeting of GATCOM – Response DfT Night Flights Consultation
- **REVISED DATE** – Wednesday 16 June 2021 at 15:15 – GATCOM Steering Group
- Thursday 17 June 2021 at 13:30 – Passenger Advisory Group

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