

**CAA's Strategic Plan 2016–2021**  
***“Making Aviation Better: Our key strategies”***

**What this paper is about**

The paper provides an overview of the CAA's Strategic Plan 2016-2021, published in April 2016, to help put into context the CAA's work and aims for the future. It also provides an opportunity for delegates to comment on other aspects of the CAA's work not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**Points for discussion**

- Delegates are asked to:
  - comment on the CAA's areas of work and approach
  - provide feedback on the new look CAA website
  - highlight any matters not covered elsewhere on the agenda where best practice can be shared or are areas of concern to their ACC

**Possible action**

Dependent on discussions at the meeting.

## Background

1. Since the CAA was established in the 1970s its role and functions have broadened and certain responsibilities previously undertaken by the Government have transferred to the CAA. The Civil Aviation Act 2012 further introduced new responsibilities on the CAA such as:

- the transfer of a number of aviation security functions from the DfT
- the requirement to publish information on aspects of the aviation industry's performance, whether or not the CAA regulates them, and which may be relevant to increasing informed decision-making by consumers and awareness by the general public
- the publication of a Statement of Policy for carrying out these functions.

2. In October 2012 the CAA Consumer Panel was established to act as a 'critical friend' to the CAA, scrutinising and challenging all of the CAA's work and in April 2014 the new Directorate of Aviation Security was set up within the CAA which manages rule-making and compliance to deliver proportionate and focussed regulation for UK aviation.

3. There are a number of items on the agenda for UKACCs to consider that relate to the work of the CAA. This paper therefore provides an overview of the CAA's Strategic Plan to help put into context the items to be considered. It also provides delegates with the opportunity to comment on other aspects of the CAA's work not covered elsewhere on the agenda, including the new design of the CAA's website and any other issues concerning best practice or that are of concern to member ACCs.

## Strategic Plan 2016-2021

4. Following a public consultation, the CAA launched its new five-year strategic plan<sup>1</sup> in April 2016. The strategy sets out in simple terms the CAA's vision and approach to making aviation better for those who choose to fly and for those who do not. The strategy is built around five themes that will be the focus of the CAA's work between now and 2020. These themes are given below.

- **Risk-based regulation** – to target regulation where risk is highest, to be adaptable to the ever-changing risk picture and to develop confidence that the aviation community are managing their own risks effectively. The primary obligation to fly safely and to treat passengers well rests on the companies and people who are regulated, not on the regulator. The CAA works in partnership across sectors to share learning and pool the information to use it more actively.
- **Empowering consumers** - The UK aviation sector is, in the main, competitive: most passengers can choose from multiple airports and a range of services, and airlines compete on price and service. The CAA believes everyone benefits from engaged and informed consumers being at the heart of the competitive process. The CAA's information publishing powers granted in 2012 aim to help passengers choose and will remain a priority for the CAA, as well as promoting effective competition. The CAA will be particularly alert to passengers with disabilities or special needs to ensure the service performance across UK airports is maintained and appropriate. The reporting of its monitoring results for the first time in 2016 has helped member ACCs to identify where improvements in service provision for PRMs need to be made.

Ensuring passengers have means for redress when things go wrong is a key focus and the CAA hopes, over the plan period, to see an ombudsman-style arrangement (called Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)) in place offering quality service to passengers and good incentives for airlines to settle complaints correctly but informally. Four UKACCs member airports (Bristol, East Midlands, London City and Gatwick) have this year launched an ADR service. It is understood that Heathrow and Manchester Airport Group (MAG) are also in the final stages launching their ADR service.

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<sup>1</sup> CAA Strategic Plan 2016-2021 <https://www.caa.co.uk/Our-work/Corporate-reports/Strategic-Plan/Our-five-year-strategic-plan/>

The CAA will continue to seek opportunities to achieve a balanced and pro-consumer regulatory framework.

- **Infrastructure optimisation** - The CAA will challenge airports and airlines to deliver the best possible service for passengers with the available infrastructure. The CAA believes that the South East of England will remain short of runway capacity throughout the Strategic Plan period. Forecasts also show that the UK's airspace will become increasingly congested to the point of saturation in particular areas and during specific periods in the years out to 2030 and beyond. Progress on airspace change will require decisions to take account of the interests of local residents, other airspace users, passengers and the country as a whole. The DfT has recently consulted on its proposals to update its UK Airspace Policy and the CAA is currently consulting on the draft Airspace Design Guidance (to replace the current CAP 725 guidance) both of which are considered elsewhere on the agenda.

The CAA has been clear in its advice to policy-makers: passengers and the public are already suffering from shortage of airport capacity. The CAA provided extensive support to the Airports Commission and will continue to work closely with Government as it develops its approach to airport expansion. Where expanded or new infrastructure is considered necessary, the CAA will press for a fair deal for consumers that delivers value for money. This means consulting extensively on any proposals so that decisions take account of the views of a wide range of stakeholders, and working with airport owners to facilitate timely delivery of new capacity.

Airspace reform is an essential part of the CAA's aim to deliver infrastructure optimisation. The plan period will see an unprecedented amount of changes to the way that airspace is structured, consistent with the UK Future Airspace Strategy (FAS). Such changes will impact on residents as well as passengers and the wider aviation community. The CAA is responsible for making decisions about airspace changes and setting the process by which those wanting to change airspace must propose designs and consult with relevant stakeholders before submitting a request for a decision. The CAA states that it will seek at all times to ensure that the decision-making process for airspace changes is strong and transparent, employs evidence as appropriate and involves consultation with all affected groups to ensure a fair balance. The CAA also recognises that there may be more it can do to address noise within the policy framework set by Government and it will check that it is doing all that it can to limit and where possible reduce the nuisance caused to communities affected by aircraft noise, including its role in balancing noise reduction against other objectives. Enhancing communication and engagement is a key focus of the CAA's change programme and it is taking steps to do this better e.g CAA Community Discussion Forum. The CAA's stakeholders have indicated that they want the CAA to be more accessible and responsive to their needs. The CAA recognise that communication through digital platforms is a key part of the solution. It has now launched its new improved website and is committed to further investment in this and other communication platforms to deliver information in ways that meet stakeholders' expectations.

- **Service excellence** - The CAA aims to be easy to transact with, with more and more services delivered online. Even where the CAA takes action to compel regulated companies to do what is needed under the law, it aims to be straightforward and easy to deal with. Delivering service excellence is a priority area in its change programme.
- **Technological Innovation** - The CAA's vision is that passengers and the public benefit from a world-class aviation sector. The CAA plans to support the aviation community industry in adjusting to the growing challenges of modern aviation from new business models or from new technology. The CAA wishes to ensure that it does not act as a barrier to technological developments which have the potential to deliver significant benefits, including strengthening the already high standards of safety that consumers and the public expect.

5. The CAA believes these themes provide a sound platform from which to deal with the key issues the organisation will face. The CAA is aligning its business plans to deliver its plan with key strategies for:

- **Aviation safety** - Better safety intelligence, implement performance-based regulation, international regulatory relationships and keeping pace with change.
- **Aviation security** - providing regulatory expertise, compliance monitoring, security management systems.
- **Choice, value and fair treatment** - regulating to get the most from infrastructure, modernising holiday protection, empowering consumers through information, securing consumer redress and enforcement.
- **Environment** - aiding performance through information, generating new data for decision-makers, helping it reach the right decisions.
- **Better regulation** - promoting growth, reducing burdens on businesses, better decision-making.

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