

Kings Speech 2026 – delivered on 13 May 2026

Summary for UKACCs members

Oral statement to Parliament – [click here](#)

King's Speech 2026: background briefing notes – [click here](#)

This summary gives details of the airport/aviation related topics covered in the King's Speech 2026. The Background Briefing Notes state that "Legislation will be introduced to unlock the benefits of airport expansion [**Civil Aviation Bill**]" and "deliver a fair deal for the North of England through Northern Powerhouse Rail [**Northern Powerhouse Rail Bill**]".

Civil Aviation Bill (from page 98 of the Briefing Notes)

The Bill will strengthen consumer rights and protections, promote economic growth and infrastructure provision, and enhance aviation safety, ensuring that the UK retains its appeal as a competitive aviation hub. It will support the UK's world-leading aviation sector to continue thriving. It covers **strengthening consumer rights and protections** – ensuring fair treatment and boosting consumer confidence; **promoting economic growth and infrastructure** – keeping the UK competitive in global aviation which will unlock the benefits of airport expansion, including attracting investment, enabling innovation, and improving capacity for business, trade, and tourism; and **enhancing aviation safety** – streamlining regulations to meet vital standards and strengthen the safety of the UK aviation sector. Specifically,

- **Additional consumer enforcement powers for the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)** to reduce consumer harm, ensure compliance, and allow for timely regulatory intervention. It will enable the CAA to ensure airlines and airports are meeting their legal obligations for passengers more promptly. This will ensure the people of the UK feel their rights are protected when they fly and have more confidence in the sector.
- **Aviation consumer rights reform** with powers to ensure that the Government can update the law on air passenger rights, providing flexibility to ensure passengers have the best protections possible. This could include, for example, strengthening alternative dispute resolution or changes to compensation for damaged or lost mobility aids. This will reassure passengers that they will be treated properly and receive the support and compensation they are entitled to.
- **Reform to airport slots regulation**, including updating the allocation of take-off and landing permissions at certain airports, which will support airport expansion, infrastructure development, and economic growth. This will also provide flexibility for the Government to respond to emergency situations that require changes to scheduling – such as during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- **Airspace modernisation and stronger direction powers**, to support the operation of the UK Airspace Design Service (UKADS). The UKADS has been created to streamline airspace change and drive forward the modernisation of the UK's airspace. The UKADS will help plan better routes for aircraft so they use less fuel, cause less pollution, and are less likely to be delayed. It also gives the CAA more flexible licensing powers, so the cost of providing better air services can continue to be recovered fairly.
- **Aviation safety regulatory reform** to consolidate and streamline safety legislation, delegating technical rulemaking to the CAA for a more agile regulatory system.
- **Aviation safety criminal sanctions** to empower the Government to amend safety-related criminal sanctions in assimilated law, allowing the UK to adapt regulations quickly where necessary.

Northern Powerhouse Rail Bill (from page 13 of the Briefing Notes)

- The Bill (formally titled the High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill) is foundational to Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR), unlocking the delivery of rail capacity into Manchester Piccadilly via Manchester Airport so that people can benefit from better transport links across the region.
- NPR will deliver faster, more reliable and more frequent services between the North of England's key cities - between Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield and York, with regular services onward to Newcastle via Darlington and Durham, Hull, and Chester for North Wales connections.
- NPR will be delivered in three phases:
 - The first phase will include upgrades to lines east of the Pennines for delivery in the 2030s, focusing on electrification and upgrades in the Leeds-Bradford, Leeds-Sheffield and Leeds-York corridors, including the stations.
 - In the second phase, the Government will take forward a new route between Liverpool and Manchester via Warrington and Manchester Airport. The adapted High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill will provide the necessary powers to construct and operate the connection into Manchester Piccadilly via Manchester Airport.
 - In the third phase, the Government will deliver better cross-Pennine links over and above the Transpennine Route Upgrade already underway.
- The Bill will outline the proposed route from Manchester to Millington, via Manchester Airport, and will provide the necessary powers to take forward delivery when the design has been completed. By adapting the High Speed Rail (Crewe to Manchester) Bill, the Government is making use of the significant progress already made.

The Chief Executive Officer of Manchester Airport Group, Ken O'Toole, said that: *“By placing Manchester Airport at the heart of a full Northern Powerhouse Rail Network, people and businesses across the region will have the direct access they deserve to the world. That will help high-value industries to thrive and attract investors and visitors to all parts of the North - maximising the region's contribution to national growth.”*

Paula Street
Head of Secretariat
UKACCs