

## Directorate of Airspace Policy



See Distribution

31 January 2012

DAP/HarmonisedTAConsultation

### CAA CONSULTATIVE LETTER

Dear Colleague,

#### **PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE A HARMONISED TRANSITION ALTITUDE OF 18 000FT IN THE LONDON AND SCOTTISH FLIGHT INFORMATION REGIONS**

The Civil Aviation Authority Information Notice IN-2011/03, published on 24 January 2011, introduced the proposal for the establishment of a Harmonised Transition Altitude (TA) of 18 000 ft in the London and Scottish Flight Information Regions (FIRs). The IN also highlighted the intention of the Irish Aviation Authority, under the auspices of the UK/Irish Functional Airspace Block (FAB) concept, to introduce, in parallel with the UK, a Harmonised TA of 18 000ft in Dublin and Shannon FIRs; the joint implementation is currently planned for Winter 2013/2014. The UK/Irish FAB Harmonised TA proposal was developed cognisant of similar considerations by other European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) States.

Throughout Europe it is accepted that the harmonisation of the TA and associated procedures brings safety benefit through standardisation of airspace and procedures both within and outside controlled airspace. EUROCONTROL has established the Harmonised European Transition Altitude (HETA) Task Force to coordinate TA implementation proposals in European airspace; the CAA plays a full role in influencing the work and output of this Task Force. The harmonisation of TA is a Single European Skies (SES) objective and a UK Future Airspace Strategy (FAS) enabler. There are also proposals within the Standardised European Rules of the Air (SERA) package that impact on the UK's existing arrangements for Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) flights outside Controlled Airspace (CAS) that will require changes.

In order to develop the UK initiative a joint TA Project Team (TAPT) has been established. Given the CAA's assessment that the proposed change is limited to the technical make-up of extant airspace and thus consultation should be limited to aviation stakeholders only, the TAPT undertook informal consultation and briefings on the proposal during the Spring and Summer of 2011 within the NATMAC forum. Organisations including the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the Association of European Airlines (AEA) and the International Council of Aircraft Owner and Pilot Associations (IAOPA) have also been engaged.

The purpose of this letter is to initiate formal consultation on this proposal. At Enclosure 1 is the Harmonised TA Consultation Document, which provides the necessary background to enable stakeholders to begin assessment of the merits of the proposal. The consultation document also provides much of the necessary detail. However, work on the development of altimeter setting procedures and a review of the UK Altimeter Setting Regions (ASRs) has yet to be finalised, but given the timelines associated with the overall proposal, it is considered that formal consultation on the supporting policy should commence without these elements. Once the altimeter setting procedures have been determined and the degree of change to current

ASRs is known, stakeholders will be invited to comment on the findings. It is acknowledged that this may result in an extension to the consultation period.

A list of stakeholders that have been sent this consultation is at Annex A to this letter. Representatives of user groups that will be affected by the proposal are requested to give the consultation document the widest possible circulation within the organisations that they represent.

For ease of reference and submission, a Consultation Response Form is at Appendix 4 to Enclosure 1. An electronic version of the Consultation Document is available via the CAA website at:

[www.caa.co.uk](http://www.caa.co.uk)

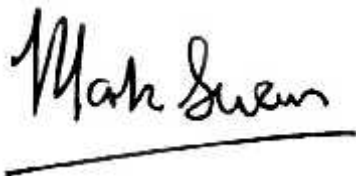
This consultation has been produced in accordance with the Principles of the Government's Code of Practice on Consultation which is summarised at Appendix 3 to Enclosure 1.

A summary of the responses to the consultation will be published on the CAA and NATS websites after the consultation period ends. All responses will be available under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000. If consultees request responses to be kept confidential this will only be possible if it is consistent with the CAA's obligations under the FOI Act and the Data Protection Act.

Stakeholders are invited to send any comments on the proposal to the Focal Point named below by **1 May 2012**. Also, as a consequence of the change, there may be additional costs to Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) and other stakeholders through, for example, the requirement to modify existing equipment, upgrade software and to train staff in order to continue to provide services to at least equal the current standard. Costs would have to be met by the bodies affected, but in order to gauge the full extent of the financial implications the CAA invites all impacted parties to provide an estimate of costs that would result from the proposed change. Overall comments will be reflected in the final Regulatory Impact Assessment of the proposal. In the absence of comment, the CAA will assume that there are no objections to the proposed amendments and will proceed to the next stage of the legislative process.

The Focal Point is Dean Miller, in the Controlled Airspace Section, Directorate of Airspace Policy: [dean.miller@caa.co.uk](mailto:dean.miller@caa.co.uk), 020 7453 6554.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Swan". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a solid horizontal line that serves as a separator.

M SWAN  
Director

Annex:

A. Organisations/Stakeholders Consulted.

Enclosure:

1. Consultation on the Policy to Harmonised Transition Altitude in the London and Scottish Flight Information Regions at 18 000 ft.

Continued (2 of 4 pages)

**ORGANISATIONS/STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED**

**National Air Traffic Management Advisory Committee (NATMAC)**

BATA

BPA

Heavy Airlines

European UAV Systems Centre Ltd

Light Airlines

UKAB

PPL/IR

BALPA

GATCO

GAPAN

BHPA

BAA

LAA

GASCo

HCGB

Aviation Environment Federation

UKFSC

BBGA

AOA

BGA

BMFA

British Helicopter Association

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Low Fares Airlines

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