

Directorate of Airspace Policy



All NATMAC Representatives

2 September 2010

Reference: DAP/BM/LB/ClassF

NATMAC INFORMATIVE LETTER

Dear Colleagues,

THE FUTURE APPLICATION OF CLASS F AIRSPACE IN UK FLIGHT INFORMATION REGIONS

You will recall we informed you in September 2009 of the CAA's intention to progressively replace UK Class F airspace, i.e. the UK's Advisory Routes (ADRs), by airspace classifications and structures better suited to the prevailing operational conditions associated with each of the routes. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the progress made to date by the Airspace Strategy Steering Group's cross-industry Technical Sub Group (TSG) in identifying replacement options.

It remains our intention to replace individual ADRs with higher classifications (ie, to establish airways) where justified, or to return ADRs to Class G where appropriate. NATS will be invited to develop and sponsor the necessary airspace change in accordance with the requirements of the Airspace Change Process and in doing so will engage with NATMAC and other affected parties. In the case of each ADR, the application of a particular airspace classification will be determined by the need to establish (or not) a known or co-operative traffic environment in either or both Visual Meteorological Conditions and Instrument Meteorological Conditions in specific areas, subject to the availability of the requisite navigational infrastructure and air traffic services within each particular volume of airspace.

TSG has concluded that:

- Classes C and G as currently applied within the UK FIRs are considered to be appropriate replacement airspace classifications.
- Class E airspace as defined by ICAO is considered not to be an appropriate replacement airspace classification. However, Class E notified as Transponder Mandatory airspace (thus creating a co-operative environment) is considered to be suitable where Classes C and G are deemed inappropriate. Appropriate arrangements for non-SSR and non-radio access will be developed. This is considered to be in line with provisions developed for Eurocontrol's airspace classification toolbox that is informing the development of the Standardised European Rules of the Air project.
- The future classification of each ADR will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Longitudinal and vertical requirements will be examined as part of this process.
- The change sponsor will be required to identify where traffic could be readily absorbed into adjacent permanent structures.
- The change sponsor will be required to determine and reflect in their airspace change proposal the interfaces between current ADRs and partitioned Class C airways above and below FL195. International and Oceanic interfaces will also need to be considered.

- The change implementation deadline has yet to be determined, but it is not expected to be before 6 April 2012. 'Double AIRAC' (i.e. 56 days) notice of the change is currently deemed appropriate.

In the light of the above developments it has been necessary to revise the DAP policy statement concerning the future application of Class F Airspace in UK FIRs that was published in September 2009. The revised version was published on 31 August 2010 and a copy is enclosed. The DAP policy statement concerning the application of ICAO airspace classifications in the UK FIRs has also been amended slightly to reflect progress; a copy is also enclosed.

NATMAC will, of course, be kept informed of project developments.

Yours sincerely,

Original signed

P L BRAHAM
Head of Business Management

Enclosures:

1. The Future Application of Class F Airspace in UK Flight Information Regions - DAP Policy Statement dated 31 August 2010.
2. The Application of ICAO Airspace Classification in UK Flight Information Regions – Policy Statement dated 31 August 2010.