

From: [CAA Press Office](#)

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News Release

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NEW PROJECT CALLS FOR HELP IN STUDYING USE OF CLASS G AIRSPACE

A new Airspace and Safety Initiative project launched today aims to collect accurate data on the use of Class G airspace in the UK for the first time. It will enable bodies such as the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to have better information available when taking decisions on issues like airspace design.

The fact that the users of Class G airspace are so diverse, ranging from paragliders to civilian operated ex-military jet fighters, and are able to use the airspace without the requirement to register their flight centrally, means that there has historically been very little data collected on what actually occurs. That means decisions on airspace changes and design have to be based on the limited information available which can result in changes to controlled airspace creating choke points for Class G users.

In the future, if more accurate data on flights conducted in Class G airspace is available this can be used by airspace designers and will also help to provide a better understanding of areas where safety may be a concern.

Better data on the amount of flying undertaken in Class G would also enable more accurate assessments of accident and Airprox data and trends, as the number of incidents can be viewed against an improved understanding of overall activity levels.

The new project will initially be run for six months by QinetiQ, by way of a feasibility study. Using computer modelling based on the amount of flying each pilot undertakes; their average type of flight; and the weather conditions; a prediction of airspace activity on a given day or time can be generated.

Commenting on the project, Phil Roberts, Assistant Director of Airspace Policy at the CAA, said: "As well as providing us with better data that can quantify the level of use in Class G airspace and helping to improve safety levels, the results of the project will also be of huge potential benefit to GA and other users of Class G airspace for their own use."

To make the computer model as accurate as possible it needs information from as many pilots as possible on the type of flights that they make. A short (no more than 10 minute) online survey has been put together that pilots are asked to complete with their logbook to hand. All information is non attributable and will only be used for the airspace model.

Phil Roberts added: "The more information we can gather the more accurate the model will be and the more benefit to GA in terms of influencing airspace changes and helping to remove choke points."

Martin Robinson, Chief Executive of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, commented: "Once we have the model up and running the data it can produce will be extremely useful in showing just how important GA is. It will provide air traffic control organisations and regulators with the true levels of activity when making their proposals and decisions on airspace changes. It's therefore very important that all GA pilots complete the questionnaire."

John Brady, Vice Chairman of the Light Aircraft Association, added: "The LAA supports the proposal and is encouraging all GA pilots to participate in the survey. Having an accurate depiction of GA activity in class G airspace will mean that everything from safety rates to airspace designs will be produced using the best possible data and will help to ensure that everyone is aware of the true value of GA."

The survey can be completed at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/G5Z9BNB>

For more media information please contact the CAA press office on 020 7453 6030 or press.office@caa.co.uk

Notes to Editors:

The Airspace & Safety Initiative (ASI) is a joint CAA, NATS, Airport Operator's Association, General Aviation and Ministry of Defence effort to investigate and tackle the major safety risks in UK airspace.

It emerged from a top-level discussion between the CAA Chairman, NATS Chief Executive and MoD Assistant Chief of the Air Staff following a number of incidents where light aircraft infringed controlled airspace, or military and commercial flights conflicted outside controlled airspace.

The ASI is a major review covering a number of different areas, with the aims of:

- Enhancing safety outside controlled airspace
- Identifying the hazards associated with the use of UK airspace
- Identifying the needs of all airspace users
- Prioritizing the hazards and
- Developing a strategy to mitigate those risks while meeting the needs of all airspace users.

For more information go to www.airspacesafety.com

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