

UK CAA BIRDSTRIKE COMMITTEE (UKBSC)

Notes of Meeting held on Thursday, 24 April 2008

CAA Safety Regulation Group Aviation House, Gatwick

Present:

Kirsten Riensema, CAA ASD (Chair) (KR)
Nick Yearwood, CAA ASD (NY)
Paul Fraser-Bennison, CAA ASD (PF-B)
Tony Heap, CAA ASD (TH)
David Cockburn, CAA GAD (DC)
Ian Witter, BAA (IW)
John Hamshare, BAA (JH)
Tony Cook, BAA (TC)
Steve Hull, British Airways (SH)
Capt Pieter Reynolds, BALPA (PR)
Peter Cox, BALPA (PC)
Robert Cooke, Birmingham Airport (RC)
Andy Baxter, CSL (AB)
John Thorpe, GASCO (JT)
Flt Lt Matt Willshaw-Rhead, GATCO (MW-R)
Ray Downward, LJLA/Peel (RD)
Roger Koukkoullis, Luton Airport/AOA (RK)
Anthony Clarke, Manchester Airport (AC)
Carl Lawton, Manchester Airport (CL)
Capt Tony Wride, Monarch/UKFSC (TW)
Nigel Horton, NH Bird Management (NH)
David Bennett, Shoreham Airport (DB)

Apologies:

Ray Elgy, CAA Hd ASD
Gill Galway, CAA ATSD
Prof Callum Thomas, Chair of Sustainable Aviation Centre for
Transport and the Environment, Manchester Met University
John Allan, CSL

Simon Prower, easyJet
Anne Phillips, HIAL
Simon Butterworth, Manchester Airport
Rad Taylor, Manchester Airport
Dr Elaine Gill, Natural England
David Hoccom, RSPB

1. INTRODUCTION

KR introduced herself as the new Head of Policy and Business Support and apologised on behalf of RE for his absence. She then explained that the reason there had been a delay in arranging this meeting was that an internal review of birdstrike information management had taken place and this defined how to go forward with the Committee. As part of this process, the CAA has revised the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the UKBSC; these would be discussed under agenda item 3.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

2.1 Matters Arising

Action Item 1: CAA to research SIDD database for “wildlife” incidents. NY stated that less than 1% of strike reports raised involved wildlife, there were few reports and of those, rabbits, hares and foxes had been reported. JT said that rabbit holes were most likely to cause damage. *Closed*

Action Item 2: IB to e-mail members of UKBSC. *Closed.*

Action Item 3: CAA to nominate a representative as contact point for Avian Flu updates – KR advised that CSL advice has been posted on the CAA website which includes links to other organisations and these are being kept up to date. *Closed.*

There followed a general discussion on Avian Flu. IW stated that if there was an outbreak and if airports came within a control zone, then actions would be put in place by DEFRA to stop the airport from carrying out bird control activities. Airports would need to apply for a licence to continue bird control from their local animal health office, details of which can be obtained from the DEFRA website.

Action 1: IW will draft advice and send to CAA for publication on the CAA website.

Action Item 4: CAA to review and re-issue the UKBSC TOR. *Closed.*

3. REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE

The revised ToR had been circulated in advance of the meeting. KR described the main changes. There will be Committee meetings such as this one every year with sub-Committees set up for specific actions as required. The timing of the annual meeting will give the CAA the opportunity to assimilate birdstrike data from the previous year and share it with the Committee. Draft minutes will be sent out to all attendees for verification and once agreed they will be posted on the CAA website.

With regard to objectives (of the UKBSC) JT suggested that birdstrike hazards and mitigation of birdstrike hazards are included. *CAA Action Noted.*

MW-R advised that SATCO's work to MoD guidance contained in GAL 1039, which is on the DASC website but it is in need of an update and still refers to CAP 680.

TC asked if there was informed advice anywhere for planning advisors and developers, as more guidance was needed. PFB advised that CAP772 covered this, as well as the AOA Safeguarding Advice Notes as per <http://www.aoa.org.uk/publications/safeguarding.asp>

Action 2: CAA to update the ToRs and post these on the website.

4. CAA UPDATE

4.1 CAA Paper 2006/05

4.1.1 KR informed the meeting that in 2004 the CAA commissioned research looking into the

Completeness and Accuracy of Birdstrike Reporting following the amendment to the Air Navigation Order to mandate the reporting of birdstrikes by an aircraft commander. Nine recommendations were made which resulted in a CAA policy review to decide how the CAA would address the recommendations. This resulted in CAA paper 2006/05 and recommendations (The Completeness & Accuracy of Birdstrike Reporting) was published in November 2006.

4.1.2 KR led the meeting through the recommendations:

- Improved information sharing
- Establishing channels of reporting, including electronic reporting
- Reporting of near-miss occurrences & definitions

4.1.3 The committee discussed issues and problems surrounding information sharing. Airlines and Aerodromes are not routinely sharing birdstrike information to each other. If the information is to be used properly it is important that birdstrike information is reported back to the aerodrome as soon as possible after the event. When asked if it was not incumbent upon the CAA to report back to the aerodromes KR said that by the time the CAA receive a birdstrike report it is often some time after the event, and by the time the information is processed it is later still. The respective Safety Management Systems of airport operators and airlines should ensure that adequate mechanisms for liaison are in place to share information so that hazards can be mitigated. PC concurred and asked why the CAA acts as a go-between when airports and airlines should be talking to each other. IW said the information was still valuable even if it is received a few months later. RK agreed but suggested that 4-6 weeks would be ideal; it is more important to receive the data than not receive it. Risk assessments cannot be completed without the data.

4.1.4 The majority of the group felt that more could be done to facilitate the sharing of information between relevant stakeholders. KR said that lines of communication must be established between stakeholders and that with the advent of Online reporting, it was feasible that birdstrike information could be accessible to stakeholders. However, all request for the release of any birdstrike information would be subject to the constraints of the CAA Act, Freedom of Information Act and Section 6 of the CAA Regulation 1991 (Dissemination of Reports of reportable occurrences). JH asked if it would be possible when filling in the on-line form for the information to be sent directly to the airport. KR advised that most of the information from airlines is reported to the CAA via an emailed Air Safety Report (ASR), requiring manual input by CAA staff, but that the CAA would explore IT solutions to see if

this additional facility was feasible, but that if not, then it was not appropriate for the CAA to act as the post-box in such instances.

4.1.5 With regard to the General Aviation community JT said they were at the highest risk and it would be difficult for them to report online. KR said the paper system was still available albeit it was not the preferred method to report to the CAA. NY said the CAA would be represented at the forthcoming AirExpo at Wycombe and would publicise the importance of Birdstrike reporting, using the Online method, to the GA and Business aviation fraternity accordingly.

Action 3: CAA to consider methods to improve the sharing of information

4.2 New Definitions: (Appendix B)

4.2.1 The group discussed the proposed new definitions for; confirmed, unconfirmed birdstrikes and near miss events, including the reporting requirements for each category. The CAA's intent with the proposed new definitions is to help ensure that CAA's record of strikes is as accurate as possible, in separating confirmed from unconfirmed events. The CAA proposals also suggest that near misses should not be reported to the CAA but instead reported at the time to ATC, who can pass the information on to the aerodrome operator for action and manage these events accordingly. The group discussed at length the advantages/disadvantages of reporting near-miss events. Concerns were expressed that important information about near-miss events could be lost by not recording these centrally (by CAA). Concluding the discussion, KR emphasised that the aim was to reduce the hazards of birdstrikes, and that having accurate information to act on is critical. She proposed that the CAA would consider how information from unconfirmed birdstrikes and near-miss events can best be shared, noting also the responsibility for airlines and aerodromes to work together to share information directly and to act on this information locally without waiting for CAA data.

Action 4: CAA to consider collecting reports of “unconfirmed birdstrikes” and “near miss events” as separate categories.

Action 5: CAA to investigate how unconfirmed birdstrikes and near miss events could be shared with industry.

4.2.2 On/Off Aerodrome & En Route – New Criteria (Appendix C)

The CAA explained that the rationale for the distinction between on/off aerodrome and en-route birdstrikes was to provide clarity to aerodromes as to which birdstrikes were effectively within or outside of a particular aerodrome's control. The group queried how the criteria related to the requirement in Annex 14 with regards to the 13 km circle around an aerodrome. PF-B explained that aerodromes have a responsibility to monitor activity within the 13km circle for developments/activities that might attract wildlife hazards, but that an aerodrome operator cannot always take immediate wildlife dispersal action that far outside of the aerodrome boundary. The intent is not to alleviate aerodromes from their obligations, but for them to gain a better understanding of where strikes occur in relation to the airport, establish an understanding of the habitat outside the boundary and where possible, negotiate with land owners regarding land usage. TC suggested the specific altitudes should be reviewed, but that he did not want the information dis-associated from his aerodrome. DC suggested that the strike could still be listed as occurring en-route to/from an aerodrome name. TW agreed. KR stated that the challenge is finding a way to categorise information so that it is useful to stakeholders, and that the CAA would look at adopting en-route with the aerodrome's name. PFB said it all comes down to the accuracy and quality of the report being made.

Action 6: CAA to review the definition of “on aerodrome”, “off aerodrome” and “en-route birdstrikes”.

4.3 Online Birdstrike Reporting

KR reported that this was very successful, and that 65% of all reports are submitted online from source.

4.4 Information Sharing

This was discussed under agenda item 4.1 (see Action 3).

4.5 2007 Birdstrikes – Summary Analysis

NY presented a summary of birdstrike data received by the CAA for 2007 which included summary analysis detailing birdstrike reporting trends, bird species, aircraft types, and reporting sources.

4.6 CAP 772 Update

KR said Chapter 5 was currently in draft and would contain information on the reporting of birdstrikes and will reflect decisions made as a result of discussions at the UKBSC. Chapter 5 will be promulgated when ready via the CAA website. NY asked for any input from the group by the end of May and stated that it was not planned to hold a formal consultation but the CAA would consult informally with members of the group present.

Action 7: All to send comments to NY by 30 May 2008.

Action 8: CAA to complete and publish Chapter 5 of CAP 772.

5. CSL UPDATE – Andy Baxter

The IBSC website <http://www.int-birdstrike.org> has been updated over the last 18 months and all the papers from the IBSC meetings are on the website. IBSC's published training requirement notes are currently with various state Birdstrike Committees and will be discussed at the next IBSC meeting (Brazil, November 2008). It was suggested that there should be a link between the CAA and IBSC websites. With regard to SMS, trends of species are being incorporated into the risk assessment. In terms of species, lapwings have dropped and woodpigeons are highest. Lasers have been used successfully and are viewed as a good tool at night especially against gulls. He reported that the use of a gun on aerodromes requires the permission of the landowner. The majority of IBSC contacts will be updated and included in IBIS website.

6. BAA UPDATE – Ian Witter

IW reported on the current BAA issues and activities, which included control measures, risk

assessment (which now include a 5-year trend), species risk matrix, grass trial, netting and bird balls.

7. BRITISH AIRWAYS UPDATE – Steve Hull

BA has suffered more than 400 birdstrikes throughout UK airports in the past 10 years, and birdstrikes represent the 5th highest reason for submitting Air Safety Reports reports. However, BA's main concern lies with bird control and birdstrike risks at non-UK airports.

8. EUROPEAN AIRFIELDS BIRDSTRIKE SURVEY – Capt. Tony Wride

TW indicated that he is fairly comfortable with reporting and action taken by airports within the UK. The percentage of UK strikes as compared to the total is low. However, he noted that there is no centralised point to report overseas birdstrikes to identify “hotspots” and he questioned how airlines can effectively risk assess airfields (mainly overseas) without access to a central database providing information on strikes and unconfirmed strikes. He stated that the appropriate balance between confidentiality and information sharing should be found. PFB mentioned the advent of the ECCAIRS database, the EASA European Occurrence recording system.

9. FINDINGS FROM RECENT EUROPEAN AIRFIELD AUDITS – Nigel Horton

NH presented findings resulting from audits of 13 European airports. A variety of organisations, equipment, staff training and dispersal techniques were evidenced at different airports. He explained the advantages and disadvantages of the variety of mitigation measures. He found that there is a requirement to clarify the 13 km safeguarding circle.

10. WORLDWIDE FATAL ACCIDENTS SINCE LAST UKBSC – John Thorpe

JT presented statistics of fatal accidents involving wildlife strikes that occurred since the last UKBSC meeting. The results indicate that modern aircraft are more able to cope with birdstrike damage, whereas general aviation and older aircraft suffer the most fatal damage.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

AB suggested that the draft TORs are amended to remove the naming of government and quango organisations because these change from time to time.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 23 April 2009