

Sent on behalf of Chris Peart, Head of Operations, Air Traffic Standards Division, CAA Safety Regulation Group:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As agreed at the earlier CAA/Industry meeting regarding level clearances to aircraft on SIDs and STARs, SRG circulated copies of a draft SI and FODCOM in early March. These documents detailed revised arrangements for climb clearances to aircraft on SIDs in UK airspace and advised AOC operators of the revised ICAO procedures, published in ICAO Doc 4444 (PANS-ATM), for level clearances to aircraft on SIDs and STARs.

Since the drafts were circulated, ICAO has decided to review its procedures for clearances to aircraft on SIDs and STARs, and has issued a State Letter asking whether States have implemented the revised ICAO procedures, whether they encountered any problems and inviting suggestions for solutions. A copy of the State Letter is attached for your information.

The CAA is developing a robust and detailed response to the ICAO State Letter, arguing that clearances to aircraft on SIDs and STARs should follow the same logic as clearances to aircraft in other phases of flight (i.e. that level restrictions shall be repeated in conjunction with any subsequent level clearances in order to remain in effect).

Pending the outcome of the ICAO review, and having considered all the options, together with the requests received from representatives of the UK Industry, the CAA intends to retain the interim UK arrangements for climb clearances to aircraft on SIDs in UK airspace, as currently detailed in ATSIN 119 (10 December 2007). This advised UK controllers to adhere to extant procedures, with the word 'now' added to climb clearances above the SID profile (e.g. 'c/s climb now flight level 120'). An SI, to replace ATSIN 119, and a FODCOM, highlighting the potential variance in international procedures and phraseology, are being prepared and the CAA intends to issue these in the next few days.