Future Airspace Strategy Implementation- ScTMA

Gateway Documentation:

Stage 3 Consultation: Frequently Asked Questions

ACP-2019-74

1. Frequently Asked Questions

1.1 Why are you changing this airspace?

1.1.1 NERL is mandated to make changes to the ScTMA in line with the AMS.

1.1.2 Airspace has not modernised in line with navigation and technology changes. As a result, the available routes and airspace limits capacity and means aircraft may not fly the most efficient routes.

1.1.3 Utilising satellite-based GPS and aircraft technology means routes can be more predictable and direct. This affects the network of routes as well as the routes aircraft take arriving and departing from airports. For more detail, see the Full Consultation Document para 2.4.

1.2 What are the benefits of the change?

1.2.1 The proposed changes aim to give benefits in safety, environment, efficiency and capacity. Modernisation and increased capacity will reduce delays, help make environmental improvements, and ensure we can maintain our exceptional safety record. For more detail, see the Full Consultation Document para 2.4 and section 7.

1.3 Who is part of the coordinated consultation?

1.3.1 NATS EN-route Ltd (NERL), Edinburgh Airport and Glasgow Airport, coordinated by ACOG, have worked closely together to develop the Scottish Airspace Modernisation proposal. These parties, in unison, are also referred to as the Scottish Terminal Control Area (ScTMA) cluster. More information on the coordinated consultation can be found on the Scottish Airspace Modernisation website here.

1.4 What are the responsibilities of each Scottish Airspace Modernisation sponsor?

1.4.1 NERL are responsible for connecting these routes into the network airspace, and the wider route network above 7,000ft. Edinburgh Airport and Glasgow Airport are responsible for the modernisation of their departure and arrival routes below 7,000ft and the airport's controlled airspace.

1.4.2 The three designs need to align, and one overall design has been reached through an iterative design process following compromise and coordination.

1.5 How are the consultations coordinated?

1.5.1 NERL, Edinburgh Airport and Glasgow Airport have worked together to identify which stakeholders are shared across all three proposals. For these stakeholders, such as Airlines and General Aviation organisations, there will be co-ordinated consultation events where all 3 sponsors will present the overall proposal. For more information about whether you are a coordinated consultee please see our Consultation Strategy.

1.6 Do all three ACPs need to be implemented together?

1.6.1 Yes, the designs submitted will be the result of feedback from this consultation and are dependent on the successful implementation of all Scottish Airspace Modernisation ACPs.

1.7 What if there is a delay to an airports ACP?

1.7.1 The proposed timescales allow for a small delay to an ACP without impacting the implementation date.

1.8 What if one or both airports withdraw their ACP?

1.8.1 This ACP seeks to modernise the en-route airspace in and around the ScTMA. Should one or both airports choose to withdraw their ACP, the ATS network could still be modernised and provide benefit to our stakeholders. Connectivity to/from the ATS route network will be

provided to departing aircraft via the remaining extant or new SID end points and by using existing transitions or vectoring aircraft from the holds to the runways.

1.8.2 However, the potential benefits described herein may not be realised. The greater risk is that if one airport withdraws, this could have an impact on the other airport's design. These designs will have optimally deconflicted the low-level interactions and the new design of one airport may not be operable with the extant design of the other. This could further limit the potential benefits realised through the modernisation of the ScTMA airspace. Therefore, if either Glasgow Airport or Edinburgh Airport withdrew their ACP, significant re-design and reassessment would likely be required.

1.9 Will the cumulative impacts of both ACPs be shared with stakeholders?

1.9.1 Yes, cumulative impacts and benefits for fuel burn and CO_2e are considered (see Section 7 of the Full Consultation Document). To consider one ACP option in isolation may give apparently contradictory results, hence the combined benefits/impacts should be considered by the reader. This is essential in order to understand the impacts on the whole system and to see the "bigger picture".

1.10 How is the airspace classification decided?

1.10.1 CAA policy requires routes and procedures to be contained within controlled airspace. When designing these structures, airspace designers need to consider the type, frequency and complexity of use, for example the quantity of interacting IFR and VFR traffic predicted the use a certain portion of airspace, or the frequency of expected holding. By specifying RNAV1 routes the total CAS volume can be reduced but this means aircraft have less flexibility to deviate from their routes. Therefore, a higher classification may be needed to protect the routes. If a route is more frequently used or the airspace is more complex (more interactions), the airspace classification may also need to be higher. We have considered the type of use, complexity and frequency and proposed an airspace classification that we consider suitable to the proposed use.

1.11 Have you considered Flexible Use Airspace?

1.11.1 Flexible use airspace is a concept that allows airspace to be shared between civil and military users. We have employed this for the proposed Firth of Forth routes as they will be closed when the MoD requires the use of Danger Area 514. This type of arrangement requires notification in advance to accommodate civil flight planning requirements as commercial air traffic users need to know the next day(s) airspace availability, and so it is not a suitable concept for *ad hoc* requests on a short-term basis.

1.12 Will VFR aircraft be able to enter Class D airspace?

1.12.1 Yes, VFR aircraft will be able to access class D airspace. However, they will require a clearance to do so which is requested from ATC. ATC accommodates a variety of airspace users and clearance availability to enter a given piece of airspace is based on the traffic situation at the time.

1.13 How were the hold locations and heights selected?

1.13.1 Within the design there are six holding locations proposed. When considering the holding locations, our design teams had to ensure that the holds were suitably positioned. To do this, the following considerations were made:

- The proposed hold had to be fully contained within 40 NM of the airfield to ensure all contained traffic remains visible on the air traffic controller's radar screen.
- They had to be suitably positioned to accept traffic arriving from the network, and to deconflict from other aspects of the airspace design.
- They were aligned to ensure hold entry was as predictable as possible, should the angle be too great, aircraft entering will require a greater controlled airspace volume to ensure they remain within CAS.

- The lowest level was decided by considering the transition design to facilitate a 3-degree descent from the hold to the runway.

1.13.2 Whilst not a requirement to consider overflight, NATS has considered the height and overflight of the lowest aircraft in the hold in their FOA analysis.

1.13.3 4 out of 6 of these holds are closely related to the existing locations as these were well aligned with the network routes serving them in the proposed airspace design. The final two holds are in new locations and these have been positioned in line with the above considerations.

1.14 Can I get the airspace design in any other format?

1.14.1 Within in the consultation documents there are detailed pictures of the design and Controlled Airspace Volumes. Additional figures have been provided within the slide pack here, and a recording of the presentation is available here. Where able we will endeavour to provide additional figures. However, we are restricted on what we can provide due to product licensing. Should you require a kml (an interactive file that can be viewed on google earth) of the CAS volumes to aid in your feedback please email airspaceconsultation@nats.co.uk and we will consider your request.

1.15 Are there any changes at other Scottish airports?

1.15.1 As part of the overall Scottish airspace changes, the Glasgow Prestwick Airport Standard Terminal Arrival Routes (STARs) have been amended to accommodate the amended route network design in Scotland. No changes have been made to the existing holds or other procedures at Glasgow Prestwick Airport, and the changes within this ACP are to NATS airspace only.

1.15.2 There are no changes below 7000ft for any other airport. Access to other airports within the ScTMA will still be available and are broadly similar to how they are today, but with some changes to the base of controlled airspace around certain airfields.

1.16 How can I provide my feedback?

1.16.1 Responses to the consultation can be submitted through the consultation portal here. Questions asked in webinars and via other channels will be answered where able, but feedback must be submitted via the online questionnaire to be considered in the consultation response.

1.17 When is the consultation period?

1.17.1 The consultation will run for 14 weeks from 20 October until 25 January 2026.

1.18 When will the changes happen?

1.18.1 If the proposal is approved by the CAA, implementation of the airspace change would occur after Q1 2027. Note: The expected year for implementing the proposed changes (currently 2027) could shift. This depends on the UK Government's priorities for airspace modernisation and the capacity of the aviation industry to manage the introduction of major changes safely and efficiently.