

# UK Airspace Design Service

## Heathrow Noise and Airspace Community Forum (NACF)

*23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025*

Stuart Lindsey  
CAA Head of Airspace Modernisation

# Organisations Represented

## 9 July:

AirportsUK  
Biggin Hill EGKB  
RAF Northolt  
Farnborough  
London Gatwick  
London Heathrow  
London Luton  
MAG  
Southend EGMC  
Airlines UK  
Board of Airline Representatives (BAR)  
Tui  
MOD

## 10 July:

ACOG  
Cyrrus Ltd  
Egis  
Trax  
Sagentia  
Birmingham  
Bristol  
Edinburgh  
Highlands & Islands Airports Ltd (HIAL)  
Leeds Bradford  
Liverpool  
British Airline Pilots Association (BALPA)  
UK Flight Safety Committee (UKFSC)

## 14 July:

London Oxford / Denham / Cumbernauld  
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA)  
British Gliding Association (BGA)  
Drone Delivery Group  
Future Flight/ Future Aviation Industry Wkg Gp  
GA Alliance  
Airspace4all trust  
Light Aircraft Association

## 15 July:

Aviation Environment Federation (AEF)  
CAGNE  
UK ACC  
HACAN  
HACAN East  
Harpenden Sky  
Heathrow Strategic Planning Group  
Luton & District Assoc for the Control of Aircraft  
Noise (LADACAN)  
Manchester Airport Consultative Committee  
Strategic Aviation Specialist Interest Group for  
Local Authorities (SASIG)

n.b. NERL listened in an observational capacity



# Context of UKADS



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## Previous engagement:

2022 – 2023	Internal CAA/DfT sessions to develop UKADS concept
Sep 23	Stakeholder workshops (listening) and Dec 23 (test options)
Jul – Oct 24	Industry workshops (likely proposals for consultation)
Oct – Dec 24	Formal consultation on UKADS (CAP 3029)
Nov 24 - Jan 25	Consultation on how we might modify NERL's licence
Nov 24	Webinar
Jan 25	CAA commits to PM (CAP 3085a) to establish UKADS by year end
Mar 25	Chancellor announces go-ahead for UKADS and Support Fund
Jun 25	Consultation response document (CAP 3106) and policy papers
Jun 25	Consultation on IP for modification to NERL's licence



# Consultation Response

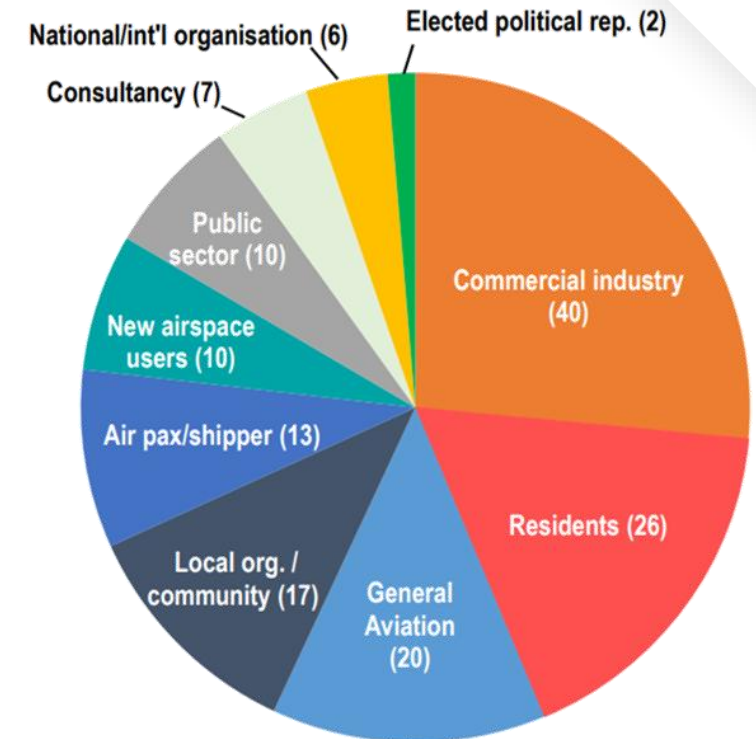


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## 151 Responses received from:

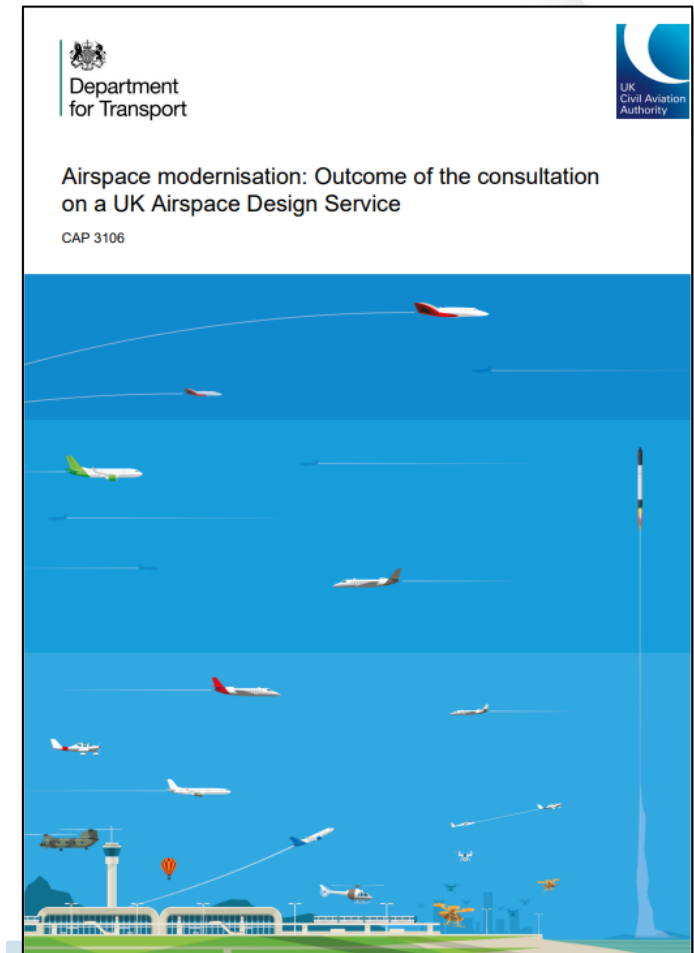
- Air passenger, shipper or customer
- Commercial aviation/aerospace industry including trade associations
- Consultancies
- General Aviation (GA), including representative organisations
- New or developing airspace user, such as remotely piloted aircraft system, eVTOL, space industry, including representative/related organisations
- Central or local government body, including military (we refer to this as 'public sector' in this document)
- Local organisation such as a community action group, airport consultative committee or forum
- National or international organisation (excluding GA organisations and industry trade associations), for example NGO.
- Elected political representative such as councillor or Member of Parliament



# Outcome of Consultation

## Headlines

- NERL will be tasked with providing the UKADS.
- We expect UKADS to be up and running by the end of this year.
- The UKADS will initially focus on modernising the complex airspace around London, including airspace change required for any Heathrow third runway.
- We are setting up a new Airspace Design Support Fund to help cover relevant costs of airspace modernisation in other parts of the UK.





# Scope of UKADS

## Initial

UKADS initial scope will be to deliver modernised airspace within the London TMA region.

## Ultimate

The ultimate scope of UKADS is that it becomes responsible for progressing all ACPs in UK airspace.

We will consider developing detailed proposals for an extended-scope UKADS that could be a new or existing body responsible for sponsoring all airspace change in the UK, but these detailed proposals would be subject to further consultation.



# Allocation to NERL

NERL is best placed to provide UKADS, with the required experience and skills.

We recognise the need to ensure transparency and impartiality in balancing competing interests through robust governance structures.

## Tasking NERL

- DfT laid two Statutory Instruments (2 June and 3 June) – parliamentary debate mid Jul
- DfT to consult on amendments to terms of the NERL licence over summer
- CAA currently consulting on Initial Proposals for amendments to NERL licence 12 Jun – 24 Jul (CAP3121)



# Onboarding to UKADS

Co-sponsors are working with NERL on the mobilisation of the UKADS.

UKADS Onboarding policy (CAP 3129) under development to define how existing ACPs within the London cluster will be transferred to a consolidated UKADS-sponsored single ACP that is started at the beginning of stage 3 of the CAP 1616 process.





# UKADS Oversight

## Advisory Board

A UKADS Advisory Board will act as a mechanism for key stakeholders to engage with and have oversight and visibility of the work of the UKADS at a strategic level.

It will have no decision-making role and it will not be involved in decisions or design choices around individual ACPs: its role will be to provide visibility and ensure that the UKADS is approaching these matters in the right way.

## Airspace Modernisation Strategy Oversight

UKADS activities will be subject to DfT/CAA oversight through existing AMS governance arrangements and will include regular, transparent progress reporting.



# Ongoing Role of ACOG

On establishment of UKADS there will remain a requirement for ACOG's functions to support airspace modernisation within the non-London clusters.

Requiring NERL, through its licence, to maintain a separate and impartial ACOG in addition to providing the UKADS would be disproportionately burdensome.

Subject to forthcoming CAA consultation on the regulatory framework for the masterplan (CAP 2156a/b), the co-sponsors' 'minded to' position is that the residual services being provided by ACOG should be subsumed into the part of NERL providing UKADS.



# Airspace Design Support Fund



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Subject to the licence modification process, we will create a new UK Airspace Design Charge paid by airspace users, which will be used to:

- Meet the efficient costs of NERL to provide UKADS, and
- Capitalise a new UK Airspace Design Support Fund

## Administration

The Support Fund will be administered by NERL to cover relevant costs of sponsors of eligible UK airport ACPs that are outside the scope of the UKADS.

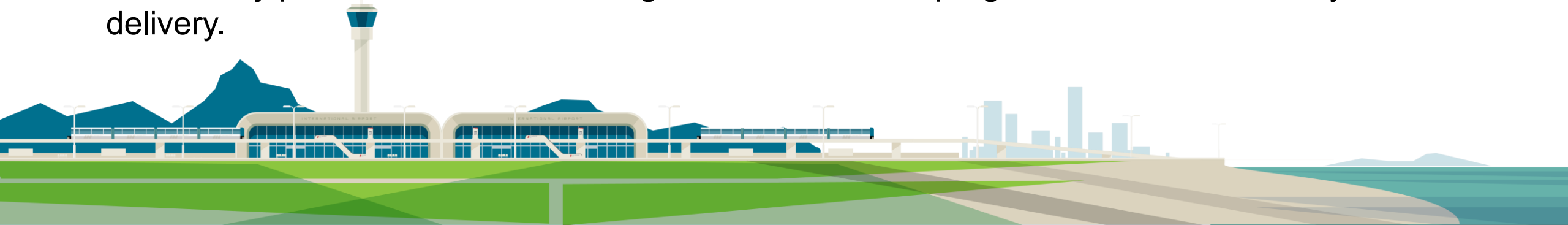




# Airspace Design Support Fund

## Principles for Support Fund

- Maintain a level playing field between the funding for the UKADS and funding for eligible ACPs outside the scope of UKADS.
- Continue to reflect the 'user pays' principle.
- Be equitable and transparent for applicants.
- Be based on clear rules governing how the Fund works, who it applies to and what the funding can be used for.
- Ensure key parties retain 'skin in the game' to incentivise progress, financial efficiency and delivery.





# Airspace Design Support Fund

## Eligibility

This Fund would only be for UK commercial airports which are served by airline operators required to pay the Charge, not in scope of the UKADS and are taking forward an ACP which meets the following criteria:

- a. Relate to ACPs that directly support the Airspace Modernisation Strategy and, as a minimum, have successfully completed the CAP 1616 Stage 2 Gateway;
- b. Relate to work done and costs incurred after the launch date for the funding scheme;
- c. Be identifiable and verifiable and meet applicable UK accounting standards and laws, and be reasonable, justified and comply with the principle of sound management in particular regarding economy and efficiency; *and*
- d. Relate to an ACP which has appropriate commitment from the sponsor to be seen through to completion.



# Regulatory Framework



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Co-sponsors are reviewing the regulatory framework to (a) enable the establishment of UKADS and (b) to streamline airspace regulatory processes more generally, including:

- Air Navigation Guidance & Air Navigation Directions
- Airspace Change Process (CAP1616)
- CAP2156a/b
- CAP3121 – Initial Proposals for NERL licence modification, and Final Proposal
- CAP3129 – Onboarding Process for UKADS
- UKADS Guidance



# Planned Consultations



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CAA to consult on improvements to the effectiveness and proportionality of our process for changing airspace to simplify and speed it up.

## July

- CAP3121 Initial Proposals for modifying NERL Licence (ends 24 Jul)

## August

- (DfT) - Licence Terms

## September

- Airspace Change Process (CAP1616)
- Air Navigation Guidance and Air Navigation Directions
- Airspace Change Masterplan Requirements





# UK Airspace Design Service

## Project Delivery Plan 2025

← NERL stand up as UKADS – Initial Operating Capability →



UKADS Consultation Response Document published alongside **supporting papers:**  
 UKADS Governance  
 UK Airspace Design Support Fund  
 Future of ACOG

↑ SIs laid (Jun)  
 ↑ SI debated (Jul)

DfT Licence Consultation (Aug-Sep)  
 Consultation (Oct-Nov)  
 Response Analysis (Dec)

Regulatory Framework / Process Review & Policy Development

- Air Navigation Guidance
- CAP1616
- Masterplan Requirements
- UKADS Guidance



# [caa.co.uk/ukads](https://caa.co.uk/ukads) a one-stop shop non-technical website



Log in

## UK Airspace Design Service

A single guiding mind for designing UK airspace

## Latest news about the UKADS

Read about recent developments as the UKADS takes shape

Home

### UK Airspace Design Service (UKADS)

Key information about the UKADS

Home / Commercial industry / Airspace / Airspace modernisation / UK Airspace Design Service / Latest news

#### Latest news about the UKADS

Read about recent developments as the UKADS takes shape

#### UKADS Key topics

Answers to frequently asked questions

#### Useful links related to the UKADS

Includes past and current consultations by the CAA and DfT

- [CAA and DfT press releases 22 October 2024](#) announcing the UKADS consultation.
- The DfT and CAA held a webinar on 20 November 2024 to give an overview of the consultation and answer any questions. Watch now: [UK Airspace Design Service Consultation - Webinar](#).
- [Government announcement 17 March 2025 confirming the go-ahead for the UKADS and Support Fund](#).
- [DfT press release 2 June 2025](#) announcing how the CAA and DfT have responded to the UKADS consultation in autumn 2024, including that NERL will provide the UKADS, and that it is expected to be up and running by the end of 2025.

UK Airspace

UK Airspace (UKADS)

Latest news

UKADS Key

Useful links UKADS

Supporting



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# Q&A

