

GLOBAL AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT FORUM ON CIVIL-MILITARY
COOPERATION
TUESDAY SESSION, BLOCK B 1030-1130

SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

How do we work together to enhance security and minimize impact

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The civil-military interface is much talked about, but as all the discussion at this forum has so far suggested, while it is unquestionably difficult at times, we should not consider it to be an insurmountable issue. However, in terms of the subject of this session, we are all well aware that the demands that are placed on airspace by States' requirements to maintain and indeed enhance Security are often not compatible with those of the commercial operation and other airspace users.

We are, without a doubt operating in interesting times, with unprecedented economic difficulties existing alongside an intense and long-running global fight against terrorism and organised crime. No country can deny the economic and commercial benefits that it gains from the aviation industry. But equally, nowadays, neither can any deny the need for security, both in terms of the integrity of national airspace and also of the needs of armed forces to train effectively to conduct global operations in whatever form they might take, from humanitarian relief at one end to warfighting at the other. What is needed, therefore is for both communities to embrace a position that encourages and enhances opportunities for dialogue and compromise; if this happens then it is possible for both to achieve their aim.

From the UK MOD's perspective, one of the most important of our strategic aspirations and requirements is to be able to access airspace that will enable all arms of UK Defence to 'train as they would fight' in order to counter immediate threats to the UK and to be fully prepared to meet any future challenges both at home and overseas. Considering the size of the UK landmass and associated airspace, our geographical location in terms of the juxta-position of the North Atlantic routes and continental Europe and the exponential growth in air travel, this has, in the past 20 years, become an increasingly difficult aspiration to meet. However, we have continued to meet it and the operational capability of our Armed Forces has very safely and effectively kept pace with modern evolving requirements whilst co-existing successfully alongside a thriving commercial sector.

And, what has enabled us to do this so successfully in the UK, has been the mature institutional and operational joint and integrated arrangements that have evolved over the past 50 years following the collocation of civilian and military ATSUs at air defence sites in the post-world war era. Basically, this joint and integrated approach

or J&I as we call it, relates to a cooperative and collaborative approach by the Civil Aviation Authority, NATS (the UK's monopoly en-route service provider) and the Ministry of Defence to all functions of airspace policy and planning, and to the provision of air traffic services in UK airspace. In particular, under the terms of J&I, all stakeholders recognise that airspace is a shared resource, that with the exception of airspace segregated for safety reasons, safe and expeditious access to all airspace should be available for all users, and, subject to operational priorities, ATS will be available on request from NATS and MOD units.

The institutional framework for the UK's J&I approach is overseen by 2 Departments of State – the Department for Transport and the Ministry of Defence. As well as the MOD's Assistant Chief of the Air Staff being appointed as a non-executive member of the CAA Board and the nominated member for national security matters, an organisation known as the Joint Air Navigation Services Council – the JANSC – exists specifically to safeguard the future of J&I. It reports annually to the Department of Transport and the MOD, it is chaired by the CAA's Director of Airspace Policy and its members are the Hd of Defence Airspace and Air Traffic Management for the MOD and NATS' Director Development and Investment.

The MOD is fully committed to J&I and at the very root of this are the 14 MOD personnel seconded to the Civil Aviation Authority's Department of Aviation Policy (DAP) to ensure that appropriate military judgment is introduced into all policy decisions likely to impact on defence. Moreover, the last 2 people in the post of the Director of DAP, who is provided with Directions on how he should execute his responsibilities from the Deputy Prime Minister, have been recently retired military officers. Overall, the success of this arrangement is down to the voluntary buy in of all involved parties underpinned, of course, by collaborative and transparent decision making.

From the operational perspective, the impact on the national ATS system of security and air policing operations is reduced significantly by the fact that civil and military controllers continue to work alongside each other in joint ops rooms in the London and Scottish ACCs and work in accordance with joint operating procedures, which also involve the UK's Air Defence organisation. I should stress here that civil involvement is very important in this area, not just in terms of direct involvement in air policing operations themselves, but also in the development of national procedures and in ongoing training.

J&I principles of optimising UK airspace usage by sharing rather than segregation also allow both military and civil operations to enhance their operational effectiveness through the implementation of the Flexible Use of Airspace concept. Plus, the co-location of staff gives to the military the benefits of ease of access by OAT to all airspace, including busy GAT routes and terminal control areas, and the provision of service to CAT in Class C and G airspace by military area radar

controllers helps, in particular, airlines operating from the regional airports and reduces the need for further expansion of CAS.

Another good example from our experience of how we have reduced the impact of civil and military operations on each other, and how the J&I concept has been translated into strategic planning is the UK's Joint Future Airspace Design Team (JFADT). The work of this team, co-chaired by NATS and the MOD, is based on FUA principles and the reduction to an absolute minimum of airspace segregation. Set up in the late 1990's, one of the early successes of the Team was the development and successful implementation of a huge-scale joint NATS/MOD airspace change proposal for the North Sea, which included 3 managed danger areas, designed to provide the very large tracts of training airspace needed for the next generation of aircraft such as Typhoon and Joint Strike Fighter, while at the same time introducing an enhanced network of permanent and conditional routes, which significantly reduced delays and track miles for commercial aircraft transiting the area. Management of this airspace from the FUA perspective is the joint responsibility of the military and civil staff of the UK's AMC at Swanwick.

This level of cooperation has more recently been taken forward in the development of the UK/Irish Functional Airspace Block (FAB). The UK MOD and the Irish Defence Force both have seats, alongside NATS and the Irish Aviation Authority on the FAB Management Board, and are fully integrated into the management process. So, the J&I principles are now being applied cross-border, with airspace planning and ATM provision no longer constrained by the FIR/UIR boundaries. While these boundaries will, for a time continue to physically exist, they will increasingly become 'soft' or 'transparent' boundaries in the same way as they are today between the Scottish and the London FIRs.

Finally though, I should acknowledge that getting to this position has required us to overcome substantial issues in the past and there will be significant challenges in the future. If we are to unlock the full latent capacity of the ATM system, then perhaps the most demanding of these is the need for ever greater interoperability of civil and military systems both on the ground and in the air. This is an absolute requirement, but, as you are all aware, it does not come cheap. Simply to meet the most basic requirements of P-RNAV, Mode S and 8.33kHz radios will cost the UK MOD well in excess of £100M – serious money for projects that have limited military utility, but essential for us in terms of maintaining the status quo in terms of assured airspace access. Overall then there will be an ongoing need to recognise this area of potential friction and continue to work closely together to find solutions that will mitigate this in our respective regions.

Nevertheless, I think the UK example serves to demonstrate that the civil and military interface, although sometimes challenging, is certainly not insurmountable. Even with the current pressures on national airspace, we have found that, with mature

institutional arrangements in place for open and sometimes frank dialogue to regularly and routinely take place, we have a thriving commercial operation working alongside thriving and capable Armed Forces, with both continuing to achieve often disparate aims. Overall then, my message is that, while we accept that there are some other very good models, the J&I approach to airspace policy, planning and ATS provision works very well for us in the UK. We have had several very successful visits from other States keen to see J&I in action, and we would of course be very happy to provide more detail to any of you who are interested to see more either in person or through liaison visits.