


**MINUTES OF ASSESSMENT MEETING  
HELD ONLINE ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2024**

24 September 2024

All Present

<b>Present</b>	<b>Appointment</b>	<b>Representing</b>
	Airspace Change Account Manager	CAA
	Airspace Regulator (Technical)	CAA
	Airspace Regulator (Environment)	CAA
	Airspace Regulator (Engagement and Consultation)	CAA
	Airspace Regulator (Economist)	CAA
	Airspace Change Account Manager (Observing)	CAA
	ACP ATM Team	QinetiQ (MOD)
	ACP ATM Team	QinetiQ (MOD)
	Hd Airspace Integration DLOD & Capability Acceptance (Protector)	Change Sponsor

**CAA Assessment Meeting Opening Statement**

CAA noted that the following: [Assessment meeting presentation] were received in advance of the Assessment Meeting and confirmed that the documents must be published by the sponsor, together with minutes of the meeting, on the Airspace Change Portal page. CAA explained the purpose of the meeting and confirmed that the meeting was an Assessment Meeting and not a Gateway. The CAA reinforced that the sponsor was required to provide a broad description of their proposed approach to meeting the CAA's CAP 1616 requirements, but the CAA was not deciding whether the proposed approach met the detailed requirements of the CAA's process at this stage. The purpose of the Assessment Meeting (set out in detail in CAP 1616) was broadly:

- for the Sponsor to present and discuss their Statement of Need,
- to enable the CAA to consider whether the proposal concerned falls within the scope of the formal airspace change process, including determining whether the proposal falls within the scope of a pre-scaled ACP process/Level 3,
- to enable the CAA to consider the appropriate provisional Level to assign to the change proposal.

Additionally, the sponsor was required to provide information on how it intended to proceed to fulfil the requirements of the airspace change process and to provide information on timescales. Lastly, the sponsor was required to provide information on how it intended to meet the engagement requirements of the various stages of the airspace change process.

	<b>ACTION</b>
<p><b>Item 1 – Introduction</b></p> <p>1. All attendees were introduced.</p>	
<p><b>Item 2 –Statement of Need (discussion and review)</b></p> <p>2. The MOD described the SON as follows: Due to an enduring requirement to enable routine test and calibration of RPAS on-board equipment, segregated airspace is needed, within which this activity can be conducted.</p> <p>EGD207 is the preferred location for Protector test and calibration operations, due to its geographical location and the requisite ground based</p>	

equipment in-situ. The existing Danger Area construct is insufficient to accommodate the flight profiles required to conduct the activities, thus an additional volume of airspace is proposed to enable flexible and efficient short periods of utilisation.

3. ■ queried whether the airspace was required due to the lack of Detect and Avoid (DAA) or due to the laser risk. ■ confirmed that in the short term the reasoning was both, however, in the long term, the laser risk is the enduring reason.

**Item 3 – Current day scenario**

4. The current airspace was presented as depicted at Figure 1.



Figure 1- Current airspace chart showing EGD207

5. The upper limit of EGD207 is 23,000ft ALT; RPAS BVLOS may not be conducted above 18000ft ALT (12000ft ALT in the event of the activation of Contingency Airway T999); however, there is an LOA in force to enable BVLOS ingress and egress from controlled airspace into the existing construct to operate below 18,000ft ALT.
6. There is currently an ACP in progress for temporary airspace (TDA) in the same location under ACP-2024-014. The timeline for this is from Spring 2025, with a maximum of 8 sorties of approximately 4.5 hours each.
7. ■ queried the period for which the TDA was required. ■ confirmed it was not possible to provide conclusive dates due to the evolving programme schedule.
8. Protector requires a circular orbit at approximately 10,000ft AGL and at 18,000ft AGL, up to 5.4NM radius, centred on the ground-based target location. These profiles cannot be contained within the current EGD207 construct.
9. 3 x constructs are provisionally envisaged, based on the current TDA proposal;
  - Area A - 7NM radius centred on 52 51 52.668N, 0 10 01.848E, from 7000ft AGL to FL195 (0.6NM buffer on the flown pattern of 5.4NM to account for wind etc., plus 1NM buffer)
  - Area B – 7NM radius centred on 52 51 52.668N, 0 10 01.848E, from between 2000-4000ft up to 7000ft (TBD)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area C – Radius will be scaled at 1-1 basis: altitude to radius centred on the target (e.g. Section B base level 4000ft = 4NM radius of Section C). Radius of Section C will be set to minimum radius to ensure safe ops may continue up to base level of area B.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Item 4 – Options to exploit opportunities or address issues identified</b></p> <p>10. The following potential opportunities were presented by the Change Sponsor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Footprint from TDA likely to be carried forward to the DA if Protector-only utilisation;</li> <li>Potential utilisation of the airspace for other platforms;</li> <li>Similar previous application (2018: withdrawn) identifies stakeholders and potential impacts.</li> </ul> <p>11. The following potential issues were presented by the Change Sponsor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EGD207 one of only two viable locations: The other (West Freugh) is too far for routine testing;</li> <li>Enduring requirement - characterisation for each new airframe, plus repeated at equipment configuration change (e.g. software update);</li> <li>Request for utilisation by other assets may require revised airspace design;</li> <li>Similar previous application (2018) withdrawn due to airframe-related mitigations not available for Protector.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Item 5 – Provisional indication of the scale level and process requirements*</b></p> <p>Airspace Regulator (Technical)</p> <p>12. The CAA advised that the inclusion of PMR225 on consultation diagrams may be confusing for civilian aviators, who are not mandated to abide by the PMR and therefore, may not be aware of its location.</p> <p>13. CAA internal traffic analysis below 3000ft in this vicinity indicates usage is low (between 30 and 60 aircraft per quarter), so consideration of the dimensions of the lower sector needs to take place to ensure that the impact is proportionate.</p> <p>14. Change Sponsor iterated that all stakeholders would be considered, particularly those who may be impacted by any changes to transit of the Fenland Gap. There are also a large amount of non-transponding/non-radio airspace users in the area who also need to be considered. Engagement with key stakeholders is already taking place due to the proposal of a TDA.</p> <p>15. All data in the submission must be evidenced, or a considered qualitative assessment provided if evidence isn't available.</p> <p>16. The CAA queried how frequently the airspace would be used, as this information would be crucial for stakeholders. ■ stated that this information could not be determined at this time. However, the current anticipated tempo is unlikely to be more than twice per month.</p>	

<p><b>Action:</b> Change Sponsor to compile a statement to accurately describe the anticipated frequency of usage.</p> <p>Airspace Regulator (Environment)</p> <p>17. CAP1616i provides guidance on the environmental assessment (and scaling). The Change Sponsor must conduct a habitat regulations assessment and screening exercise; CAP 1616i pg. 33 contains further guidance.</p> <p>18. The Change Sponsor was advised that the consequential impact to civilian aviation only need be considered for this ACP.</p> <p>Airspace Regulator (Economic)</p> <p>19. The CAA stated that all potential costs to civilian airspace users and ANSPs must be considered.</p> <p>Airspace Regulator (Engagement &amp; Consultation)</p> <p>20. The CAA directed the Change Sponsor to CAP 1616f and described which paragraphs were applicable at each stage. Throughout the process, evidence of effective two-way engagement will be required, including identification of the right audience, understanding their needs and demonstrating how that has informed the ACP, with clear records of all engagement with the stakeholders.</p> <p>21. In addition to stakeholders listed on CAP1616, the Change Sponsor was advised to also engage with the British Model Flying Association (BMFA), British Hang-gliding and Paragliding Association (BHPA) and other local aviation clubs as some of these bodies might not be current members of NATMAC.</p> <p>22. At Stage 3, consultation must be in line with the Gunning principles. 12 weeks is the standard period of consultation but if change sponsor believes they can achieve an effective consultation in a shorter period, a strong rationale will need to be presented in the consultation strategy. All consultations will also need to be hosted on the Citizen Space platform.</p> <p>23. The CAA indicated the scale of the ACP was likely to be a Level 1, possibly scaled.</p> <p><b><i>* When the sponsor submits their gateway materials for each Gateway at the agreed submission deadline, the period between this and the gateway decision will be an analysis by the CAA Airspace Regulatory team (Airspace Regulation) of the documentation submitted, for the purposes of making a recommendation to the CAA Gateway decision maker(s). In conducting the gateway assessment, the CAA is assessing the process employed and its compliance with the guidance stipulated within CAP 1616. It is not an assessment of the merits of the submission itself, which is reviewed at Stage 5 - Decision. We may request documentation from the sponsor that is referred to in the gateway submission but has not been provided as part of the Gateway submission materials. We may also request the sponsor to provide information by way of clarification relating to statements or assumptions made in the submission. Any further information sought by Airspace Regulation at this stage is for clarificatory purposes and is only for determining compliance with the CAP 1616 process.</i></b></p>	<p><b>Change Sponsor</b></p>
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<p><b><i>In any instance where a sponsor has not met the requirements of the process, we will inform them after the gateway decision and advise of next steps.</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Please note that <u>this text does not apply to airspace change proposals involving the sole implementation of RNP Instrument Approach Procedures (IAPs) without an Approach Control</u>, as Gateway Assessments are not required. Therefore, this text can be removed from the Assessment Meeting minutes.</i></b></p>									
<p><b>Item 6 – Provisional process timescales*</b></p> <p>24. The aspiration for implementation of airspace would be May 2026. The following dates were presented for discussion, based on an Aeronautical Information Circular (AIC) publication<sup>1</sup>.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="169 757 1241 880"> <thead> <tr> <th>AIRAC</th> <th>AIC/SUP Submission Cut Off</th> <th>AIC/SUP Finalised</th> <th>Publication Date</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>AIRAC 05/2026</td> <td>Fri 13 Feb 26</td> <td>Thu 02 Apr 26</td> <td>Thu 14 May 26</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Action:</b> Change Sponsor is to complete timeline submission form once sent by CAA.</p> <p>25. The CAA advised that the next available gateway after the anticipated start date of the ACP was April 2025.</p> <p><i>* The timeline agreed may become subject to change by the CAA. As outlined in CAP 2541 it is not the CAA's intent to conduct a re-prioritisation of all ACPs currently in progress, but only to prioritise when we believe this is required. Such prioritisation will be conducted on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with the principles outlined in CAP 2541. Should it be considered necessary to reprioritise an ACP a member of the Airspace Regulation team will contact the sponsor directly.</i></p>	AIRAC	AIC/SUP Submission Cut Off	AIC/SUP Finalised	Publication Date	AIRAC 05/2026	Fri 13 Feb 26	Thu 02 Apr 26	Thu 14 May 26	<p><b>Change Sponsor</b></p>
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<p><b>Item 7 – Next steps</b></p> <p>26. The Change Sponsor expressed their thanks to the CAA for their time and guidance.</p> <p>27. A draft copy of the minutes of this meeting should be sent to the CAA by 1 October 2024 for return of comment. A complete version will be agreed and presented to the CAA, whilst a redacted version will be placed on the portal.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Change Sponsor complete minutes of the meeting by 1 October 2024.</p>	<p><b>Change Sponsor</b></p>								
<p><b>Item 8 – Any other business</b></p> <p>28. Nil.</p>									

**ACTIONS ARISING FROM ACP-2024-028 DANGER AREA TO ENABLE RPAS TEST AND EVALUATION  
ACTIVITY ASSESSMENT MEETING**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Frequency of Usage	Change Sponsor	Change Sponsor to develop a statement that provides stakeholders with an indication of the anticipated frequency of use.	1 October 2024
ACP Timeline	Change Sponsor	Change Sponsor is to complete timeline submission form once sent by CAA.	
Minutes	Change Sponsor	To provide draft minutes to CAA for internal review	1 October 2024

Ministry of Defence  
ACP Sponsor