**ACOG SC 29th JAN 25 – SUMMARY**

The ACOG Steering Committee (SC) convened in the De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms in London on Wed 29th January. The SC considered the following subject areas:

- Under Actions Arising, further discussion around risks and issues with simulation availability to support airspace design proposals took place. ACOG reported that use of NERL's Part Task Trainer (PTT) had benefited recent work in the Western TMA, although NERL had cautioned that as the PTT wasn't accredited by the CAA it could not be relied upon for higher fidelity tasks, such as safety assurance work. However, the sim teams at Prestwick were moving to shift operations in March and this would offer a material improvement in simulation capacity. Nevertheless, despite ongoing work by NERL to mitigate the issue, the 9-18 months lead time for simulator adaptation to reflect new airspace designs would likely remain a significant constraint for the next few years. The Chair expressed concern that there is still a lack of clarity over the scale of the issue and asked how well characterised this was within ACOG's programme risks and mitigations. ACOG responded that it was captured within the resource risks, but the SC saw the issue more as a scheduling risk. With more resource, there would not be a coincident reduction in time taken for technical adaptation. The Chair highlighted the need to raise and maintain the profile of this issue to ensure the dialogue had wide visibility. Too often, significant disruption and delays to the programme have been occasioned by external actions beyond ACOG and the ACP-sponsors' control, yet the focus invariably lands on ACOG. Notwithstanding, it was true that simulation capacity had not been a pinch point to date, but remained an issue.
- The SC discussed developments in relation to the UKADS and the recent consultation responses. A further consultation on the proposed UKADS funding model was likely. The SC emphasised the critical need for funding to also be made available for the ACP sponsors outside the LTMA.
- ACOG reported that given the importance of getting EDI through the CAP1616 St2 Gateway to enable the ScTMA cluster to proceed and in accordance with the SC's previous encouragement, they had stepped outside of their swim lane to provide direct technical support to EDI and take an enhanced role in project managing EDI's preparations for resubmission. The SC welcomed ACOG's involvement. There was a pressing need to get the ScTMA across the line and another failure was not an option. Hd of ACOG stated that NERL and ACOG had both provided resource, but there were no further resources left to deploy. Given the strategic nature of the ScTMA success for the whole FASI programme, the Chair asked for confirmation that the CAA were adopting a constructive approach and Hd of ACOG reported that they were. He stated that the Authority's airspace team were offering as much support within the bounds of their regulatory responsibilities as could reasonably be expected.
- Turning to the MTMA, the Chair opined that given the political tailwind the project has attracted, the assumption should be that reopening DSA will progress in some form or other and this therefore has the potential to have a significant impact on the work done thus far in the MTMA. Hd of ACOG reported that the issue is that DSA's dormant 'legacy' ACP SIDs conflict with the airspace now occupied by the new LBA

hold design. ACOG's proposal was to reinstate the legacy airspace volume to allow DSA to have a control zone and published approach procedures, but that departures would be actively managed and cleared by NATS on a case-by-case basis. This was a well-established CONOPS used to good effect at other regional airports around the country, most of which easily supported traffic levels above those DSA would be likely to generate for the foreseeable future. The ideal outcome was for DSA not to interfere with the LBA hold which would preserve the MTMA programme as currently planned and deliver a sizeable chunk of the airspace modernisation benefits to the region without further delay. In due course, if traffic levels demanded it, DSA would have the option to submit a new ACP that could integrate successfully with the established MTMA network. ACOG are firmly of the view that this is a highly pragmatic approach and are lobbying hard with the Co-Sponsors to advocate for it and ensure that the negative impact any alternative approach would inevitably have on timescales and further delay is well understood and acknowledged.

- Constructive dialogue with the CAA and DfT on the DSA issue is ongoing. A meeting chaired by the DfT will be held on 3rd Feb to resolve. Hd of ACOG had briefed two MPs in the Doncaster constituencies to assure them that ACOG were not acting as a blocker for the airspace they needed. The Chair was due to talk to David Silk (DfT) next week and would raise this issue in the conversation. Hd of ACOG reaffirmed that there was no objection to opening the airspace; the problem was the need for a new ACP to avoid conflicting with the considerable body of successful MTMA work that had already taken place and introducing significant delay.
- ACOG reported that LBA had ongoing challenges with their ACP. There were resource constraints and the consultants LBA had contracted with were reported to be doing rework after the most recent gateway failure at their own cost. ACOG had stepped in only from a Programme Management perspective to support progress. A new Stage 2 submission was booked for April. Unfortunately, there was evidently little appetite for the ACP at LBA's senior management level which could affect progress. Funding was the key issue.
- The Chair asked whether there was any evidence of funding for the ACP sponsors outside the LTMA making the necessary progress now that the UKADS consultation had finished. Hd of ACOG responded that he had discussed with DfT who were supportive of ACOG's position and there was work ongoing with the CAA for a proposal. Hd of ACOG viewed this as on the critical path and the SC concurred. The Chair emphasised the need for ACOG to escalate to the SC without delay if assistance was required.
- ACOG's bi-monthly report on programme risks was discussed. The SC offered positive feedback on the previously distributed slides. However, there was a desire to see more on mitigations and why those presented did not appear to be enough to reduce the residual risk score once implemented. ACOG advised that the mitigations were grouped collectively in the brief for ease of reference. In the Risk Register, specific mitigations were aligned to each individual risk.
- The SC commented that the Risk Register should contain risks that could affect the programme, regardless of whether ACOG could control them. MS confirmed that this was the case and added that there were proximity scores of three to five years in the Horizon Risk Register. The Chair highlighted the dominant characteristic of the Programme was that it had slipped repeatedly, regardless of ACOG control and often

for external reasons. From an assurance perspective, the SC needed sufficient confidence that the risks that caused or continued to put the timeline at risk had been identified and either mitigations had been put in place, with some assurance these would be successful, or the risk owners had been identified and made aware of the risks they were responsible for. There was therefore a need to ensure the risks were correctly categorised. The Chair spoke around amalgamation of risks and expressed that 'compression' was an outcome rather than a risk – he would have liked to see the causes stated more explicitly. The SC added that the lack of ability to persuade the Co-Sponsors to act on ACOG advice should be included in the risk register and it was not shown in the papers circulated to the SC. The SC expressed a desire to see more on the risks, theme by theme. It was agreed that Hd of ACOG would talk through both Horizon and Programme risk registers with SC colleagues on request at a convenient time.

- On the Chancellor's recent announcement in support of LHR's R3, the Chair opined that as it fell within the boundaries of the LTMA and the putative UKADS Phase 1's remit, there should be relatively little impact on ACOG's work. The Chair reflected on ACOG's historic position with respect to the possibility of R3 entering into the mix, which was to plan on the 2-runway reality, where possible leaving flexibility to adjust to R3 if and when it became material, in order to deliver LTMA modernisation as pragmatically and quickly as possible. Given the hurdles that delivering R3 would still need to overcome and the likely timescales involved, he still felt that such an approach was valid and ultimately in the best interests of delivering airspace modernisation in the South-East in a timely fashion.
- ACOG spoke briefly around Benefits and how it was not currently possible to identify and control what does or does not deliver optimum benefit. Slides were distributed prior to the meeting to highlight the five metrics from the AMS. The baseline for Scotland was near completion. The delta between FOA and baseline was the next step to highlight the potential impact to the benefits. The timeline had shifted slightly to allow for a baseline to be created for the MTMA. The Chair asked how robust the Scottish baseline was and ACOG responded that it was necessarily subjective at this early stage and not the product of a rigorous, scientific approach. There was a need to find balance between resource and capability. The Chair highlighted the need nevertheless for the benefits strategy to be credible. ACOG stated that they had worked closely with NATS Analytics to achieve a credible output. The Chair reiterated the need for the Benefits Strategy to align with the AMS strategic aims and demonstrate their delivery.