ACOG SC 30th JUL 25 – SUMMARY

The ACOG Steering Committee (SC) convened in the De Vere Grand Connaught Rooms in London on Wed 30th July. The SC considered the following subject areas:

- Hd of ACOG updated the SC on developments concerning the UKADS. LHR's third runway would attract a series of bids, which would have to be subject to due diligence; in his opinion, it was likely that little or no progress could be made on design options for the LTMA until the scrutiny of the R3 process was complete. He suggested that there was a risk of delay to the start of UKADS1 and the design of the LTMA by six months to one year whilst this process was worked through.
- The Chair asked if there was progress with non-LTMA funding; Hd of ACOG responded that a paper had been submitted to the Co-Sponsors that highlighted the programme delays that would be caused by a lack of funds past September. Hd of ACOG was now less confident in the previous indication from officials for a resolution before September, owing to the fact the ongoing discussions between the Co-Sponsors and NERL with regard to the operating model for UKADS1 were yet to be concluded and were obviously the priority.
- The SC asked if there were sections of the LTMA that could continue in the interim regardless of the decision on LHR R3. Hd of ACOG confirmed that LAS was currently on track to continue under ACOG coordination and was progressing to schedule. The Chair referenced speculation of up to five bidders for R3 and, if correct, this would likely lengthen the due diligence aspects of assessing the bids considerably. The Chair observed that NATS was a commercial entity and its Board had fiduciary obligations to safeguard the business' performance and shareholders' investments, so they were unlikely to be willing to be forced into an arrangement that conflicted with that. A discussion was had around potential new regulation and legislation and the potential for that to help unlock the current logjam
- ACOG reported that the CAA had indicated EDI's St2 submission was now at a sufficient standard to submit, which increased confidence. The Chair noted the extensive effort from ACOG to improve the work on this submission. The SC agreed and stated that this also reflected well on the work that ACOG had engaged in with the Co-Sponsors. The ScTMA consultation was due to launch in October and preparation had begun. ACOG were tracking this day-by-day. Nevertheless, the airports were dependent on reassurance regarding the support funding arrangements from the DfT, but this had not yet been received and was becoming critical.
- ACOG confirmed that the DSA airspace issues had been resolved, but the ongoing issue was LBA's St2 submission. Discussions were ongoing regarding the future of LBA's ACP and the significant work required. Hd of ACOG observed that there remains a window of opportunity between 2027-2030 for ACOG to at least complete the CAP1616 process and deliver the ScTMA and MTMA. That would then secure a window of up to five years to schedule and implement deployment as conditions dictated. However, if the window is missed the MTMA modernisation would be

pushed right and likely very significantly. Given their success in pulling irons out of the fire in the ScTMA, the SC asked why ACOG would not step in to resolve LBA's St2 submission at this point, rather than waiting for it to fail. ACOG commented that fundamental issues around the write-up and underpinning work had been identified. It was therefore deemed too great a challenge for ACOG to resolve in the time available.

- The SC asked for further clarification re DSA. Hd of ACOG reported that the CAA were dealing directly with DSA and had accepted ACOG's advice on the best way ahead. It would take at least a year to get the airport commercially and regulatory compliant; in the meantime, NERL would provide an ATC service. DSA’s ACP would therefore not start for another year and would not be part of the current FASI Programme.
- The Chair drew attention to the Dashboard and questioned the RAG status colours, in particular LBA. ACOG advised the Dashboard was rationalised to align with the airports’ view on progress. The Chair voiced concern that the Dashboard should be ACOG’s assessment of the Programme, not a reflection of the airports' views. Hd of ACOG responded that the narrative that accompanied the RAG status provided more information. The Chair opined that the information was not enough to show ACOG’s true view. Due to the commercially sensitive nature, Hd of ACOG agreed there was some compromise on the presented Dashboard which was also used at the FASI PB. The Chair suggested a separate column in the Dashboard for the SC to show the true ACOG views, which was agreed.
- The SC reviewed a selection of Programme risks. The Chair asked whether there was an optimal time to discuss the plan of transition of ACOG into UKADS. Hd of ACOG responded that if pressed, Q1 2026 would be an option as a decision on whether and how to progress the MTMA would presumably have been made by then, as well as the ScTMA consultation completed. There would then be a potential eight-month migration window until November 2026, before the MTMA Consultation started. The Chair opined that if the roles and responsibilities of UKADS were still unconfirmed by Q1 2026, giving management of ACOG to NERL too early could be a cause for concern for both parties. It seemed likely that the turbulence often arising from any major organisational change could be amplified by limits on NERL's bandwidth available to assume UKADS1's implicit role and responsibilities, not least in reinvigorating the relatively dormant LTMA, including the sizeable task of data capture and applying a new operating model across a wide and diverse array of stakeholders. Adding assimilation of ACOG and ACOG's responsibilities into the hopper prematurely whilst there remained material work to be undertaken to steer the non-LTMA clusters home didn’t seem like prudent planning. The Chair stated that it was imperative that any plan has clearly articulated steps, including timings for any transfers of responsibility, to avoid premature dilution of ACOG effort in the leading FASI clusters and diversion of ACOG resource away from ACOG's main effort.
- ACOG had received an update from the CAA stating that the IFP backlog was expected to be cleared by the end of 2026. The CAA were conscious not to disrupt the current ecosystem with recruitment. The CAA were minded to adopt performance-based regulation for IFP and airspace oversight, dependent on the

Design Houses' quality and consistency of output. By the time the 2026 IFP Design requirement increased, the CAA were confident the resource risk would be solved to manage the input. The Chair drew attention to the Dashboard and the risk of IFP Resource and asked whether the risk level was consistent with the current mitigation actions from the CAA. Hd of ACOG opined the risk should stay severe for the foreseeable future. The SC asked whether there was an opportunity to look at the risk differently by shortlisting a number of Design Houses that were approved for use in the Programme to avoid delay. Hd of ACOG agreed and added that NERL had significantly mitigated the IFP risk for LTMA due to being the market leader in design. The SC commented that the resource risk had been highlighted to the CAA for many years and asked how confident ACOG were that these promises would come to fruition. Hd of ACOG could not offer certainty but was working to derisk as much as possible by keeping the pressure on. Risk around the ACP sponsors' technical capability was discussed. The IFP industry was not expanding, so resources were at high risk of being poached.

- The SC considered the draft ACOG Annual Report for 25/25. The SC were supportive of the report and welcomed the comprehensive coverage of ACOG's significant efforts and achievements over the period. The Chair expressed positive views on the report, specifically the outline of the extensive behind-the-scenes work that ACOG had done outside of their normal remit and would continue to do. There were minor editorial tweaks to be made which the Chair would share with MS offline. It was agreed to distribute the report relatively quickly.