



Department for Transport

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From the Secretary of State
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Dear Deirdre,

SECRETARY OF STATE PRIORITIES FOR THE CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

I was pleased to have the opportunity to meet you so soon after my appointment, and then to speak to you again at the recent event at Cranfield University. I also want to take the opportunity again to place on record my gratitude to you, the Board and the staff of the CAA for your magnificent work in mounting the largest peacetime repatriation ever undertaken in the UK following the sad collapse of Thomas Cook.

I have previously mentioned my intention to come back to you with my ambitions for the CAA in supporting UK aviation. The purpose of this letter therefore is to set out what I see as my key priorities for the CAA in carrying out its work in line with its statutory objectives. These are as follows:

Promoting and supporting the growth of the aviation industry: As you know, the Deregulation Act 2015 already requires the CAA to exercise its statutory functions with regard to 'promoting economic growth'. I want the CAA to go further, and to be at the forefront of promoting the UK aviation industry, and I would like to see the CAA account for how it is doing this in its reporting. I also consider it a priority for the CAA to be supporting the success of the aviation industry by protecting and improving its infrastructure, including by protecting the network of General Aviation airfields where STEM jobs and skills are developed and the next generation is most often inspired by flight.

Training pilots: To consider all possible measures to reduce the high cost of training for pilots, to ensure that we can grow increased numbers of future

pilots locally, and that new pilots represent the diverse population in the UK, driving up representation from women and BAME. I want to move away from the current situation where many aspiring pilots are obliged to train overseas. Actions could include publishing guidance on pilot training and supporting events about pilot training at aerodromes and educational institutions.

Supporting innovation and greener aviation: To support new business models and other innovations that have the potential to drive significant economic growth in UK aviation, building on the Innovation Hub you have established. This is vital if we are to make headway on our ambitious goals for countering climate change, whilst realising the benefits for passengers and the UK which new types of aircraft, fuel and business models offer. As well as putting the CAA at the forefront of the UK's efforts in innovation, this will ensure that new aviation technology and business models develop in line with our strong safety ethos.

Protecting aerodromes: To ensure there is appropriate protection for the crucial strategic infrastructure network and assets of general aviation for future generations of pilots, who are vital to the continued success of the UK's aviation industry. Actions could include proactively advising aerodromes faced with possible changes of use which could constrain future flying.

Modernising airspace: To ensure that UK airspace is more efficient, safe, interoperable and integrated for all users, through delivery of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy. Ensuring that we are able to harness the full benefits of important new technologies, which will help to reduce noise and CO2 emissions from aviation. Action should also include undertaking a review of airspace classification, with the aim of reducing controlled airspace in the UK.

Implementing Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) approaches: To accelerate the delivery of GNSS approaches and the realisation of their benefits for general aviation by prioritising airspace change proposals that include them; and by actively assisting sponsors of GNSS approaches to make better quality applications.

Regulating proportionately: To ensure that any regulation is proportionate and risk-based, especially for general aviation, and recognises the potential for delegation, deregulation and innovation. This could include working with government on a post-Brexit General Aviation Red Tape Challenge and by reprioritising the work of the CAA's General Aviation Unit, particularly in relation to PPL licence processing and accelerating e-licensing. I have agreed to provide additional resources to support the CAA's General Aviation Unit to do this.

In carrying out its work I believe that the CAA should work to make more data available and to increase its transparency. In particular, I would like the CAA to review the role that greater availability of aviation data can play in