

Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 Section 36

The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty

Report 2020

UK Civil Aviation Authority

The CAA is required to produce a report on its performance in relation to the public authority biodiversity duty under section 2A of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. The report focuses on the exercise of the CAA's statutory functions in relation to Scotland.

Introduction and Context

The Civil Aviation Authority is the UK's independent aviation regulator. We work to ensure that:

- the aviation industry meets the highest safety standards,
- consumers have choice, value for money, are protected and treated fairly when they fly,
- through efficient use of airspace, the environmental impact of aviation on local communities is effectively managed and CO₂ emissions are reduced,
- the aviation industry manages security risks effectively.

We are a public corporation, established by Parliament in 1972 as an independent specialist aviation regulator. The CAA can only act within the legal powers given to it by legislation. The UK Government requires that our costs are met from charges to those we provide a service to or regulate.

Most aviation regulation and policy is harmonised across the world to ensure consistent levels of safety and consumer protection. Worldwide safety regulations are set by the International Civil Aviation Organisation and within Europe by the European Aviation Safety Agency.

We run the ATOL holiday financial protection scheme.

We also economically regulate some airports and certain aspects of air traffic control.

- In developing this report, we acknowledge Scotland's Biodiversity Strategy '*It's in your hands*' (2004) and its supplement '*2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity*' (2013).

The CAA does not own any land in Scotland or carry out land management in Scotland.

- The CAA leases an office in Stirling, which is used as and when required, including when CAA staff are working with the Scottish Government. The office is also used by CAA staff carrying out regulatory work in Scotland
- The CAA Pension Scheme (CAAPS) is administered by the Pensions Administration Department who are based in Regus House, 10 Lochside Place, Edinburgh EH12 9RG. The team deals with all aspects of CAAPS member benefits.

In the CAA's own operations, we adopt a sustainability policy known as Greening the CAA. Our vision is to do business in a way that minimises our environmental footprint through the use of more efficient technologies, embedding of a strong culture of sustainability in our Values & Behaviours and empowering everyone to make innovative, positive changes and choices to help us reach our greening and sustainability goals.

This activity includes encouraging biodiversity on the land we control. To this end we have enclosed an area of managed grassland and allowed vegetation to grow without further management. Ultimately this habitat will revert to the location's natural climax community over the years to come. Additionally, within our estate have taken action to enhance the habitat to encourage growth of invertebrate species. The aim being to provide additional food to encourage growth of a diverse number of predator species, such as birds and small mammals, into the area.

CAA functions in relation to biodiversity

Aviation activity has always had an impact on the environment: both internationally through contribution to climate change and locally through effects, for example, on noise and air quality. While the CAA does not act as an environmental regulator for aviation, as the industry's regulator, it views its role as being to encourage the industry to act on these challenges, but also has an important role to play in specific areas. The CAA's roles and duties on the environment are summarised below as they could be relevant to biodiversity and the biodiversity duty in Section 1 of the Nature (Scotland) Act 2004¹:

¹ 1) It is the duty of every public body and office-holder, in exercising any functions, to further the conservation of biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions.

Noise

The CAA has three key roles around aviation noise:

- Deciding whether or not the design of contracted airspace can be changed, in accordance with government, law and noise policy.
- Monitoring noise around UK airports and publishing information about noise levels and impacts. We do this for a range of customers including the UK Government, airport operators, airspace change proposers and local authorities.
- Collaborating on and reviewing research into the effects of noise and how they can be reduced and offering advice to the UK Government on these effects.

The CAA does not:

- Make decisions about the amount of noise that is considered damaging or annoying for people.
- Make decisions about particular plans for airports, such as expansions.

Climate change

The CAA follows government policy and guidance on carbon emissions and air quality in making decisions about airspace change. It has a role in advising the government on the reduction of the industry's carbon emissions, the sharing of best practice, and the development of international initiatives such as emissions trading which is designed to address climate change.

Outside the aviation sector, the CAA also has a role in relation to the planning process around wind power in the UK, as it may impact on aviation.

(2) In complying with the duty imposed by subsection (1) a body or office-holder must have regard to—
(a) any strategy designated under section 2(1), and
(b) the United Nations Environmental Programme Convention on Biological Diversity of 5 June 1992 as amended from time to time (or any United Nations Convention replacing that Convention).