

Safety & Airspace Regulation Group

FASVIG Ltd,
31 Walker Avenue,
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MK12 5TW.



9th February 2018

Dear FASVIG,

CAA Response to FASVIG Proposals at NATMAC AIMWG#7

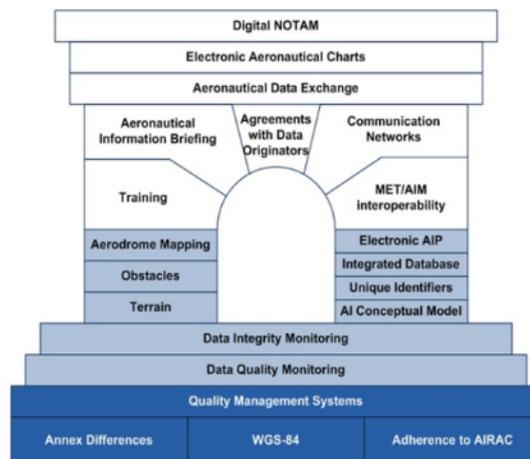
CAA/AIM acknowledges the receipt of Future Airspace Strategy VFR Implementation Group (FASVIG) proposals made at NATMAC Aeronautical Information Management Group #7 (AIMWG) that identify a number of activities to improve Aeronautical Information Management (AIM) efficiency that has significance to airspace safety and infringement reduction. (Attachment A)

CAA also recognises FASVIG simultaneously submitted a paper to CAA, dated 28 Sep 2017, that identified where FASVIG could assist CAA in these activities if the required funding were made available.

This response from CAA addresses each of your proposals in turn, and in the order presented in attachment A.

A.3.1 NOTAM Compatibility with 'third party' Graphical Displays

CAA is currently implementing the ICAO roadmap for the transition of AIS to AIM. The roadmap has been developed by ICAO to move the traditional paper based Aeronautical Information Service (AIS) into the modern digital Aeronautical Information Management (AIM) era. The ICAO roadmap is structured around a phased implementation as indicated in the diagram below.



In September 2018, the AIS provided by National Air Traffic Services (NATS) will implement new systems as part of the second phase of the ICAO roadmap. These new systems will support the implementation of the 'digital NOTAM' concept that will introduce a standardised format for the delivery of future NOTAM that will replace traditional global Aeronautical Fixed Telecommunications Network (AFTN) NOTAM that all States are currently obligated by ICAO to provide.

As can be seen from the diagram 'digital NOTAM' is the final ICAO objective in the third phase of the roadmap. CAA is now discussing the implementation of digital NOTAM with the NATS as one of the elements for investment during Reference Period -3 (RP3) 2020-2024.

The current format for delivery of AFTN NOTAM is set out in the Operating Procedures for AIS Dynamic Data (OPADD), which is used by all ICAO member States. The OPADD format is rigid to ensure harmonisation of AFTN distributed NOTAM to ensure NOTAM are interpreted correctly across the world. Because of the old telecommunication technologies involved the capacity to change or improve this format is extremely limited.

Whilst third party providers of graphical NOTAM applications may require an improved digital data source for their NOTAM applications today, it is too early at this current time, as the implementation of a supporting AIXM AIS system is the first step. CAA and NATS are working closely to ensure the foundations are in place which will enable the provision of digital NOTAM in the future.

A.3.2 NOTAMs Relevant to Time

It is recognised that the notification of related multiple aeronautical activities in a single NOTAM may mean that third party providers of NOTAM cannot automatically ingest this into their graphical NOTAM applications.

Whilst it is also understood that the dissemination of individual multiple NOTAM for related activities might be beneficial to commercial providers, it would also increase the work load of NOTAM sponsors. Given that the NOTAM in question are generally generated by CAA Airspace Regulation section, the impact on the resource required for notifying individual NOTAM related areas is not sustainable.

The CAA's primary concern is that safety related information of a temporary and urgent nature is available in the most expeditious manner. The impact of individual NOTAM for related events would adversely impact on those notifying these activities in CAA and increase the NOTAM proliferation issue.

A.3.3 NOTAMs Relevant to Route

The limitations of AFTN NOTAM mean that complex polygons describing restricted, prohibited or conflict areas will not be taken into account when determining which NOTAM to include in a NOTAM pre-flight information bulletin.

Instead, and in accord with the OPADD as mentioned above, a circle of influence that covers the area (polygon) described in the NOTAM is created. Any route brief between two points that bisects this circle of influence, or FIR that encompasses the circle of influence, will be included in that NOTAM brief.

This is how all globally AFTN generated NOTAM work. The implementation of digital NOTAM, as mentioned in A.3.1 above, will facilitate the inclusion of NOTAM based on the actual area concerned, rather than on the circle of influence system that encompasses an activity area. Whilst not entirely satisfactory now, the CAA's primary concern is that all NOTAM information that may be relevant to a flight is provided, the 'circle of influence' method ensures this. Improvements to how NOTAM may be filtered and delivered based on exact planned flight paths will come to fruition once digital NOTAM is implemented.

A.3.4 Temporary Reserved Airspace Depiction for VFR Airspace User

CAA agrees with FASVIG that Temporary Reserved Areas (TRA) should be charted in an Aeronautical Information Circulars (AIC) with the same topographical background information as used for CAA VFR charts. This ensures that chart users can visualise the extent of a TRA in relation to the chart they use for everyday navigation. This will be tabled at the next AIMWG meeting for discussion by the group, and a Policy agreed for future TRA charts included in AIC.

FASVIG last statement implies that some Temporary Reserved Areas are rarely used. The activity times of TRA are published in the AIP and included in the legend of CAA charts. If FASVIG has evidence that TRA are not active during these published hours, then the airspace regulation team at CAA should be notified and the usage of TRA investigated by CAA accordingly. CAA does not agree

that the proposed FASVIG solution for underused TRA i.e.to NOTAM them only when used. ICAO obligates all states to publish a detailed description of all types of regulated airspace in the AIP. They are also depicted on the chart as they could affect flights. Not publicising the existence of TRA on CAA charts would raise the risk of safety related incidents by the possible invisibility of active TRA to airspace users.

Summary

CAA is grateful to FASVIG for bringing attention to the issue raised in A.3.4 regarding the use of CAA navigational charts as the background for TRA charted in AIC. CAA looks forward to working with FASVIG via the AIMWG in resolving this issue.

Attachment A



FASVIG AIM
Proposals 2.0 Final.pdf