

CAA Environmental and Sustainability Panel minutes

10:30 – 16:00 28 March 2023

Attendees

Ruth Mallors-Ray (RMR)	Panel Chair
Charlotte Clarke (CC)	
Martin Hawley (MH)	
David Lee (DL)	
Alistair Lewis (AL)	
Anil Namdeo (AN)	
Mark Westwood (MW)	
Abigail Grenfell (AG)	CAA
Bronwyn Fraser (BF)	CAA, Panel Secretariat
Nic Stevenson	CAA (Items 1-4)
Polina Webb (PW)	CAA (Item 5)
Liji Mohan (LM)	CAA (Item 5)
Barbara Perata-Smith (BPS)	CAA (Item 6)
Nathan Lambrinos (NL)	CAA (Item 6)

Apologies

Chikage Miyoshi (CM)

1. Welcome

RMR welcomed the Panel to its seventh meeting. She noted she had held 1:1 meetings with all Panel members to seek feedback and reflection on the Panel's first six months of operation, and this had been extremely helpful for informing the future operation of the Panel and providing feedback to the CAA.

2. Update on CAA Environmental Sustainability Strategy implementation

The Panel discussed the CAA's update on the implementation of its Environmental Sustainability Strategy (the strategy). MH noted his thoughts on the importance of having a strategy that is underpinned with strong objectives.

The Panel discussed the most effective way it could provide input to CAA projects, including around the Airspace Modernisation Strategy.

DL noted that while the Panel was adding value to the CAA, its finite nature needed to be better considered and communicated.

Action: MH to draft shortlist of points around changing context for Airspace Modernisation Strategy since the ICAO deliverables were set that drive it.

Action: RMR, BF and AG to consider utilisation of Panel against future budget.

3. Panel think pieces – update and next steps

The Panel provided updates on the development of its strategic think pieces, as set out in its [interim work programme](#).

The Panel also discussed how to finalise the papers in a way that would add most value to the CAA audience.

RMR noted that these think pieces were a learning test for the Panel, and that once completed it was important to seek feedback on whether and how they have added value to the CAA. It was agreed to take the two think pieces on Data Quality and Availability and Local Health Impacts of Aviation forward as the primary test pieces.

Action: All Panel members to review more developed think pieces on Data Quality and Availability and Local Health Impacts of Aviation ahead of May Panel meeting.

4. Development of Panel longer-term work programme

The Panel discussed the development of its longer-term work programme, including the following proposed five areas of activity:

- Supporting the CAA's Environmental Sustainability Strategy
- Advisory support on specific areas of CAA interest
- Collaborating with the CAA Consumer Panel
- Supporting CAA knowledge, understanding and awareness of environmental sustainability
- Strategic Panel input

The Panel generally supported these five activities for inclusion in their longer-term work programme. MW noted that the Panel's feedback (discussed under item 1) had reflected the Panel's ambition to influence at Board level and asked whether the proposed activities were the correct ones to do this. MH noted that the longer-term work programme could include a role for greater challenge by the Panel; for example, giving the CAA both advice and challenge on work being undertaken when the expertise already exists elsewhere. MH noted this could make the Panel's role more like a mentor than just advisory. AL noted that having small teams working on technical problems in isolation from other teams and wider scientific considerations was not a problem unique to the CAA, and that the Panel could have a significant role in accelerating CAA progress by showing where specific knowledge and evidence was that could support it to get the best possible outcome. CC noted that the longer-term work programme needed to include recognition that trade-offs of environmental impacts, such as carbon and noise, also had implications for human health.

Alongside the Panel's role in advising and supporting the CAA, the Panel reemphasised the importance of the CAA having clear environmental priorities so as to be able to focus the organisation's work, and also to be able to assess how the Panel's work has fitted into and supported these priorities. The Panel noted that the [UN's sustainable development goals](#) were valuable in providing a framework for how a business can engage with environmental regulation, and that could also assist in positioning the strategy.

RMR noted that the finalised longer-term work programme would be ready for the Panel's May meeting and would be finalised shortly afterwards after the June update to the Board.

Action: RMR to develop first draft of Panel longer-term work programme against the discussed themes ahead of May Panel meeting.

Action: Panel members to share research or papers that are felt of importance on an ongoing basis supporting development of an environmental insight knowledge bank.

Action: BF to consider a file structure to capture information shared by the Panel, as well as how this material can be made available to the wider CAA teams.

5. Environmental impacts and trade-offs

PW sought the Panel's inputs on potential trade-offs between different environmental impacts.

The Panel raised points around:

- The importance of a holistic approach that incorporates the impacts of aviation on human health into trade-off assessments, alongside consideration of other environmental impacts like noise and carbon;
- Using metrics that can be used to effectively describe and compare different environmental impacts. For example, the Panel highlighted the importance of using metrics that set out the specific impact of an environmental impact over specified time scenarios, rather than using long-term averages. The Panel discussed the possible value of a digital twin that would allow modelling of a variety of impacts at once, rather than in isolation;
- The importance of finding holistic solutions to what may appear to be quite specific environmental sustainability problems, to ensure that a solution to a specific problem does not unintentionally lead to additional, or even, more complex challenges to be addressed. This may involve the CAA undertaking deeper initial consideration of the problem or request under consideration before determining how a project will be carried out;
- Ensuring that environmental sustainability issues properly take into account public engagement, including around how communities view trade-offs;
- The potential role of the CAA in challenging and guiding the development of holistic consideration of environmental sustainability issues;

The Panel noted it is keen to engage further on this issue of trade-offs between environmental impacts.

Action: BF and AG to consider how work that the CAA is either developing or being tasked with comes to the ES Panel at an early stage so that the Panel can support framing the work from the outset.

6. CAA prioritisation principle

BPS and NL continued the discussion with the Panel from the January 2023 meeting on the prioritisation principle in the CAA's strategy. The Panel discussed:

- The value of both quantitative and qualitative assessments, and comparing the outcomes of these in the application of the prioritisation principle;
- The value of an economic model as part of the consideration of prioritising certain environmental impacts over others;
- Consideration of where the CAA can likely have the most impact and affect the greatest change in environmental sustainability, and how this could affect the priorities, while also being cognisant of the boundaries of the CAA's accountability;
- The importance of ensuring that decisions about environmental sustainability are underpinned and informed by scientifically validated information;
- The challenges in using a broad principle to navigate bespoke situations that the CAA may face.

The Panel suggested that the CAA provide examples of scenarios where the prioritisation principle could be used to be able to test it further.

7. Panel teach in – David Lee

DL provided the Panel with a teach in on climate science, including the current scientific understanding and uncertainties around contrail formation and impact on climate. The Panel discussed the importance of allowing time for results of scientific research to inform policy changes.

8. Summary of upcoming meetings

RMR noted that the CAA's joint interim CEOs would be attending the Panel meeting in May.

9. AoB

Nil.

Actions log		
1	MH to draft shortlist of points around changing context for Airspace Modernisation Strategy since the ICAO deliverables were set that drive it.	MH
2	RMR, BF and AG to consider utilisation of Panel against future budget.	RMR, BF, AG
3	All Panel members to review more developed think pieces on Data Quality and Availability and Local Health Impacts of Aviation ahead of May Panel meeting.	Panel
4	RMR to develop first draft of Panel longer-term work programme against the discussed themes ahead of May Panel meeting.	RMR
5	Panel members to share research or papers that are felt of importance on an ongoing basis supporting development of an environmental insight knowledge bank.	Panel
6	BF to consider a file structure to capture information shared by the Panel, as well as how this material can be made available to the wider CAA teams.	BF
7	BF and AG to consider how work that the CAA is either developing or being tasked with comes to the ES Panel at an early stage so that the Panel can support framing the work from the outset.	BF, AG