

Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Civil Aviation Authority and the Aviation Community Advisory Group

Date:	Monday 10 March 2025
Venue:	Asteron Centre, Wellington
Attending:	ACAG: Chris Jackson, Dylan Robinson, Qwilton Biel, Steve Kelly, Mark Blanchard, Simon Wallace, Billie Moore, Bob Henderson, Peter Merwood, Chris Hoffman. CAA: Keith Manch, John Kay, David Harrison, June Ralphs, Stu Worden, Sophie Kelsall, Jo Nicholas, Lucy Damaceno, Kate Smith, Kirill Kruger MoT: Carolina Durrant, Siobhan Routledge, Erin Wynne

1. Welcome

John Kay opened the ACAG meeting by welcoming attendees.

2. Apologies

Mike Hill (CAA,) Don McCracken (Aircraft Engineering Association of NZ,) Michael Robinson (NZALPA.)

3. Minutes of previous meeting

Apart from a spelling mistake on page 2 “feedback,” the minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as accurate and complete.

4. Overview of the Advanced Aviation Reform Programme

The Government has announced a programme of work to reform the regulatory framework for advanced aviation to enable the Government’s goal that:

“By the end of 2025, New Zealand has a world class regulatory environment that allows rapid iteration and testing of advanced aviation vehicles and technology, while maintaining current levels of safety.”

A key driver is to attract internal and overseas companies to NZ for testing and trialling. The Minister for Space tasked the Advanced Aviation Reform Advisory Group (AARAG), made up of representatives from the advanced aviation sector and various government agencies, to propose actions to address this goal. Those actions were agreed to by Cabinet and are being delivered by the CAA and MoT, with support from other agencies as required.

ACAG received a presentation on the workstreams that the Ministry of Transport and CAA are responsible for delivering, including current approach, timeframes and an opportunity in June of this year for consultation and the sector to provide input.

The presentation slides were shared with ACAG members.

A new rule part for research and development activities

The purpose for the new Part 10X is to enable research and development activity to take place without the need for the amendment of expositions every time an iteration is required. It would not replace existing pathways for R+D activity but provide an experimental space where these operations can take place without

the need for amendments, so long as the Director of Civil Aviation is satisfied that they can be done safely. It's intended to be used in conjunction with new restricted airspace areas.

Shifting the boundary between Part101/102, while maintaining safety

This work seeks to shift the boundaries of Part 101/102 to reduce regulatory burden on the sector. The goal is to develop a transport instrument to attach to the existing Part 101, with a matrix that allows for the exceedance of some existing rules, provided some prescriptive requirements are met. These exceedances would utilise a high trust model whereby no approvals are needed but a declaration with CAA would be required. A transport instrument will likely be used to ensure that this matrix can be updated rapidly and keep pace with the growth of both technology and the sector.

ACAG expressed concerns around current Part 101 holders and a lack of compliance due to CAA's limited oversight and enforcement. CAA confirmed the aim is to only increase the scope of Part 101 to operations that have a low-risk threshold.

Regulatory advice

This workstream involves exploring how the CAA can seek advice from trusted parties and, where appropriate, delegate regulatory decisions. Many agencies and organisations have supported and encouraged the CAA to delegate decision-making. AARAG hope to explore with other NAAs the ability to leverage on their resources to enable CAA to make quicker decisions on licensing and renewals. However, this approach raises issues around liability in the event of wrong decision-making.

Key discussion points on the full programme were:

- How this work will be funded. The CAA confirmed that the work will come from the usual policy and rule development appropriation, and reprioritising other policy and rule work.
- The economic benefits of R&D and return on investment for the economy.
- The new rule 10X is in addition to 102. Having a 102 certificate does not preclude you from applying for a 10X.
- Efforts to reduce regulatory burden on this sector more generally, such as a risk-based approach to renewals.
- Cost recovery and the overall health of the sector.
- The importance of consultation with the sector.
- The need to leverage existing resource and infrastructure.

5. Sharing initial thinking on next First Principles Funding Review

ACAG received an update on next steps for the First Principles Funding Review. CAA is undertaking a first principles review of cost recovery from the sector. The review will forecast cost requirements out to 2030. The role of Ministry is to provide assurance to the Minister that we are seeking the funds required to keep the CAA self-sustainable. Once the terms of reference have been endorsed by the Minister, it can be shared with ACAG.

ACAG received an overview of:

- The Government cost recovery guidance that needs to be applied by the CAA to any cost recovery proposal
- The objectives and proposed scope of the review, including the proposed policy pieces and how we might simplify the model
- The overall process and high-level timeline involved in developing options and going through the Cabinet process.

The group discussed risks around changes to the current network pricing model, the election cycle and potential changes to the AvSec delivery model. The group also discussed consultation and engagement with

the sector. The CAA confirmed that this will not be a consensus driven process, but they will attempt to bring in sector insights where they can, such as safety trade-offs and ability to pay.

The group agreed that ACAG will be engaged on this subject, and members understand the confidentiality requirements attached to this work.

7. General updates – ongoing work

a. Ministerial changes

Officials at the CAA met the Minister for first time on Wednesday 5 March. Minister Meager is the acting Minister for Transport and is responsible for the aviation portfolio as well as maritime. He is a very positive, energised Minister that seems genuinely engaged. Currently, Minister Meager is occupied as the Chair of the Justice Select Committee but will be able to focus attentions to the Transport portfolios towards the beginning of April.

b. Flight Plan Programme

The group received an overview of current Flight Plan updates. Keith (CE, CAA) reiterated the purpose of the change is to align capability with being intelligence-led and risk-based so that the CAA can better make timely decisions. CAA has begun the Expression of Interest process, which involves ongoing recruitment throughout the next 6 months. CAA will be able to provide the new organisational structure diagram and specific contact details for the sector. **Action:** CAA to share new structure diagram at the beginning of April 2025. The group discussed the end of Keith's 3-year tenure with the Authority and ACAG thanked Keith for his service.

c. Act Implementation

CAA and MoT gave an overview of the key implementation workstreams. CAA confirmed that the updated Rules are now online. The Rules are still currently pending. Work has also begun on updating corresponding support documentation such as ACs and operational policies. Training has also commenced on training inspectors and ASOs on charges as well as work to ensure delegations are updated. Under the new Act, inspectors will require a CAA appointment card to show their delegation on arrival. CAA confirmed they're aiming to retain amendment histories of the Rules.

MOT gave a brief overview of the independent review function. The review function is currently in the final stage of development. Regulations and notices were published in the first week of March 2025. The panel of independent reviewers haven't been named yet and MOT are still working towards exact implementation timeframes. ACAG praised CAA and MoT for as seamless Act implementation.

d. ICAO Safety Audit preparation

The ICAO Audit team gave the group an update on progress towards the 2025 Safety Audit. The State audit will run in NZ from 8-20 July this year. The audit has three core phases:

1) Preparation

Teams across the Authority respond to over 800 protocol questions across 8 key audit areas. These questions aim to assess how we implement various standards with evidence.

2) The onsite Audit

Seven auditors from around the world will arrive for 2 weeks to assess the responses and evidence to our questions. Towards end of the 2 weeks, Auditors will conduct industry visits to assess the State's implementation of the global standards. ICAO will confirm the names of aviation sector operators they hope to visit in mid to late March.

3) Post Audit Activities

CAA will receive the first draft report in October 2025 and the final report in January 2026 where CAA is required to address any deficiencies through corrective action plans. In parallel to this, CAA is also working towards updating over 1,200 filed Differences.

As well as the 8 audit areas spanning operational and organisational questions, the Authority has also volunteered to be beta tested as a State on 60 questions regarding NZ's state safety plan (SSP) and how it is implemented. ICAO auditors will take a prescriptive approach that requires compliance with the SARP related to SSPs. ICAO are keen to raise the bar on compliance with larger States to act as a benchmark to countries with lower scores.

The group discussed the potential for New Zealand to receive audit findings where we have alternative ways of achieving the safety outcome.

8. Specific items for discussion

a) Work Together, Stay Apart (WTSA)

The WTSA campaign has now formally ended. Massey University is undertaking an assessment to measure the impacts of its success. CAA will continue to review the data and impacts. Materials are available online for anyone to access. David Harrison thanked the industry for their support, engagement and collaboration.

b) IFR currency/renewal requirements

The group discussed access to an IFR environment for Part 91 and the increase in costs to maintain an IFR rating. ACAG expressed concern that this can often be a disincentive and a burden on IFR pilots. CAA confirmed they understood these concerns and are developing some ideas to tackle the issue including a proposal by the AIA training and development division. ACAG expressed their desire to be involved in the development of such changes.

c) Charting of instrument approach procedures at VORs forming the Minimum Operating Network

The group discussed the move to Performance Based Navigation and the decision to deploy minimum ground-based navigation aids. ACAG expressed a concern that most GA aircraft are unable to access this in the event of an emergency and VOR approaches are essential to getting aircraft on the ground safely. **ACTION:** David Harrison to raise with Mike Hill and Aeropath.

9. Next Meeting

Next meeting to be late June.

ACAG expressed their overall concern with the health of the sector, especially cost increases leading to the vulnerability of the sector.