

Civil Aviation Authority 2021 progress report

During the passage of the Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Act 2021 through Parliament, ministers confirmed that the Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA) annual progress report on the [airspace modernisation strategy](#) would be published, and a copy placed in the libraries of both Houses accompanied by a written ministerial statement (WMS).

The airspace modernisation strategy sets out, through 15 initiatives, ways and means of modernising airspace, initially focussing on the period until the end of 2024. The initiatives include airspace design, operational concepts and new technology.

Six of the 15 initiatives are assessed as on track, and 5 initiatives require further work. The delayed timescales of delivery against the original plans set out in the airspace modernisation strategy have predominantly shifted because of ongoing recovery of the aviation industry from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Four initiatives will need further legislation on performance-based navigation and air traffic management, core elements of the airspace modernisation strategy. The Department for Transport will be taking legislation forward this year to ensure continued progress to the overall airspace modernisation strategy programme.

Key areas of progress have been noted within free route airspace (initiative 2), remobilisation of the future airspace strategy implementation south and north airspace change programmes made possible by government funding (initiatives 4 and 5) and initiatives 9, 10 and 11 on aligning air traffic provision with international standards, review of airspace classification and electronic conspicuity respectively.

There has also been progress with the [Airspace Change Organising Group](#) submitting Iteration 2 of their masterplan – which will set out where airspace changes need to be coordinated and developed – for assessment by the CAA.

Chapter 2 provides an update from the co-sponsors on policy and regulatory process, with a particular emphasis on stakeholder engagement activity undertaken as part of the airspace modernisation strategy refresh and the re-introduction of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy Support Fund. Strategic risks have also been flagged within this chapter, predominantly concerning future delivery model, financing, and resourcing of the modernisation programme.

Chapter 3 provides updates related specifically to activities under the airspace modernisation strategy, undertaken within areas of particular interest from the general aviation and communities stakeholder groups.

I will place a copy of the [Airspace modernisation – 2021 progress report](#) in the libraries of both Houses.