

Australian Aviation Bird and Animal Hazard Working Group

Minutes of Australian Aviation Bird and Animal Hazard Working Group
Meeting

Tuesday 4 July 2006

Brindabella Centre – Canberra International Airport

Meeting opened at 12:00 by Anthony Rohead, Chairperson

In attendance

Anthony Rohead	Civil Aviation Safety Authority - Chairperson
Dianne Coyne	Australian Transport Safety Bureau – Secretary
Peter Pallot	Australian Airports Association
David White	Virgin Blue
David Drynan	Department of the Environment and Heritage
Walter Boles	Australian Museum
Janette Norman	Museum Victoria
Alex Ananian-Cooper	Canberra International Airport
Eric B Root	Boeing Field SVC – Sydney
Glen Lang	Airservices Australia Safety Management
James Lucas	Qantas Engineering

Apologies

Pierre Blais	Directorate of Defence Aviation and Air Force Safety
Darren Olsson	Directorate of Defence Aviation and Air Force Safety
Bob Wickbold	Civil Aviation Safety Authority
Terry Wesley-Smith	Regional Aviation Association of Australia
Mark Farrar	Australasian Aviation Ground Safety Council/Sydney Airport
Michael Doherty	Qantas Airways
Peter McCormack	Virgin Blue
Rebecca Johnson	Australian Museum

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting had been accepted by the members via email.

Anthony refreshed the action items arising from the previous meeting.

2. Membership

Anthony thanked Glen, Walter and Janette for coming along to the meeting. Glen will be replacing Alf Duczek as the Airservices Australia representative on the working group. Anthony asked Glen to pass on the thanks of the group to Alf for his contribution.

Action item 1: Anthony to write to Alf to thank him for his contribution to the Working Group.

Janette advised that she and Rebecca Johnson (Australian Museum) would alternate to attend meetings.

Dianne advised that June Mann from MacAir Airlines had requested to participate in the working group. The members of the working group agreed that MacAir be accepted as a member of the group.

Action item 2: Dianne to write to June Mann to advise that the working group voted to accept MacAir as a new member and provide June with the Statement of Purpose and Charter and confidentiality agreements.

David White suggested that with MacAir's inclusion in the working group, an invitation could also be extended to National Jet to become a member.

Action item 3: David to talk to National Jet about joining the working group.

Eric reported that he had spoken to representatives from General Electric and Rolls Royce and that they had agreed in principle to come along to meetings.

Peter spoke about the need to get the Local Government Association (LGA) involved in the Working Group, especially in light of the significant impact land use planning has in the vicinity of airports. The need to pursue this further was agreed as was the action for Anthony to write to the LGA to seek their involvement.

Action item 4: Anthony to write to the LGA seeking their involvement.

3. Correspondence

Anthony distributed copies of the following correspondence:

- letter to the ATSB advising that the working group was happy to delete 'engine parameters' from the Bureau's data collection suite; and
- letter to Qantas requesting sponsorship to assist an expert ornithologist to attend working group meetings.

4. Communication Strategy

Anthony presented the revised 'Communication Strategy' with some minor changes to reflect suggestions made by CASA legal regarding wording used in the 'Statement of Purpose and Charter'.

It was agreed to accept the revised 'Communication Strategy'.

Peter suggested that to better target the working group's audience, it would be beneficial to include a condensed version of the meeting minutes in the 'Airports' magazine to keep important stakeholders informed about the operations and outputs of the working group.

Action item 5: Peter to organise for bird and animal hazard information to go into the Airports magazine.

Glen stated that information included in targeted magazines such as 'Airports' could also be included in other publications, for example, Airservices publications to keep ATC informed of issues important to aerodrome operations that could impact on ATC operations.

Action item 6: Glen to include bird and animal hazard information in Airservices publications.

5. Statement of Purpose and Charter

Anthony advised that he had amended the 'Statement of Purpose and Charter' in light of advice received from CASA Office of Legal Counsel to remove specific references to individuals to avoid personal liability issues. CASA Office of Legal Counsel reviewed the amended document and Anthony said he would assess the statement again.

Anthony also informed the group that the 'Statement of Purpose and Charter' did not allow for another member to act as Chairperson in his absence. To ensure that meetings could go ahead constitutionally in Anthony's absence it was agreed that a deputy chairperson should be elected.

After further discussion, it was agreed to amend the 'Statement of Purpose and Charter' to allow for the election of a chairperson, deputy chairperson and secretary on a biennial basis.

Action item 7: Anthony to amend the 'Statement of Purpose and Charter' to include a provision to elect a chairperson, deputy chairperson and secretary on a biennial basis and distribute to members for comment.

6. ATSB Bird and Animal Hazard Report Mar-Jun 2006

Dianne presented preliminary data on bird and animal occurrences reported to the ATSB from 01 March to 20 June 2006. The data showed that there were 410 bird strikes and 12 animal strikes in this period with the majority of occurrences reported by high capacity air transport operations. Damage occurred in 33 occurrences with aircraft wings and engines damaged most often. A list of bird/animal strikes by aerodrome location was also included.

Dianne explained that bird strikes are generally recorded in the database from the notifications received of strikes to civil aircraft. The matter of data quality was discussed along with the issues that impact on recording data.

Anthony summarised the three major issues surrounding the bird/animal strike data held by ATSB as:

- ◆ the need to match separate notifications to individual occurrences;
- ◆ the need to include defence strike occurrences; and
- ◆ encouraging the top 25 aerodromes involved in strike occurrences to be active in checking data held by ATSB relating to their aerodromes.

7. Update on the Annual ATSB Bird and Animal Hazard Report

Dianne advised the group that the proposed annual report would be produced later in the 2006/07 financial year.

8. Defence Bird/Wildlife reports

Agenda item held over until next meeting.

9. Forensic Identification of Aviation Bird Strikes in Australia – Australian Museum and Museum Victoria Joint Project

Janette Norman from Museum Victoria explained the forensic identification of bird strikes project and the associated findings. The project involved assessment and suitability of DNA testing techniques to identify the species of bird/bat involved in strikes. The project included testing remains exposed to damaging conditions to assess if identification was still possible. The project also included the development of a DNA database of the high risk bird species and development of a field collection kit for aerodrome ground staff to collect blood and tissue samples for identification during the project.

Janette explained that to have a diagnostic service, a fully developed DNA database would be needed. It was agreed that the expansion of the bird DNA database would be valuable and would assist the industry manage the wildlife strike issue by enhancing the process of identification of the species involved in strikes.

Ways of expanding the DNA database were discussed and the possibility of applying to the Australian Research Council for linkage funding was raised.

David White proposed that a meeting be held to scope a research project to expand the DNA database and develop a proposal that could be submitted to the ARC. Walter Boles explained it would also be valuable to include the development of feather morphology in the proposal which would help determine the age of birds involved in strikes.

Action item 8: David to convene a meeting for those interested to scope a proposal for ARC linkage funding for enable further research to support development of the bird DNA database and feather morphology.

10. Update on Bird Hazard Management at Virgin Blue

David explained to the group Virgin Blue's process for managing bird hazards. Airports are prioritised using a bird hazard risk assessment developed from historical data and interaction with airports. David said in order to gauge the impact of bird strikes; there was value in recording whether aircraft damage or delay had occurred due to a strike. Members of the working group were interested in the methodology used to rank and prioritise airports, based on bird strike risk, which was described by David. David agreed to distribute his methodology to working group members and asked for feedback.

Action item 9: David to distribute bird strike risk/airport prioritisation methodology to working group members

Action item 10: All members to review methodology and provide feedback or suggestions to David.

11. Update on the National Framework for Bird and Animal Hazard Management at Airports

Peter Pallot advised that the Framework had been in the public domain since last November but he had received only limited feedback on how the Framework had been implemented but it didn't appear to have had a significant uptake across the board. However, Peter explained that the Framework was tailored for smaller aerodromes that did not have their own template. David said he was aware of some aerodromes that had taken up the Framework to manage wildlife hazards at aerodromes.

12. Update of the Development of an Australian Bird/Animal Strike Risk Model

Peter explained that further progress had not been made on the risk model at this stage and asked the group for ideas on ways to progress the model. Peter suggested that research funding may be necessary to ensure further development of the model can take place. Peter saw the risk model as being relevant to regional/smaller airlines that fly into smaller aerodromes to provide assistance in assessing bird/animal risks.

13. Input to working group by airport operators, aircraft operators and general public

Agenda item held over to next meeting.

14. Update of the Information Handbook for Industry

Peter informed the working group that he had been talking to Phil Shaw about copyright issues relating to pictures that could be included in the Information Handbook.

15. Education and Information Sharing Forum

The format of the Education and Information Sharing Forum was again discussed and it was agreed that the Forum should go ahead in September.

Action item 11: Anthony to organise "Education and Information Sharing Forum" for late September in Sydney.

16. Research Projects Funding

Peter distributed a draft discussion paper on funding aviation safety wildlife research. Peter advised against the working group becoming involved in administering research funds and saw the group's role as facilitating research instead by raising industry concerns and connecting appropriate parties to promote research.

Action item 12: All members to review and discuss at the next meeting.

17. Logo

Held over to next meeting.

18. General Business

Health issues associated with managing wildlife strikes was discussed. Michael Doherty had distributed the IATA guidelines on handling strike remains to the working group members. Anthony asked Eric to send him the Boeing guidelines for handling strike remains so he can distribute these to the members of the working group.

Action item 13: Eric to send Anthony Boeing guidelines on handling wildlife strike remains.

Action item 14: Anthony to distribute the Boeing guidelines to all members.

The suitability of the working group's name was discussed and it was agreed that the name could be refined before finalisation of a logo went ahead. Anthony said suggestions for a new name could be forwarded to him.

Action item 15: All Members to send suggestions for a new name for the working group to Anthony.

19. Next Meeting

It was (subsequently) agreed the next meeting would be held on Tuesday the 21st of November 2006.

The meeting closed at 4.30 pm.