

Drone Leadership Group Minutes

Chairperson	Bronwyn Turley
Date/Time	Tuesday, 12 October 2021 02:00pm-03:30pm
Location	Ministry of Transport 3 Queens Wharf, Wellington, 6011 (opposite TSB Arena) and via Skype
Invited participants	Iain Cossar (MBIE) John Kay (CAA) David Harrison (CAA) Katie Bhreatnach (Airways) Mark Blanchard (Airways) Bronwyn Turley (MoT) Note, other staff from the respective member agencies will also be in attendance

1. Apologies and welcome to new members

Bronwyn Turley introduced herself as the new chairperson, replacing Karl Simpson who left the Ministry of Transport (the Ministry). Iain Cossar was introduced as the acting replacement for Peter Crabtree who has left the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). Steve Smyth was introduced as the Director of the Civil Aviation Authority's (CAA) newly established Emerging Technologies Programme (ETP).

All other attendees briefly introduced themselves to the wider group. There were no apologies.

2. Setting the scene – introduction to all work

The Ministry provided an update to set out the work on drones and emerging aviation technologies that has been done in the past to provide context to new members of the group. It also introduced a Venn-diagram to visualise all ongoing workstreams and to outline the overlaps and interrelations between cross-agency work.

Other agencies acknowledged that the visual overview of ongoing work is useful and that it could potentially be expanded and used for different purposes as well.

3.



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Withheld under Section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Official Information Act 1982

4. Update on Enabling Drone Integration measures

The Ministry provided a brief update on the work on Enabling Drone Integration measures. The draft Cabinet paper and the Regulatory Impact Statement were under consideration of other agencies with the deadline for the departmental consultation being set for 18 October 2021.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Withheld under Section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Official Information Act 1982.

5. Adjacent technologies

MBIE proposed the inclusion of adjacent technology partners in the Airspace Integration Trials Programme (AITP). It has noticed an increasing requirement to collaborate with adjacent technology providers to solve difficult challenges and therefore sought in principle support to further develop options for implementation.

CAA stated that it was very supportive of the proposed inclusion. Its only concern was that all workstreams need to be kept synchronised to ensure that none of the work is getting ahead of other work. It suggested that we could learn from other jurisdictions, for example when it comes to the scope and security concerns.

Airways fully agreed with CAA's comments.

The Ministry noted that in principle it is supportive of the concept. However, it stresses that the inclusion of adjacent technology partners should not create more demand than we can meet. It also acknowledged that the AITP has made much progress, but that it will be useful to provide more information on the status of its partnerships. Information on the milestones that partners are working towards is important regardless of whether the AITP will expand to adjacent technology providers.

[REDACTED]

Withheld under Section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Official Information Act 1982

MBIE, CAA and Airways have a meeting scheduled with Wisk on 28 October to discuss Wisk's operations and plans. MBIE will update the Ministry following that meeting.

6. Engagement with sector representatives

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Withheld under Section 9(2)(g)(i) of the Official Information Act 1982

The CAA strongly endorsed the idea of establishing a new industry group. It noted that the policy development process needs to be better informed, which could be done by bringing industry, academia, and government together every other month to see if the current system is working. CAA proposed the idea of an advisory group with engagement function as an option. Such a group would not stop the current group from engaging but will probably improve the divergence of messages and increase transparency. Since many traditional aviation players will embrace future emerging technology in the near term, they should be included.

Airways supported wider sector engagement to ensure all viewpoints are included.

MBIE is supportive of selecting a broader group for engagement however it questions how one voice for the sector should be selected. It questioned whether it would be possible for industry to select its own representatives and raised the idea of a forum to select members. For example, in the way that the AITP selects its participants.

Action: The Ministry and CAA will work together to draft a proposal on a new format for sector engagement to be circulated before the next meeting.

7. Roundtable updates

The CAA mentioned that it has started groundwork to establish the ETP. It also became part of an international working group discussing BVLOS operations and alternative propulsion technology. This group might provide interesting insights from other jurisdictions.

MBIE noted that the process of developing the Aerospace Strategy has been delayed. Due to concerns with the ongoing Space Agency Review it is now working towards a February 2022 publication date. Any suggestions for targeted engagement and consultation are appreciated.

Airways is consulting on its pricing framework leading up to consultation on resetting prices for the industry effective from 1 July 2022.

The Ministry mentioned that it started to scope a review of the Air Navigation Settings. It will reach out to all attending agencies to identify what needs to be in scope. It also noted that the submissions for the Civil Aviation Bill are open until 11 November 2021. The aim is to have the Bill enacted by Mid-2022 and to have the regulation in place in July 2023.

8. Any other Business

No other points were raised.