

Australian Aviation Bird and Animal Hazard Working Group

Minutes of Australian Aviation Bird and Animal Hazard Working Group
Meeting

Friday 18 November 2005

Portlight Bar – Wrest Point Convention Centre - Hobart

Meeting opened at 8:45 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
Alf Duczek	Airservices Australia
Ron Watson	DFS, Department of Defence
Bob Wickbold	Civil Aviation Safety Authority
Rebecca Johnson	Australian Museum
Ken Keech	Australian Airports Association

Apologies

Brian Candler	Regional Aviation Association of Australia
David Drynan	Department of the Environment and Heritage
Michael Doherty	Qantas Airways
David Bird	Qantas Airways
Kris Adhar	Qantas Airways
Alex Ananian-Cooper	Canberra International Airport
Mark Farrar	Australasian Aviation Ground Safety Council/Sydney Airport
Eric B Root	Boeing

1. Membership

Anthony Rohead advised that the Qantas subsidiary contacts have been added to the working group membership list. Anthony also hoped that Rebecca Johnson will be able to continue to attend the working group meetings.

2. Correspondence

Anthony distributed copies of letters he had sent, on behalf of the working group, to:

- Aerodrome operators (to advise of the new birdstrike reporting form and encourage its use);
- the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) (requesting that the Bureau produce an annual birdstrike report); and
- the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA), Regulatory Services (to request that the 'National Framework for Bird and Animal Hazard Management Plan' be incorporated into the CASA safety management system (SMS) document builder).

Anthony said he thought there was a good chance that the Framework would be incorporated into the CASA SMS document builder. Peter Pallot explained that having the Framework in the document builder would allow the document to be exported into Word allowing modifications to be easily made. Peter said he would be happy to work with Brian Castle and Bob Wickbold (CASA) to achieve this.

Action item 1: Bob Wickbold to liaise with Brian Castle regarding the incorporation of the National Framework into the SMS document builder.

3. Communications Strategy

At the last meeting of the working group it was agreed that the Communications Strategy would be a standing agenda item. Anthony read the strategy and it was agreed that much of the strategy had already been achieved.

It was agreed to hold over the 'Statement of Purpose and Charter' agenda item until Ken Keech CEO AAA was able to join the meeting to take part in discussions.

4. Annual ATSB Bird and Animal Hazard Report

Anthony advised the group that he would be the point of contact for the working group in regard to the ATSB report and disseminate any correspondence/information regarding the report to the members of the working group. Anthony said when he received a response from the ATSB to relation to the request to produce an annual report he would forward this response to the working group members.

Action item 2: Anthony to forward the ATSB's response to the request to produce an annual report to the working group members.

5. National Framework for Bird and Animal Management at Airports

Peter Pallot advised that he launched the 'Bird and Animal Hazard Management Plan (National Template)' on Wednesday 16 November at the Australian Airports Association conference. Peter presented the plan to conference attendees and also explained the working group's objectives and what has been achieved so far including the development of birdstrike definitions, the new bird and animal strike reporting form and the management plan.

Peter said the management plan was well received by those in attendance. While Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane airports already have sophisticated programs in

this area, the smaller airports will benefit greatly from the plan. Peter said that all certified airports must have a wildlife management plan to **identify, assess** and **control** the wildlife and the management plan aims to assist airports in this process.

Peter explained to the working group that the risk model incorporated in the management plan is based on John Allen's risk model.

The members of the working group congratulated Peter and his staff on development of the plan. Peter distributed hardcopies of the plan along with CDs of the plan and asked for any further feedback.

Peter also informed the working group of other presenters at the AAA conference including Chris Pannell (New Zealand). Chris Pannell gave a presentation on endophytes, a fungus used to keep bugs out of crops. Peter advised that Chris had offered to give a presentation to the working group on the application of endophytes to bird management at airports. Chris Pannell also presented on a study concerning congregation habits of birds at aerodromes and how vortices wash bugs onto the flight strip influencing bird behaviour.

Peter advised that David Patten from Adelaide University also presented at the AAA conference on a 30-year study involving Adelaide airport and the effect of policy changes on the airport.

Action item 3: Peter Pallot to provide the papers presented by Chris Pannell and David Patten to Dianne to distribute to the working group members with the meeting minutes.

6. Statement of Purpose and Charter

At 10:20 Ken Keech, CEO AAA joined the meeting as there had been some concern about the possible exposure of the birdstrike working group to liabilities arising from the group performing its function.

Ken explained liability issues that had affected the National Airport Emergency Planning Committee (NAEPC) in the course of its function. This topic was discussed because of similarities between the NAEPC and the birdstrike working group. Ken informed the group that it is important to be assured that individual members of the working group (especially those who are not Government employees with Commonwealth protections) and the group itself are not exposed as a result providing a service or advice to individuals or the community.

Peter Pallot then raised the issue of the working group's 'Statement of Purpose and Charter' and the need to ensure there is no potential for liability especially where individuals may be exposed. The working group's charter was then discussed in the context of any potential liability that may exist due to working group's aims and functions.

Anthony Rohead advised that CASA legal had stated there was no liability or exposure for the group.

Alf Duczek also said that Airservices' participation in the working group had been approved through appropriate legal channels.

It was agreed that the AAA would provide the working group's 'Statement of Purpose and Charter' to the adviser who worked on the NAEPC charter to clarify the position of the working group in regard to any potential exposure for members and the group.

Action item 4: Peter Pallot/Ken Keech to liaise with Anthony to have the working group's 'Statement of Purpose and Charter' reviewed by a legal adviser.

Action item 5: Anthony Rohead to obtain written statement of verbal advice received in relation to any potential exposure that may exist for the working group.

The group thanked Ken Keech for his time and he left the meeting at 10:45.

The possibility of adding a disclaimer to the front of the 'Bird and Animal Hazard Management Plan' was discussed in light of the prior discussion. The plan was primarily prepared by the AAA but has been approved by the working group.

7. Update on trial of new Birdstrike Reporting Form and Process

Dianne Coyne provided an update on the trial of the new Bird and Animal Strike reporting form. Dianne said that during the period 01 July to 09 November 2005, a total of 715 bird/animal notifications were reported to the ATSB which related to 433 strikes. During this period a total of 66 notifications using the new form were received. Forty of the notifications were imported into the ATSB database of which 11 were received from pilots, 19 from ground staff and 10 from other sources.

Dianne reported that the ATSB database manager had noted that the aircraft operation variables on the bird strike reporting form cannot generally be supplied by ground staff, who reported almost half of the bird strikes received using the new form. This resulted in missing aircraft data where there was no report received from a pilot or operator of the aircraft which struck the bird. Operators were generally still reporting bird and animal strikes using their own forms. Little data had been received for the cost of birdstrikes and engine parameter variables.

Anthony asked if the source of reports received from sources other than pilots and ground staff be identified and presented at the next meeting.

Action item 6: Dianne Coyne to provide a breakdown of the birdstrike reports received from 'Other' sources to identify who is reporting strikes.

Ron Watson explained some of the Defence procedures for reporting birdstrikes. The pilot is generally advised of a strike and the pilot is then expected to report the strike. However, if Defence cannot identify the aircraft which struck a bird, then Defence will report the strike. These strikes are not automatically reported to the ATSB. The issue of what strikes get reported by Defence aircraft at civil aerodromes or by civil aircraft at Defence aerodromes still needs further clarification.

8. Development of an Australian Bird/Animal Strike Risk Model

Peter Pallot explained that smaller airports generally don't have historical data or resources necessary to develop a risk model for their aerodrome. The John Allen risk model included in the Management Plan requires historical data for bird strikes and bird counts. With this in mind Peter said he'd spoken to a consultant about the possibility of developing a general risk model based on geographical areas and the consultant believed it was possible to develop a bio-geological map (using geographical data and reported birdstrike data) of Australia to assist smaller airport operators assess risk.

9. Information Handbook for Industry

Peter Pallot suggested that a 'Bird Manual' could be produced including a general risk model and a severity risk rating associated with particular birds. Alf Duczek expressed that data quality could be an issue.

10. Education and Information Sharing Forum

Anthony Rohead suggested that an Information Sharing Forum would be beneficial for aerodrome staff involved in research in the area of bird and animal management along with consultants. It was discussed whether an annual seminar would be appropriate or if a meeting of this nature could be incorporated into an existing forum. The proposed participants in such a forum were also discussed and Government agencies, Department of Defence, and industry participants were seen as ways to defray forum costs.

Anthony said it would take time to develop the idea.

Action item 7: *Anthony Rohead to develop the idea of an "Industry Information Forum"*

11. Research Project Funding

Peter Pallot raised the issue of how research in the area of bird and animal hazards could be funded and noted that AAA has funded some research in the past. ATSB has offered grants for research in into aviation safety in general in the past. DOTARS was suggested as a source of future research funding along with CASA and Anthony said we would talk to a DOTARS representative (Kym Foster) and CASA regarding this issue.

Action item 8: Anthony to talk to Kym Foster and CASA regarding possibilities to fund research and send email to advise of the outcome.

Rebecca Johnson suggested that the Australian Research Council could also be a source of funding especially the Linkages Program which involves collaborative research between industry and universities with a contribution from industry to fund the research. This form of research funding would require development of possible projects and a contribution from industry.

The group discussed the role of the AABAHWG in research relating to bird and animal hazards to aviation and whether it was appropriate to just promote the need for research or actively facilitate research projects.

Action item 9: Peter Pallot to put his thoughts regarding research funding in writing for the group members to consider.

12. Press Articles

Anthony made available press articles on bird hazards to the group for information.

13. General Business

It was agreed to hold over discussion on birdstrike definitions as Qantas representatives were unavailable.

Anthony also suggested that the AABAHWG meetings be held three times a year and this was agreed to.

14. Next Meeting

It was agreed the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 21 March 2006 at Canberra Airport at 12:00.

The meeting closed at 12:30 pm.