

# Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport



***Airport Solutions Ltd***  
*International Aviation Consultancy* 

# Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

## Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

### Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Contents</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Glossary of Terms</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>1.0 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.0 Purpose of Aerodrome License</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3.0 Independent Inquiry</b>	<b>2</b>
3.3 Terms of Reference	<b>3</b>
<b>4.0 Methodology</b>	<b>4</b>
4.2 Item 1 – Aerodrome Physical Characteristics	<b>4</b>
4.3 Item 2 – Interviews	<b>4</b>
4.4 Item 3 – Review of Paperwork / Correspondence	<b>5</b>
<b>5.0 Summary of Findings of the Inquiry</b>	<b>5</b>
5.1 Physical Characteristics	<b>5</b>
5.2 Interviews	<b>6</b>
5.3 Paperwork and Documentation	<b>8</b>
5.3.1 Aerodrome Audits	<b>8</b>
5.3.2 Aerodrome Manual	<b>10</b>
5.3.3 Emergency Orders	<b>11</b>
5.3.4 Airport Committee	<b>11</b>
<b>6.0 Recommendations</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>7.0 Conclusions</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix A</b>	<b>16</b>
CAA List of Significant Safety Concerns and Clarification	
<b>Appendix B</b>	<b>22</b>
City of Derry Airport Safety Statement	

# Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

## Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

### Glossary of Terms

<b>Aerodrome</b>	Any area of land or water designed, equipped, set apart or commonly used for affording facilities of the landing and departure of aircraft and includes any area or space, whether on the ground, on the roof of a building or elsewhere, which is designed, equipped or set apart for affording facilities for the landing and departure of aircraft capable descending or climbing vertically, but shall not include any area the use of which for affording facilities for the landing and departure of aircraft that has been abandoned and has not been resumed
<b>Aerodrome Elevation</b>	The elevation of the highest point of the landing area. This is the highest point of that part of the runway used for both landing and take-off.
<b>Aeronautical Ground Light (AGL)</b>	Any light specifically provided as an aid to air navigation other than light displayed on an aircraft including lights specifically provided at an aerodrome as an aid to the movement and control of aircraft and of those vehicles which operate on the movement area.
<b>Aircraft Stand</b>	A designated area of an aerodrome intended to be used for parking an aircraft.
<b>Apron</b>	A defined area on a land aerodrome provided for the stationing of aircraft for the embarkation and disembarkation of passengers, the loading and unloading of cargo and parking.
<b>Cleared and Graded Area (CGA)</b>	The part of the runway strip cleared of all obstacles except for minor specified items and graded, intended to reduce the risk of damage to an aircraft running off the runway.
<b>Delethalisation</b>	Drainage Channels, Catchpits and other essential design items should not constitute hazards to aircraft when located within the CGA. Items should therefore be buried to a depth of not less than 0.45 metres. Above this depth a buried vertical face should be avoided by providing a slope extending from the top of the construction to not less than 0.3 metres below ground level at a slope of 1:10.
<b>Frangibility</b>	The ability of an object to retain its structural integrity and stiffness upto a specified Maximum load but when subject to a load greater than specified or struck by an aircraft will break, distort or yield in such a manner as to present minimum hazard to aircraft.

# Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

## Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

<b>Instrument Runway</b>	A runway intended for the operation of aircraft using non-visual aids provided at least directional guidance in azimuth adequate for a straight in approach
<b>Mandatory Occurrence Report (MOR)</b>	A report filed to the CAA regarding an occurrence in relation to an aircraft which endangers, or if not corrected, would endanger an aircraft, its occupants, or any other person.
<b>Manoeuvring Area</b>	That part of an aerodrome provided for the landing and take-off of aircraft and for the movement of aircraft on the surface, excluding the apron and any part of the aerodrome provided for the maintenance of aircraft.
<b>Movement Area</b>	That part of an aerodrome intended for the surface movement of aircraft including the manoeuvring area, aprons and any part aerodrome provided for the maintenance of aircraft.
<b>Obstacle</b>	All fixed (whether permanent or temporary) and mobile objects, or parts thereof that are located on an area intended for the surface movement of aircraft or that extend above a defined surface intended to protect aircraft inflight.
<b>Precision Approach Runway</b>	An instrument runway intended for the operation of aircraft using precision approach aids.
<b>Runway</b>	A defined rectangular area, on a land aerodrome prepared for the landing and take-off run of aircraft along its length
<b>Runway End Safety Area (RESA)</b>	An area symmetrical about the extended runway centreline and adjacent to the end of the strip primarily intended to reduce the risk of damage to an aeroplane undershooting or overrunning the runway.
<b>Runway Strip</b>	An area of specified dimensions enclosing a runway intended to reduce the risk of damage to an aircraft running off the runway and to protect aircraft flying over it when taking-off or landing.
<b>Taxiway</b>	A defined path on a land aerodrome established for the taxiing of aircraft and intended to provide a link between one part of the aerodrome and another.

# Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

## Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) informed Derry City Council on the 24th May 2007 that they would be provisionally suspending the License (Number P620) which enables Eglinton Aerodrome, referred to hereafter as City of Derry Airport, (CODA) to operate as a Civil Aerodrome in the UK. The suspension would take place with effect from Midnight on the 24th May and therefore prohibit Air Transport Movements from and to the airport.
- 1.2 This action was taken following a formal visit to the Aerodrome which was undertaken by Inspectors from the CAA Aerodrome Standards Department (ASD) on the 16th and 17th May 2007.
- 1.3 The CAA cited the reasons for its action as a number of non-compliances, some of which were considered serious and which, collectively, were deemed to be indicative of a significant failure of the airport's safety management system, and to have a significant detrimental impact on the ability to conduct safe aircraft operations. (The non-compliances observed by the CAA are listed at Appendix A).
- 1.4 Subsequent to this action, City of Derry Airport have undertaken emergency remedial action and their license has now been reinstated by the CAA, albeit with a number of caveats to further rectify the remaining non-compliant issues.
- 1.5 The purpose of this report is to:-
  - a. Provide a summary of the findings of the Independent Inquiry.
  - b. Make recommendations for the Airport Operator to consider.

# **Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the**

## **Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport**

### **2.0 The Purpose of the Aerodrome License**

- 2.1 The Air Navigation Order (ANO) in the UK requires that flights conducted for the public transport of passengers, and for the purpose of flying instruction, take place at a licensed aerodrome, a Government Aerodrome or at an aerodrome managed by the CAA.
- 2.2 In order to enable continued licensing, the CAA's Inspectors regularly visit the aerodrome to ensure that its facilities and operational procedures meet the licensing requirements.
- 2.3 The CAA expect compliance with International and National Standards for aerodromes, however, where insurmountable difficulties exist then the CAA may accept an alternative means of compliance, but any such move would need to be the subject of Safety Assurance Documentation by the Licensee.
- 2.4 Any mitigating measures which may be used in order to support non-compliances at an aerodrome should be the subject of periodic review by the licensee. These items will also be the subject of review by the CAA during its audits of the Aerodrome. Issues such as significant changes in the nature and scale of flying activity, as well as new development work may all significantly influence mitigating measures previously in place and which may therefore need to be changed or revised in order to continue safe operations.
- 2.5 A number of non-compliant issues previously deemed to have been mitigated against at CODA in the past may no longer be acceptable due to the increase in traffic, both frequency and aircraft size.

### **3.0 Independent Inquiry**

- 3.1 In order to fully understand the action of the CAA and its implications for the future and safe operations of CODA, Derry City Council decided to commission an independent inquiry into the circumstances that led up to the provisional suspension of the Operating License. As such, they appointed Mr Peter Hampson of Airport Solutions Ltd to act as an independent consultant to assist.

## Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

### Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

- 3.2 Mr Hampson (referred to hereafter as The Surveyor) has considerable experience of Airport Operations and International / UK Civil Aviation regulations having previously been employed as General Manager Airfield at Manchester Airport and is now employed as a Consultant to Airports and Regulators all over the world.
- 3.3 The terms of reference for the inquiry are shown below:-

#### ***Terms of Reference***

*Following the recent temporary suspension of the operational license for the City of Derry Airport, Derry City Council wishes to appoint a suitably qualified independent aviation safety expert to undertake an immediate inquiry, which will*

1. *Examine the events / circumstances that led to the temporary suspension of the CAA airport license;*
2. *Examine the Council's response to the suspension of the license.*

*The inquiry should specifically focus on the Civil Aviation Authority conditions for the granting of an aerodrome license. These conditions relate to*

- *Competency with regard to experience, equipment, organisation, staffing, maintenance and other arrangements to ensure that the aerodrome and the airspace within which its visual traffic pattern is normally contained are safe for use by aircraft;*
- *The aerodrome is safe for use by aircraft, having regard in particular to the physical characteristics of the aerodrome and its surrounding.*

# Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

## Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

### 4.0 Methodology

4.1 The inquiry was divided into three areas:-

#### 4.2 **Item 1 – Aerodrome Physical Characteristics**

4.2.1 An overview of the physical characteristics of the aerodrome, with specific emphasis on any non-compliances

#### 4.3 **Item 2 – Interviews**

4.3.1 Interviews were undertaken with:-

- Elected Members of Derry City Council
- Officers of Derry City Council
- Airport Management
- Airport Operational Staff
- Management and Inspectors of the Civil Aviation Authority.

4.3.2 In order to understand and assess:-

- Organisational Structure of CODA
- Safety Accountabilities
- Roles and Responsibilities of CODA Management and Staff
- Operational Competences
- The application of a Safety Management System at CODA
- The actions of the Civil Aviation Authority



# **Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the**

## **Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport**

### **4.4 Item 3 – Review of Paperwork / Correspondence**

#### **4.4.1 A review of Airport documentation to include:-**

- Aerodrome Manual
- Emergency Plan
- Previous CAA Audit Reports
- Correspondence between the CAA and CODA
- Minutes of Meetings of The Derry City Council Airport Committee

### **5.0 Summary of Findings of the Inquiry**

#### **5.1 Physical Characteristics**

5.1.1 The Surveyor visited The City of Derry Airport on 5th and 6th June and observed some of the non-compliances at the aerodrome which had also been highlighted by the CAA during their visit of the 16th – 17th May 2007.

5.1.2 It was commendable that many of the issues raised by the CAA had already been addressed or were in the process of rectification.

5.1.3 This was a clear illustration of the proactive approach that Derry City Council have now adopted with respect to ensuring safe operations at CODA following the suspension of the license.

5.1.4 It was noted that some of the items of non-compliance which had been identified by the CAA could and should have been rectified prior to the CAA Inspection (such as the deterioration of the Aerodrome Windsock, paintmarkings, poor condition of Aircraft Movement Areas and tree growth through the “protected” aircraft approach and take-off surfaces).

5.1.5 Other significant items (such as non-compliant Runway End Safety Areas) had been brought to the attention of CODA by the CAA some time ago and were the subject of Public Hearings, Land Acquisition Issues and as a consequence required major works.

## Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

### Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

5.1.6 Whilst frequent Inspections of the Aerodrome were undertaken by Airport Staff and Management, “Gaps” were observed at all levels in the reporting, rectification and training processes. These were identified by the Surveyor and therefore no doubt contributed to the “Systematic Failure of the Safety Management System” quoted in the CAA report.

5.1.7 It is likely that the “Failure of the Safety Management System” had occurred over a period of time and is the result of an accumulation of a number of items in the 3 key areas (Aerodrome Physical Characteristics, Policies and Procedures, Staff Competency and Training) which were reviewed by the Surveyor.

#### **5.2 Interviews**

5.2.1 The Surveyor interviewed a significant number of Staff, Management, Officers of the City Council, Elected Members and Management / staff of the CAA during the course of the Inquiry.

5.2.2 Whilst it was noted that many of the CODA staff were very enthusiastic about working at the aerodrome and passionate about its future development, contribution to employment and the economy of the region, they also believed that their personal competence in the overall number and variety of tasks they undertook was often insufficient due to minimal Training and time allocated to Training.

5.2.3 A number of reasons were given for this, such as high sickness levels, staff turnover and staff fully engaged in day to day operational duties.

5.2.4 The current organisational structure is such that most staff are required to “multi-task” with the Fire Service performing the majority of functions on the aerodrome. (Rescue and Fire Fighting Service, Baggage Handling, Aircraft Marshalling, Aerodrome Inspections, Aircraft Fuelling, Bird Control).

5.2.5 The Airport Manager and Operations Manager are also qualified Air Traffic Controllers and regularly undertake Air Traffic Control (ATC) duties in particular when shortfalls arise in the ATC roster due to sickness / holidays.

5.2.6 Whilst a detailed analysis of the overall duties and functions of the Management Team did not take place, their workload was considered to be very high and commitment commendable.

## **Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the**

### **Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport**

- 5.2.7 In common with many other airports, CODA has seen rapid growth over the past few years, with increasing frequency and size of aircraft. Of particular relevance is a 39% increase in medium size jet traffic which was noted in 2006 over 2005, together with an increase in passenger throughput of 70% for the corresponding time.
- 5.2.8 In such circumstances it is important that appropriate levels of competent staff are allocated to duties commensurate with the size and scale of operation. It is probable that the diversification of staff duties in place at CODA was acceptable when the size and frequency of aircraft movements was less. However, the current structure and areas of responsibility should now be reviewed to ensure all parties are able to maintain not only an efficient operation but also a robust Safety Management System.
- 5.2.9 During interviews with Elected Members, Management and Staff the need for improved communications was highlighted by all parties on several occasions.
- 5.2.10 Communications with The Airport Committee from The Airport Management, in particular on Aerodrome Safety Issues and communication to staff at all levels was regarded as an area which urgently required enhancing.
- 5.2.11 The Airport Management Team collectively believed that support in terms of Finances to provide extra Resources, Infrastructure and Equipment was not always forthcoming from the City Council.
- 5.2.12 Members of the City Council believed that they had always supported the Airport when requests for Finances had been made. No evidence was found to the contrary in the minutes of the City Council meetings.

# Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

## Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

### 5.3 Paperwork and Documentation

#### 5.3.1 *Aerodrome Audits*

- 5.3.1.1 A review of the CAA Aerodrome Audit documentation was undertaken. Audit reports for January 2005 and April 2006 were submitted for review together with subsequent correspondence between CODA and the CAA .
- 5.3.1.2 The issue of a Safety Management System (SMS) was the subject of correspondence between the CAA and CODA.
- 5.3.1.3 In January 2005, SMS was raised as a non-compliant item in the CAA's formal Inspection Report and CODA were given a date of March 2005 to respond formally to the CAA.
- 5.3.1.4 CODA replied later that year to the CAA stating that good progress had been made with respect to implementation of an SMS and that the Aerodrome Manual documenting the SMS had been updated and a copy would be forwarded to CAA forthwith. (Note that this correspondence was not dated).
- 5.3.1.5 At the next CAA Audit undertaken in April 2006, SMS was again raised as a non-compliant issue. It appears that CODA had lost the only copy of the amended Aerodrome Manual due to an IT failure. The only printed version of a Manual available for the CAA to Audit was dated 2003 which the CAA referred to as being "out of date". Whilst the Inspector pointed out in his report that he did not question the ability of The Team, he recorded the absence of a functioning SMS.
- 5.3.1.6 CODA were therefore required to amend the Aerodrome Manual and re-submit with a full SMS. The Aerodrome Manual was therefore updated and submitted to CAA in November 2006. (See notes regarding Aerodrome Manual).

## Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

### Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

- 5.3.1.7 The Fire Service were also assessed fully at each of the audits described above.
- 5.3.1.8 Extraneous duties undertaken by Fire service personnel in addition to their firefighting role were raised by the CAA at each of the audits. As a consequence, CODA undertook a review in March 2007, the focus of which was to ensure that Firefighters involved in non-fire related activities on the apron were able to meet the required response times. Whilst the report indicated that the fire response times could be met, the CAA and the Surveyor have concerns whether other duties were being given the proper attention and time in order to meet the commitments of an SMS.
- 5.3.1.9 Staffing levels were also the subject of comment by the CAA. The CAA did acknowledge that CODA had experienced significant problems with respect to long term sickness within the Fire Service which had resulted in considerable amounts of overtime being generated in order to maintain the mandatory staffing levels.
- 5.3.1.10 Whilst items raised by the CAA during their annual audits were dealt with by CODA, it appears that CODA have in the past adopted a reactive approach to the audits, only addressing items after they have been raised by the CAA. Implementation of an SMS will address this issue, enabling CODA to adopt a more proactive style of safety management. (See 7.4)
- 5.3.1.11 Moreover, there was significant correspondence from the CAA requesting updates from CODA with respect to items raised at the audits as the completion dates agreed were often not achieved. Whilst the CAA acknowledged that on some occasions, such as staffing issues for the Fire Service, CODA had experienced difficulties in achieving results, they did comment that many items remained ongoing for significant periods of time.
- 5.3.1.12 It is believed that based on the paperwork provided, the CAA Aerodrome Audits were not the subject of discussion at the Airport Committee meetings and as such the Committee were not made aware of any items of non-compliance raised by the CAA. Indeed the issue of SMS is documented only once in the Committee Meeting minutes. (See 5.3.4.3).

## Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

### Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

#### 5.3.2 *Aerodrome Manual*

5.3.2.1 The Aerodrome Manual is required to address the Safety Management System in place at the Aerodrome together with details of operational procedures, policies, accountabilities and training.

5.3.2.2 A draft Aerodrome Manual and associated Operating Policies and Procedures documents were submitted to the CAA in November 2006, following non-compliances filed by the CAA in the January 2005 and April 2006 annual Aerodrome Audits.

5.3.2.3 A review of the manual submitted has been undertaken by the Surveyor.

5.3.2.4 Whilst there are a number of procedures which are documented, it is unclear whether they provide a fully auditable process which will ensure that items requiring rectification are actioned in a timely and acceptable manner. This will require further investigation and audit.

5.3.2.5 It was also noted that a number of procedures did not provide adequate guidance and instruction with respect to methodology. Some examples are shown below for information:-

- Runway Friction Monitoring – it is stated that should results be “less than good” then rectification will take place to the runway to improve braking action. It neither explains what this means nor how rectification will be undertaken.
- Runway Markings are not included on the checklist for inspections. (The poor condition of the markings was raised by the CAA during their visit to CODA on the 16th and 17th May 2007 which led to the suspension of the operating license).

5.3.2.6 It is important that the actual operation at CODA reflects exactly the procedures contained in the manual to ensure compliance with the SMS.

## Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

### Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

5.3.2.7 A further amended Manual is currently in the process of being updated which should hopefully address many of the non-compliances in its contents. However, it must be emphasised that any procedures documented in the Manual must also be carried out in practical terms.

#### **5.3.3 *Emergency Orders***

5.3.3.1 Whilst the Emergency Orders (dated March 2007) appear to be comprehensive, in common with all SMS, it is essential that the procedures contained in the documentation are able to be carried out in reality.

#### **5.3.4 *Airport Committee***

5.3.4.1 A review of the minutes of the Airport Committee was undertaken. It was noted that the Airport Safety Works were a frequent agenda item for the meetings, which is commendable.

5.3.4.2 Safety did not, however frequently appear on the agenda as a separate item.

5.3.4.3 SMS was raised by the Airport Manager in November 2006, where he stated that CODA required an SMS in accordance with new EU legislation. This however, was not the subject of discussion at future meetings.

5.3.4.4 In accordance with a robust SMS, it would be expected that Safety would be a regular agenda item to report safety related items to the members of the Airport Committee. The inclusion of Safety as a standard agenda item will enhance awareness of the Committee to Safety related issues.

# Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

## Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

### 6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 In order to maintain the CAA Licence for operations at CODA, a number of serious non-compliances have either been addressed or are currently being dealt with. This should continue without delay.
- 6.2 The Inspection and Maintenance system should be enhanced to ensure that minor items of non-compliance are highlighted and rectified in a timely manner.
- 6.3 A review of the Structure in place at the airport should be undertaken to ensure safety, efficiency and the application of correct resources and competence is achieved.
- 6.4 A robust Safety Management System should be documented and implemented at the aerodrome in order to ensure continuous compliance with UK Civil Aviation Regulations. The function of the SMS would be to ensure that any future non-compliance issues are highlighted immediately and rectified to the satisfaction of CODA and the CAA.
- 6.5 Documentation should be amended and reviewed to reflect any changes implemented at the airport.
- 6.6 A comprehensive Training programme for all staff should be implemented which will ensure that staff are fully competent to undertake their roles in accordance with CAA regulations and local requirements.
- 6.7 A review and further development of the Business Plan and Master Plan should be undertaken to ensure staff, equipment and appropriate resources are available to meet current and future demand.
- 6.8 Serious items of non-compliance with CAA Aerodrome Licensing Regulations which require significant Capital Expenditure are planned and implemented expeditiously in order to achieve compliance. (It should be noted that some of these issues were addressed at the recent Public Inquiry).



## **Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the**

### **Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport**

- 6.9 Communications and reporting systems should be enhanced both from Management to The Airport Committee and Management to Staff (and vice versa). This should include regular reports to the Airport Committee on Aerodrome Safety (eg. incidents, inspections, staffing, initiatives) and the introduction of regular “Team Briefings” or similar “open” communications forums for staff.
- 6.10 Consideration should be given to the appointment of a “Safety Manager” who is able to meet and report “openly” to the Aerodrome Licensee or an elected Member of the Committee on all Safety related matters.
- 6.11 The Airport is about to embark on a period of major Aerodrome works. It is essential that safe operating procedures are developed and agreed with the CAA prior to commencement of the works in accordance with CAP 729 (CAA Guidance on Aerodrome Development). Once agreement has been obtained, strict monitoring and enforcement of the procedures will be required to ensure continuous safe aircraft operations.
- 6.12 The City of Derry Airport has published a public Safety Statement (Appendix B) signed by the Town Clerk, acknowledging the City Councils responsibility “proactively managing Safety through the application of a formal Safety Management System”. It is imperative that Officers and Members of the Council understand their responsibilities and commitments in this respect. Aerodrome Safety must therefore become a standing item on the Committee’s agenda.

# Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

## Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

### 7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 The City of Derry Airport has experienced considerable and rapid growth in medium size Jet Aircraft Movements in recent years (39% in 2006). This is associated with an increase in passenger throughput of 70%. The Safety Management System in place at the airport failed to maintain pace with the corresponding growth, in particular with respect to infrastructure, staff resources and competencies.
- 7.2 The collective number of deficiencies in the SMS noted on a formal visit by the CAA on 16th and 17th May were such that the Civil Aviation Authority believed that a “Systematic Failure of the SMS” had occurred and therefore provisionally suspended the Airport’s License to operate in the interests of public safety. The Surveyor believes that the action of the CAA in suspending the Aerodrome License at CODA was appropriate.
- 7.3 It is probable that none of the parties involved had previously recognised the extent of the failure although correspondence reviewed between the Regulator (CAA) and the Airport dating back to 2004 (period reviewed) continually refers to a number of deficiencies in the allocation of resources and the operating environment of the Aerodrome.
- 7.4 When Inspectors from the CAA visited CODA on 16th / 17th May 2007 they believed that the overall number of deficiencies had increased to a level which was unacceptable and that the Safety Management Systems in place at that time were insufficient as they had not alerted the Airport Operator to take immediate action to rectify an increasing number of non-compliant items.
- 7.5 Whilst Derry City Council and CAA were previously aware of some of the deficiencies and agreed an “Action Plan” for rectification. It was acknowledged that major work was required in order for the Airport to obtain full compliance with UK Aerodrome Licensing requirements (CAP 168). It is however highly unlikely that either party would have known that the time taken to obtain a) approvals for works (including a Judicial Review) and b) European / State Aid funding would be in excess of 5 years.

## Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

### Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

- 7.6 The prompt response by Derry City Council and the Airport Management Team to address some of the issues raised following the withdrawal of the License was acknowledged by the CAA as commendable and as a direct consequence of these actions the CAA License to operate was reinstated at 0000 hours on Tuesday 29 May 2007.
- 7.7 This report describes some of the pertinent issues which surrounded the loss of the license, it also provides recommendations which will assist and give guidance in ensuring continuous safe operations at CODA in accordance with the licensing requirements of UK Civil Aviation Authority and the Air Navigation Order.
- 7.8 The Airport Operator should now give immediate consideration to a review of the Operational Structure, allocation of duties and communications at all levels to ensure that the Resources, Policies, Procedures and Safety Management System in place at CODA accurately reflect the scale and frequency of operations taking place.
- 7.9 Any previous deficiencies and non-compliant items of the UK CAA Aerodrome Licensing Standards identified by Airport Staff or the CAA Aerodrome Standards Department should be rectified at the earliest opportunity.
- 7.10 It is acknowledged by all parties that considerable work in a number of areas is required to ensure an appropriate and robust Safety Management System is fully implemented and maintained at City of Derry Airport.
- 7.11 It must be emphasised that Derry City Council and the CAA both acted promptly and responsibly to ensure that public safety was paramount throughout.

**Peter Hampson**  
**Managing Director**  
**Airport Solutions Ltd**

# Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

## Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

### Appendix A Civil Aviation Authority Provisional Suspension and List of Significant Safety Concerns and Clarification

#### CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY ARTICLE 92(1) AIR NAVIGATION ORDER 2005

#### PROVISIONAL SUSPENSION

1. The Civil Aviation Authority, in exercise of its powers under Article 92 (1) of the Air Navigation Order (ANO) 2005, hereby provisionally suspends with effect from midnight 24 May 2007 aerodrome licence P620 granted to Derry City Council for Eglinton Aerodrome, pending consideration of or inquiry into the case.
2. The suspension follows an audit of the aerodrome on 16 and 17 May 2007, which revealed the significant safety concerns listed in Appendix A, attached hereto.
3. Having regard to these significant safety concerns the CAA is no longer satisfied, as required by Article 128 (1) of the ANO 2005, that the Licence Holder is competent to secure the aerodrome and the airspace within which its visual traffic pattern is normally contained are safe for use by aircraft.
4. This provisional suspension will remain in force until withdrawn in writing.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
For the Civil Aviation Authority

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

## Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

Regulatory Licensing Issues	Clarification
Safety Management System	<p>ASD has significant concerns regarding the overall management/control of safety. The audit reports dated January 2005 and April 2006 both show Category 2 Non compliances against the SMS and Aerodrome Manual.</p> <p>ASD Inspection 16-17 May 2007. In their report the ASD Inspectors have raised general concerns regarding the poor overall condition of the aerodrome and stated that the condition was not of an appropriate standard. This is considered indicative of a systemic failure of the safety management.</p> <p><b>Licensing of aerodromes</b>  <b>128</b> (1) The CAA shall grant a license in respect of any aerodrome in the United Kingdom if it is satisfied that:</p> <p>(a) the applicant is competent, having regard to his <b>previous conduct</b> and experience, his equipment, organisation, staffing, maintenance and other arrangements, to secure that the <b>aerodrome</b> and the airspace within which its visual traffic pattern is normally contained are <b>safe for use by aircraft</b>;</p> <p>(b) the aerodrome is <b>safe for use</b> by aircraft, having regard in particular to the <b>physical characteristics</b> of the aerodrome and of its surroundings.  <b>Note:</b> Based on the above the Head of ASD Operations is not satisfied that the aerodrome is safe.</p>
Runway 08/26	<p>Significant infringements/obstacles of the Approach Surface:</p> <p>Trees, Houses/buildings, Poles and Aerials. These should have been addressed through the SMS regardless of the Runway Coding or pending development of the aerodrome.</p> <p>Delethalisation: Vertical Faces are present and significant.  Runway markings are in poor condition.  Raised in the 2006 ASD report.</p>

## Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

### Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

Regulatory Licensing Issues	Clarification
Runway 26/08	<p>The Baulked Landing Surfaces: Infringed by significant obstacles (Trees)</p> <p>During the audit there was heavy precipitation and the runway appeared to be holding standing water &amp; monitoring of Surface Friction needs to be undertaken immediately.</p> <p>Delethalisation: Vertical Faces are present and significant.</p> <p>Aggregate and French Drains running parallel to the edge are poor and are only secured at the Thresholds by the Tensa netting. A Major FOD Hazard to aircraft exists with this current arrangement.</p>
Runway 02/20	<p>Boundary Markers are in poor condition and Aerodrome Ground Lighting (AGL) cables are lying loose and above ground, presenting a hazard to aircraft.</p> <p>Delethalisation: Vertical Faces are present and significant.</p>
Railway Lines- 08 Overshoot & 26 Undershoot.	<p>This issue is a long outstanding one and focused primarily on control of the trains. However, the Inspectors felt that the lines present a vertical face &amp; hazard if an aircraft overruns or lands short of the runway.</p>
Management of Survey Data	<p>Surveys have been conducted at CODA but it appears that the data is not being <b>managed</b> or utilised allowing significant obstacles to remain in place. <b>(See SMS above)</b></p>

## Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

### Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

Regulatory Licensing Issues	Clarification
MORs	<p>Three Occurrences with the rail crossing were reported between July 2006 and February 2007.</p> <p>MOR-200701367 B737-800 Aircraft on final approach came into close proximity with train due to train passing through runway 26 undershoot.</p> <p>MOR200607731 SaabF340 SF340 instructed go-around whilst on finals for runway 08 at 300' due to train passing through runway 26 undershoot. Aircraft carried out an uneventful go-around.</p> <p>MOR200606453 Saab F340 SF340 take-off clearance from runway 08 was cancelled at 90kts due to train passing through runway 26 undershoot. SF340 aborted take-off.</p> <p>..... Additional MORs</p> <p>MOR200500334 Saab F340 SF340 instructed to go-around from 600' due to train passing through runway 26 undershoot.</p> <p>MOR2000101517 SD360 SD360 executed go-around for runway 26 due to train passing through runway 26 undershoot.</p> <p>MOR200003893 SD360 Landing clearance cancelled during approach to runway 26 due to train passing through runway 26 undershoot.</p>

## Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

### Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

<b>Regulatory Licensing Issues</b>	<b>Clarification</b>
Runway Strip: 08/26	<p>Trees and a Water Tank infringe the strip at 135 metres South of the runway centreline in the vicinity of the 26 Threshold.</p> <p>A large open culvert is present within the Strip adjacent to the water tank. This is a significant bird attractant and potential hazard to aircraft.</p> <p>The Runway strip is generally in poor condition and could attract birds etc.</p>
Taxiway Alpha	<p>South of the Runway Taxi Holding Position (A). A large open culvert infringes the taxiway strip by 7 Metres. This is a significant bird attractant, which should be netted.</p> <p>The taxiway had significant water retention/pooling.</p>
Paint Markings	<p>All runway markings were in need of refreshing and several markings were not apparent/present. Reported previously by ASD.</p>
Windsleeves	<p>Both were in a poor state and not conspicuous against the ambient background. The SMS should be picking these issues out as a matter of course. See SMS above.</p>
AGL	<p>Runway 08 has a published non-precision approach. However there is no simple approach lighting system (Minimum licensing requirement.)</p> <p>Examples of exposed cabling and open cable housing units were witnessed.</p>



## Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

### Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

Regulatory Licensing Issues	Clarification
Apron	Steel plates are positioned to protect the monoblock surface where the main undercarriage of the B737-800 comes to rest. These plates flex with the weight of the aircraft and are not considered to be an appropriate surface.
Bird Control Management	<p>Obvious open water has not been addressed with netting, and there appears to be bird attractant sites within the licensed boundary due to the poor drainage and state of the grassed areas on the airfield'.</p> <p>Seven reports of birdstrikes are recorded in the ASD database from 24 February to 19 April 2007. (Non MOR)</p> <p>An additional 4 Mors are listed below:</p> <p>MOR2000509056 Saab F340 Birdstrike. Single gull impact during take-off, which was aborted.</p> <p>MOR200504691 Saab F340 Birdstrike (Starling) to number 1 engine during take-off, which was rejected.</p> <p>MOR200503589 Saab F340 Birdstrike at approximately 50' AGL during approach.</p> <p>MOR200007968 Jetstream 41 As aircraft passed approximately 50', flock of gulls rose up into glare of landing lights. 6 to 10 Gulls impacted aircraft, damaging aircraft.</p>
Airport Fire Service	In addition to the above ASD has retained close oversight of the CODA AFS due to significant issues raised at previous ASD audits, namely: staffing issues, extraneous duties and lack of personnel & supervisors to cover the AFS throughout the CODA operating hours. This issue is currently under review with CODA, Regional ASD Inspector and Senior ASD Inspector A meeting is planned on 14 June 2007. Titled: Airport Hand Duty Crew Operational Review dated March 2007.

# Independent Inquiry into the Provisional Suspension of the

## Aerodrome License for City of Derry Airport

### Appendix B City of Derry Airport Safety Statement



## City of Derry Airport Safety Statement

City of Derry Airport's Safety Policy is to achieve and maintain high levels of safety within the Airport and air navigation services it provides and operates. This is achieved by minimising those risks, which contribute to accidents and aircraft incidents.

Safety shall be afforded the highest priority throughout City of Derry Airport's activities, irrespective of commercial, operational, environmental or social pressures.

The Airport owners, Derry City Council, have overall responsibility for the Safety at City of Derry Airport and this is managed proactively through the application of a formal Safety Management System.

Safety is an integral function of both management and staff. Managers are accountable for the safety performance within their departments and staffs are accountable for safety in the tasks they carry out.

City of Derry Airport is committed to maintaining explicit safety standards that as a minimum comply with the requirements of:  
National Legislation, International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Eurocontrol and the Safety Regulation Division of the UK Aviation Authority.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mr A McGurk**  
On behalf of Derry City Council

**Airport Solutions Ltd  
Belvedere  
Woodcote View  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 2DT**

**E Mail: [info@airportsol.com](mailto:info@airportsol.com)  
[www.airportsol.com](http://www.airportsol.com)**