
Transition to PC - Conference & Working Together
New Branch Structure - Airways WP - CP3
Sub-section elections - Yearly Report - Upcoming in the Ocean

Thanks for taking the time to read the newsletter. This local Prospect Newsletter will be now issued once every two months. It will also be published on the www.atcos.co.uk website. There's lots of change on the horizon for all of us at work in the coming months. An increased frequency in the newsletter will hopefully help keep you reasonably informed on Prospect's involvement in these changes. We are a long way from SKY 24hour news reporting so please bear in mind that what you read here may lag behind any on going negotiation, unbelievably things can change pretty quickly within NATS. For up to date info speak to any of the reps, the 2010 rep list is listed later in the newsletter. In the past month the unit also had an election for lead Oceanic rep and the detailed results can be read below. Congratulations to Colin Riach, the vote means a real mandate by the Oceanic members for their chosen candidate and this can be a powerful influence in any negotiation.

Transition to PC

Despite the apparent vacuum of information about transition to PC there is a lot of background work being done by NATS on the transitions. I think by their own admission the main focus has been on Oceanic and Mil transitions whilst Scottish Airways and MACC transitions are very much ongoing in the background. However, Prospect have been invited to a meeting on 26th October (one of many invites to various meetings) about Airways Transition to PC and I'd advise you to speak to your line manager or watch rep after that date to get the latest.

An agreement has been reached on ATCO 1 LAS numbers for the transition period (30 substantive and 10 acting) with reviews planned that Prospect will participate in to agree the long term ATCO 1 numbers; you can read the detail in Jonathan Astill's NATS statement.

Finally, the local section believes that, as with all ATC operations, the Transitions to PC operations will throw up events and situations that cannot have been reasonably planned for, coping with these situations will ultimately fall to the operational staff on duty to deal with. Much will be made of PC coming into operation and recognition must go to all those involved in getting it to this stage, however making it work as a live ATC operation and dealing with events will be down to the professionalism of the ATCO's, ATSA's and Engineers on duty and from various transition dates onwards we hope it's recognised that it is then "our" office.

Prospect ATCO Annual Delegate Conference 2009

As usual the conference is at Bredbury Hall Hotel, Manchester. It will be over the weekend of the 6th to 8th November. **The delegates from ScOACC are Mark Levington, Paul Wharton, Nigel McCullough and Mark Rooke. Malcolm Macpherson, Richard Thomas, Colin Valentine and Dave Carty will also attending in their respective roles on the BEC.** Copies of the motions to conference are in the Prospect file in your ops room – there aren't many motions to debate this year so please take the time to read them. The important debate and vote this year will be about Prospect ATCO's Branch future involvement in the Working Together initiative.

The delegates will be debating and voting on behalf of you and this unit, if you want to influence their vote then please speak to them.

Also subject to voting at Conference we will very likely see a new structure to the BEC. The most significant effect to our local members being that after conference all ScOACC and MACC members of Prospect will be represented by a PC Section on the BEC. The PC Section Chair will have a senior position within the BEC, equal to our Swanwick AC and TC colleagues. There will also be two other representatives from the PC Section on the BEC.

Currently ScOACC and MACC members are represented within the Northern Section which includes the northern airfields. The northern airfields will join with their southern airfield colleagues forming a separate Airports Section. Both ScOACC and MACC sub sections are in the process of organising themselves for this change and you'll hear more about it the subsequent newsletters. Representatives from the Area side will still maintain close ties with our Airfield colleagues.

WP

This will be an important issue to tackle early after airways transition to PC. Locally we are getting our team together. Management have made no formal requests for meetings yet but we expect an invite soon.

CP3

I mention CP3 because the ongoing review period which we are now in, for pricing control period 3 which starts in 2011, will affect all our future within NATS. The outcome of this review will influence the decisions that the incoming management team will be making about what does and doesn't form a priority and so what will or won't have money spent on it. I guarantee this will form the basis of our future issues.

SOAL/part SOAL

Just a reminder that an amendment to the AAVA agreement was reached in the past few months giving the option to offer part SOAL (for £300) to anyone who would wish to work 4 hours or less. Part SOAL still counts as one attendance toward your annual maximum of six SOAL attendances.

Industrial Relations

Some of you may have read a statement about a meeting in early October between Pauline Lamb and some of her incoming management team and Local TU reps. It was an encouraging meeting, and this combined with NATS senior management rolling out a new programme for WT which importantly includes a KPI and training for managers with IR responsibilities gives some glimmer of hope that there'll be a visible change to Industrial Relations/ Working Together at grass roots level. Time will be the measure of these commitments from management. Encouragingly, we are beginning to see a real change in IR attitudes locally, speak to your rep and line managers if you have any issues.

Sub-Section Elections 2009 & Oceanic Ballot

Airways Unit Representatives

Mark Levington	Section Chair
Nigel Robinson	Section Secretary
Richard Thomas	BEC Rep
Paul Wharton	PC Rep

Airways Watch Representatives

Dave Allen	
Brian Gibson	
Jo Forman	
Tal Herbert	Communications
Joe Mcglynn	
Malcolm Macpherson	Co-opted to BEC
Nigel McCullough	

Oceanic Unit Representatives

Colin Riach	Lead Oceanic Rep
Lee Mayne	
Mark Rooke	Vice-Chair

Oceanic Watch Representatives

Phillip Langton

Co-opted Members

Aiden Trotter	Health & Safety Representative
Steve Hughes	EFD

In October there was an Oceanic Ballot to elect the Lead Unit Representative, the ballot result was as follows:

55 Ballots were distributed
46 Ballots were returned (2 spoiled papers)
9 No Votes

Candidate	Number of Votes
Lee Mayne	8
Colin Riach	23
Mark Rooke	13

The section representatives have a very high workload at present and would appreciate any members volunteering their services to the local section; there are numerous local issues at present which will influence your careers both now and far into the future!

Sub Section Chair's Yearly Report

As former subsection Secretary I had pleasure to take the Chair last September at the height of the Pensions debate and subsequent vote. I was one of last year's delegates to conference, 3 out of 4 of us with no previous experience. It was a baptism of fire for us as delegates. We felt like a lone voice at the time. But things have changed and the Scottish subsection has an even stronger voice and input to the BEC.

Scottish has a reputation for being difficult, and it's a reputation I think we may well deserve. It is difficult and challenging working in the environment we are faced with.

(From the Prospect perspective) WT at ScOACC didn't work, but with a new incoming management team and the opportunity afforded by the new building and environment it maybe time for things to change. The ScOACC section welcomes the opportunity for a collaborative approach to implementing change, improving the business and making Prestwick Centre a better place to work, but this must not be solely about cost. It's as much about people, because without people (travellers & workers) there is no business, just a big empty building.

This year the sub section has operated as a strong team. The high workload has been carried by many, Paul Wharton (previous Chair) has continued to deal with the many issues presented by the new Prestwick Centre. Malcolm Macpherson, Steve Hughes, Richard Thomas, Nigel Robinson, Mark Rooke and Phil Langton have all contributed and ensured that the sub-section has run smoothly.

Unfortunately, for personal reasons, Jim Eagles had to stand down as Chair of the LJC. This is a great loss to the Trade Unions on the unit; I'd like to take the opportunity to pass on our thanks and appreciation to Jim for his contribution to the section over the years.

The section has tried to improve communication with members through a quarterly newsletter. We'll be increasing the frequency of newsletters in the coming year. Tal Herbert, C watch rep, will be working on this for the sub-section. The easiest, most economic and environmentally friendly way to distribute a newsletter is by email and I ask members to pass their domestic email to their watch rep. We are also organising the placement of the newsletter on the ATCO's website. We still have an outdated Working Practises Agreement and regrettably it looks likely that we'll enter PC with the current agreement. It is inadequate and I hope that fixing this will be a priority for the new Management team.

I know there is feeling amongst members that Scottish is an experimenting test bed for NATS. But this past year we have formed closed ties with AC/TC & MACC section chairs, ensuring that we are not an isolated group and that policy is consistent across the NATS area units.

Next year will see a new section structure and representation on BEC as we join with our Manchester colleagues, and we'll keep you posted on how this progresses after conference.

Finally, we need new reps, especially younger ATCO's; you must get involved and shape your own future at work or have it shaped for you by someone else. You must get involved.

Mark Levington
Chair (Airways)
ScOACC Sub-section

From the Ocean

On the evening of the 20th October Shanwick Oceanic successfully transitioned into Prestwick Centre. The handover happened at 2049 local time and went very smoothly. Well done to all the Prospect members involved, we all need to get used to working in a huge sports hall now! Oceanic is looking forward to welcoming in Airways and Manchester over the coming months as it is lonely in there.

In November there will be a human factors trial for a week which staff from the operations room will be involved in. The positioning for Night shifts is being investigated. The Section fully understands the discontent that people are feeling.

Sub Section Vice-Chair's Yearly Report

This is the last report from OAC in its own ops room and next years will come from a fully integrated Prestwick Centre (PC). Since my last report it's been a really challenging year which started with 4 members resigning over the pensions issue. Despite this setback membership remains high with a couple of newly valid ATCOs joining and the return of 1 of the ATCOs.

The section successfully negotiated a new WP agreement with UM for summer 2009. This is similar to last year's agreement and despite managements preferred position we successfully protected the vast majority of our members aspirations. With our impending move to Prestwick Centre (PC) we will have to negotiate a new agreement but are awaiting the outcome of the difficult LAS numbers negotiation to conclude before we can progress this in a meaningful manner. In the meantime we anticipate an approach from UM for winter manning and hope to achieve a similar outcome to last winter enabling our members to benefit as well.

OAC is scheduled to move to PC over the night of Oct 20/21st. OAC members are keen to work in the same Ops room along with Scottish Airways and Manchester colleagues, hopefully this will be the first step in a truly integrated operation giving OAC members cross training opportunities. The transition to PC will be a testing time for OAC members as we will work through 4 transitions to PC with Scottish Military moving in November, Airways in December and MACC in January 2010.

OJTIs have worked hard this year with all bar 1 ab-initio ATCOs now valid and a number of extensions successfully completed so the vast majority of ATCOs are now fully valid. UM are seeking to change both the content and the way the training programme is delivered and we are engaged in this process.

OAC has been involved in some interesting programmes in the last year.

Boundary Error Trapping (BET pc) introduced into OAC in Dec 2008. There are some disappointments in how it has performed but the benefits outweigh these minor issues.

REDOS (Rapid Extraction of Data from the Operational System). This project is an engineering method of re-inputting all the flight data into SAATS due to hardware/software malfunction and will prevent a fully manual operation for our members in the future. Deployed on an operational trial from summer 2009, after some initial teething troubles OAC have had some instances where it has proved its worth.

R-Long Project (Reduced Longitudinal Separation). Due for trial early summer 2010, this project should benefit NATS OAC customers with improved flight profiles. Our members are looking forward to utilising this tool but this may present some workload issues.

CPE Project (Combined Planner/En-route). This controversial project was due for deployment into the OAC in May 2009 but was delayed due to technical issues and difficult local negotiations with UM including significant and numerous safety concerns from members. The depth of that concern eventually lead to the local section canvassing the BEC and then Prospect writing to NATS Division of Safety to ensure due diligence was paid to these concerns. Happily significant work has taken place with all interested parties and a way forward was identified. The new build (R3B1) for CPE has been deployed but due to technical difficulties the section has been unable to finally sign-up to the new method of combined operation. UM is proactively seeking a resolution to these problems and we anticipate a way forward being proposed in the coming weeks. This one project has proved to be the most time consuming issue for Unit Reps since last conference. Due to the downturn in traffic, which although not as significant as most other units, has left OAC with a small overbearing in ATCOs. This has allowed six OAC ATCOs to achieve their aspiration of working part-time. We understand that these individual agreements run for six months and will be reviewed prior to May 2010.

Working Together has proved difficult over the last year especially in respect to CPE. The section has continued to work to protect our members' best interests utilising the principles of Working Together when and where appropriate. OAC is looking forward to working with the new PC managers to resolve the many issues that the members will face in the coming months and years.

Finally I'd like to thank Philip Langton, Mark Levington, Malcolm MacPherson, Richard Thomas and PJ for their support and advice over the last year.

Mark Rooke
Oceanic Unit Rep