

All NATMAC Representatives

19 August 2009
ERM/DAP/Wind/Whitelee

NATMAC INFORMATION LETTER

Dear Colleagues,

WHITELEE WINDFARM TEMPORARY TRANSPONDER MANDATORY ZONE (TMZ)

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of the establishment of a **temporary** Transponder Mandatory Zone (TMZ) from 15 September until 6 December 2009 over the Whitelee Windfarm, south of Glasgow, to mitigate its effect on the NATS Lowther Hill radar. The TMZ will be established under an SI approved by the DfT.

Windfarms generate unwanted returns on primary radar and can degrade the performance of Secondary Surveillance Radar. In April 2006 the UK's largest onshore windfarm was granted planning permission to be built at Whitelee, south of Glasgow. A key element to gaining consent was the combined effort of the British Airports Authority, National Air Traffic Services, Civil Aviation Authority and Scottish Power to ensure the project would have no adverse effect on the safety of air traffic in the area. The agreed solution was to provide a new radar at Kincardine in Fife, this radar is already in use by Glasgow Airport. NATS will be unable to incorporate the radar feed until the new Prestwick Centre comes on-line in Dec 2009. The temporary TMZ has therefore been put in place to mitigate the effect of the wind turbines on the Lowther Hill PSR and allow an ATC service to be provided using SSR only with no adverse effect on the safety of air traffic in the area.

The TMZ will extend from surface level to 6,000 feet. Most of the TMZ will be in established Class D airspace with two small areas in uncontrolled airspace. Aircraft without a transponder will be able to enter the TMZ if under the control of Glasgow International Airport.

The TMZ will be withdrawn once NATS' new air traffic control centre at Prestwick comes online in December 2009 with a feed from the new radar station at Kincardine in Fife. This will provide improved coverage of the airspace around the area. The implementation of the temporary TMZ will have no influence on the upcoming Glasgow ACP. The TMZ is seen as a short-term mitigation to maintain safety whilst supporting Government long-term renewable energy policy.

Whilst airspace users will be prenotified of the change by means of a NOTAM, your assistance in disseminating details of the change within your respective organizations will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,
Mark Swan

M Swan
Director of Airspace Policy

Enclosures:

1. 2009/49 Whitelee TMZ dated 17 Aug 09