DISRUPTION CAUSED BY THE FAILURE IN UK AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

It was reported on 15th December that the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and the National Air Traffic Service (NATS) have agreed the establishment of an independent inquiry following the disruption caused by the failure in air traffic management systems on the afternoon of Friday 12 December 2014.

The CAA will, in consultation with NATS, appoint an independent chair of the panel which will consist of NATS technical experts, a board member from the CAA and independent experts on information technology, air traffic management and operational resilience. The full terms of reference will be published following consultation with interested parties including airlines and consumer groups but it is expected that the review will cover, as a minimum:

- The root causes of the incident on Friday.
- NATS’ handling of that incident to minimise disruption without compromising safety.
- Whether the lessons identified in the review of the disruption in December 2013 have been fully embedded and were effective in this most recent incident.
- A review of the levels of resilience and service that should be expected across the air traffic network taking into account relevant international benchmarks.
- Further measures to avoid technology or process failures in this critical national infrastructure and reduce the impact of any unavoidable disruption.