Australian Government
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

Emerging Aviation Technologies Policy Forum

Terms of Reference

March 2024

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# Context

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring the take-up of emerging aviation technologies is safe, efficient and adaptable.

The lead policy agency, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (the department), will work with industry and state, territory and local governments to determine how it may best support individuals, businesses and industry to create an efficient and adaptable operational ecosystem for emerging aviation technologies consistent with community expectations.

### Purpose

The Emerging Aviation Technologies Policy Forum (the Forum) is the principle forum for the department to consult with a range of industry stakeholders, state, territory and local governments, and other Commonwealth agencies. It provides a mechanism that may help the development of the department’s policy advice for emerging aviation technologies in Australia.

The forum is **not** a decision-making body, nor is it a body for recognising motions or particular positions. It is intended to be a mechanism for open, non-binding discussions on policy options and associated issues. It does not replace broader industry consultation by other agencies’ working groups or forums.

### Objectives

The Forum’s objective is for the department to gather feedback from participants on identified topics/questions that will assist the department to develop policy advice for emerging aviation technologies.

Topics discussed will not necessarily have an established government position, and all discussions in workshops and working groups will be non‑binding on the department.

The department has the discretion to discontinue, change or amend any aspect of the workshops/working groups or objectives in response to evolving priorities, changed circumstances or policy directions from the government.

### Functions

The functions of the Forum are to:

* Identify issues or priorities where further discussion or feedback may assist the department in developing policy advice.
* Provide perspectives on a range of topics identified and prioritised by the Forum.
* Support working groups, workshops, bi-lateral meetings etc. with identified topics/issues to support the department to implement the government’s policy approach regarding emerging aviation technologies.

### Participation

There will be an open call for nominations for those who are interested in supporting emerging aviation technologies policy development. Nominees will be required to submit an EOI, in the format provided by the department, which will include an area for nominees to note areas of interest (e.g. AAM / UTM / operations etc.).

Participants' role will be advisory. Attendance for the workshops/working groups may be limited to those whose identified areas of interest align with the workshop topic and objectives.

Participation in workshops/working groups is not guaranteed. The department will make best efforts to accommodate all nominees and their nominated areas of interest.

The department will be the permanent Chair of the Forum and any subsequent workshops/working groups.

### Workshops

Workshops will be topic-based sessions giving participants the opportunity to have open discussions and share their views. These workshops may cover a range of topic areas related to participants’ nominated areas of interest. Participants of the forum will be notified in advance of any workshop topics. Participants can then nominate to attend in workshops they are interested in.

Participation in workshops is not guaranteed. The department may limit attendance to manageable numbers if necessary and/or adjust the format to facilitate bigger workshops depending on the topic/discussion and level of interest.

### Working Groups

Working groups will be established to address a continuous topic. They will be set up as required and will cease once government policy objectives are reached.

There will be two working groups established initially: the UTM Industry Working Group (delivering the UTM Action Plan) and the AAM Policy Working Group (formerly AAM Consultative Committee).

Other working groups will be established as required and will comprise of stakeholders relevant to the issues being managed and may include representatives from industry, other Commonwealth agencies, and state, territory or local governments. Participants of the Forum will be given the opportunity to nominate for working groups which are of interest to them.

Note that these working groups do not decide on policy outcomes, with the government having final decision-making responsibility.

### Written engagement

The participants list may be used to seek feedback on draft content of papers, guidelines etc.

General implementation updates will be provided in writing to all participants periodically.

### Open forum

At least once a year, the department will hold a broader open forum to allow participants to discuss general issues and provide input on priorities and work agendas for workshops/working groups for the following year. The department will have final decision-making authority for future agendas/workshops/working groups.

### Meeting arrangements

The Forum’s workshops are expected to meet approximately quarterly (or as necessary) via video-conference. Workshops may be in-person. Working groups will be arranged separately and their frequency will be reviewed as work progresses.

### Administration

The department provides secretariat support for the Forum workshops and working group meetings. The secretariat will be responsible for:

* Scheduling meetings, including venues if required.
* Distributing material to participants as required, including agendas and other documents.
* Recording feedback from working groups/workshops (for departmental records).
* Maintaining and managing participants’ areas of interest.
* General updates in writing to all participants.

Note: High level outcomes from the working groups/workshops will be published on drones.gov.au.

All Forum participants will bear their own costs of participating.

### Conflict of interest

Participants of the Forum will disclose any actual or perceived conflicts of interest to the department. The department will decide how to address any actual or perceived conflicts as appropriate.

### Review

The department will review the role of the Forum and its ongoing functions annually or when appropriate. Forum attendees may require reaffirmation of interest after 12 months.

### Validity

This Terms of Reference is effective from 5 March 2024 and will be on-going until such time as amended, or the Forum is disbanded.

This Terms of Reference may be amended, varied or modified by the department.