

Chair of the Consumer Panel Civil Aviation Authority

Brief for applicants
June 2026



Welcome

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in serving as the next Chair of CAA's Consumer Panel.

The CAA is the UK's aviation and aerospace regulator and recognised as a world leader in its field. Our activities are diverse, enabling the aviation industry to meet the highest safety standards, and we pride ourselves on our ability to adapt to the constantly evolving aviation environment.

The Consumer Panel is a non-statutory body established to act as a 'critical friend' to the CAA on consumer matters. The Panel's overriding objective is to champion the interests of consumers.

By sharing consumer-led intelligence and expertise, the Panel works in partnership with CAA colleagues on a range of targeted projects and is widely seen within the organisation as a key source of independent, trusted consumer-focused input.

Much of the success of the Panel depends on the quality of its membership. The Panel needs to be informed, in touch, engaged and independent, providing support and constructive advice to the CAA on issues that affect current, potential and future aviation consumers.

Since the current Chair was appointed in 2018, the Panel's standing, visibility and impact across the CAA and externally has gone from strength to strength. Our current Chair will conclude their term in December 2026, and we are now seeking to appoint their successor, who will guide the Panel's next phase of development.

This is an exciting opportunity, given the leading role the incoming Chair will play in shaping the Panel's next programme of work, and given the challenges facing the aviation industry and consumers in the post-pandemic world.

We are seeking an experienced and committed Chair who:

- can demonstrate a broad understanding of, and a deep-seated commitment to, promoting and protecting the interests of consumers;
- brings a strong understanding of regulated markets/regulation and their impact on consumers, as well as of the of the broader consumer landscape and the key strategic and regulatory issues which shape it; and
- is highly credible and constructive ,and has strong chairing and influencing skills and experience.

A background in aviation or transport is not an essential requirement; however, you will demonstrate:

- a capability to quickly get to grips with the intricacies of the Panel and CAA's work; and
- strong regulatory and consumer experience, including the ability to understand the impact of CAA policy on the aviation market, as well as what this could mean for consumers.

The successful candidate will be genuinely committed to enabling the Panel to shape the CAA's regulatory and consumer work, ensuring it addresses the needs of current, potential and future aviation consumers, including those engaging with emerging technologies.

The CAA is committed to creating an inclusive and respectful environment and welcomes applications from candidates with diverse backgrounds, experiences and ways of thinking. We recognise that effective Chairs come from many career paths and encourage applications from those who meet most, but not necessarily all, of the following criteria and have a passion for consumer issues.

About the CAA

As the UK's independent, specialist civil aviation regulator, the CAA works to ensure the aviation industry meets the highest standards of safety and security of aviation; to ensure that consumers have choice, value for money and are protected and treated fairly when they fly; and to minimise the environmental impact of aviation on local communities.

We constantly challenge ourselves and our stakeholders to improve safety, security and consumer protection outcomes and strive to be a diverse, innovative, and future-focused regulator dedicated to enabling thriving aviation and aerospace sectors.

For more information about the CAA, including the latest corporate reports, please visit www.caa.co.uk.

Our Strategy

The CAA's strategy, vision and mission can be found here: <https://www.caa.co.uk/Our-work/About-us/Our-Strategy/>.

The CAA's consumer strategy can be found here: <https://www.caa.co.uk/about-us/the-civil-aviation-authority/strategies/consumer-strategy/>

Our Values

			
Do the right thing	Never stop learning	Build collaborative relationships	Respect everyone
DO THE RIGHT THING	NEVER STOP LEARNING	BUILD COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS	RESPECT EVERYONE
<p>We always do the right thing, not the easy thing, to achieve our Vision and Mission</p> <p><i>We take our responsibilities seriously and are accountable both internally to our colleagues and externally with our stakeholders. We hold ourselves to the highest standards.</i></p> <p>Keywords: ethical; honest; fair; balanced; accountable; transparent; professional; principled; independent regulatory decisions; impartial</p>	<p>We're always open to challenging our thinking</p> <p><i>We're open-minded, always eager to learn more, and never afraid to challenge the status quo. We know that tomorrow will always bring new challenges, and we're ready to explore new ideas and solutions. We ask 'why' 'what if' and 'could we?'</i></p> <p>Keywords: curiosity; reinvention; discovery; challenge; change-makers; agility; growth; exploration</p>	<p>We have common goals and we use our diverse experiences, skills and knowledge to achieve them</p> <p><i>We're team players and support each other to achieve the best results. We listen to each other and our stakeholders before we make independent regulatory decisions.</i></p> <p>Keywords: partnering, together, active collaboration, communication, perspectives, stakeholders, impact, listening, asking, balancing</p>	<p>We know, and show, that everyone deserves respect</p> <p><i>We're honest and ethical in everything we do. We're unwavering in our efforts to contribute to a culture of inclusion. We treat everyone with respect, both in and outside our organisation, and expect to receive it in return.</i></p> <p>Keywords: care; inclusion; respect; diversity; equity; consideration; trust; fairness; wellbeing; psychological safety</p>

About the Consumer Panel

As noted above, the Consumer Panel is a non-statutory body which acts as a 'critical friend' to the regulator on consumer matters. The Panel provides expert advice to make sure that the consumer interest remains central to CAA policy development, focusing on the interests of current, potential and future aviation consumers.

The Panel is a small specialist group of independent experts, who bring together deep consumer expertise and experience along with strategic thinking, applying this in a practical way to improve the aviation experience for consumers.

It works in a constructive and collegiate way, both with the CAA and with each other. Its key activities are to:

- Help the CAA to understand fully, and take account of, the interests of consumers in its policy development and decisions.
- Use existing CAA research, request the CAA undertakes new targeted research and captures intelligence, to understand the aviation consumer experience.
- Provide the CAA with feedback from a consumer perspective on its policies and practices.

The Panel does not campaign publicly (although it may respond to select external consultations and also engages with relevant industry stakeholders and public sector officials where appropriate), nor does it deal with individual complaints from the public or correspond directly with air travellers. Issues affecting citizens, such as noise from flight paths, do not fall under the Panel's remit.

The Panel has no statutory basis and governance of the Panel falls within the corporate structure of the CAA.

For more information about the Panel, including the Terms of Reference and biographies of current members please see <https://www.caa.co.uk/our-work/about-us/caa-consumer-panel/>.

Structure and ways of working

The Panel is a small, specialist policy resource for the CAA and delivers high quality, evidence-based advice in a way which is designed to maximise its impact. The Panel therefore prioritises its work carefully, asking five key questions before embarking on any given project:

- Is the issue important for aviation consumers?
- Does it fall within the Panel's remit?
- Is it an area where the CAA is best placed to effect change?
- Is it (or should it be) a priority for the CAA?
- Is it an area where the consumer voice is less understood or not represented which could benefit from additional focus?

The Panel also prioritises the interests of consumers it considers to be at greater risk of vulnerability throughout its work.

The Panel is supported by a small Secretariat based within the CAA Consumers and Markets Group. The Panel produces a work programme (every two years) which it aims to align with the CAA's strategy and key focus areas in order to have maximum impact. The Panel also produces an annual report which is shared with the CAA Board and published on the CAA's website, setting out progress made against the work programme, and other developments and priorities that might arise.

While the Panel's focus is on delivering against its work programme, it also responds to requests from the CAA and remains flexible to new developments and can adapt to future priorities.

The Panel meets formally on a quarterly basis but in between meetings, members participate in various sub-group workshops with CAA colleagues to provide advice and guidance on different areas of work.

Current and future priorities

The Panel's general focus is on building the evidence base, driving better outcomes for consumers, and influencing future frameworks. Most recently, this has been in the context of the aviation sector's recovery from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, following a turbulent few years in the aviation sector.

The overarching focus in the Panel's current work programme (November 2024 – November 2026) is on navigating the new 'post-pandemic' aviation landscape in the best interests of consumers, by building the evidence base, driving better outcomes for consumers and influencing future frameworks.

Given that the Panel has almost completed its current work programme, it will shortly be publishing an interim one year work programme from summer 2026 to summer 2027 to reflect the latest developments shaping the consumer landscape, including:

- The government's growth agenda, including airport expansion.
- The Middle East conflict and its impact on consumers.
- The recent announcement of a new Aviation Bill, which will strengthen the CAA's consumer powers.
- The rapid pace of change in aerospace innovation.
- The ongoing focus on environmental sustainability, including climate change.

The Panel will also shortly publish its 2025/26 annual report setting out its progress against the current work programme and setting the scene for the new interim work programme.

Role description

Role title Consumer Panel Chair

Overview

We are seeking to appoint a new Chair of the CAA Consumer Panel to replace the current Chair whose term ends in December 2026. For further information on the Panel's current Chair and membership see <https://www.caa.co.uk/our-work/about-us/caa-consumer-panel/>.

The first six months of the new Chair's term, starting in January 2027, will focus on delivering the interim work programme and responding to new developments and priorities. During this time, the Chair and Members will also have the opportunity to shape the next work programme (from summer 2027 covering a period of two years). As part of the onboarding process, the appointed Panel Chair will also be invited to observe the 8 October 2026 Panel meeting.

The Chair and Members are required to work towards the objectives of the Panel and not promote their own interests or those of any group or organisation for which they work, or of which they are members. No employee of the CAA may be Chair or a Member of the Panel.

The role of the Chair

Alongside developing a constructive working relationship, the CAA recognises the need to ensure the Panel has sufficient independence to make a difference. Within this context, it is important that the Panel Chair has an ability to speak with authority and credibility, and to question and challenge the CAA constructively where appropriate. To support this, the Panel Chair will need to meet with the CAA Board, the CAA Chair, Chief Executive, and other members of the Senior Executive on a regular basis, as per the recommendations from the 2023 Public Bodies Review. [1]

More generally, the Chair of the Panel should:

- Influence and challenge, by:
 - Building strong, constructive and credible relationships with the CAA (especially at Board and Executive level) in order to act as the CAA's critical friend on consumer matters.
 - Representing, advocating and championing the consumer interest across the CAA's wide-ranging functions and the Panel's advice, framing evidence in a way that resonates with the CAA's strategic and regulatory priorities.

- Run the Panel effectively through:
 - Collaborative and inclusive leadership, creating a 'safe space' for the Panel to challenge the CAA and express their views and to getting the best from members' diverse expertise and experience, drawing out clear, practical insights that add value to CAA colleagues' policy development and decision making.
 - Effective diplomacy skills across the Panel, with the ability to find common ground and consensus where there are diverging views.

[1][Civil Aviation Authority review: report - GOV.UK](#)

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- Setting a clear forward agenda for the Panel in collaboration with the CAA, ensuring meetings and the work programme are purposeful and outcome focused, while ensuring the Panel remains flexible and can adapt to new priorities.

What success looks like in this role

- The Panel's advice is understood, trusted and influences the CAA's wider work and supports consumer focused and future-proof policy development and decision-making.
- The consumer interest is further embedded across the organisation, with the Panel's views being proactively sought as a source of trusted independent advice, guidance and challenge.
- Discussions cover both direct and indirect consumer impacts, which are communicated by the Panel in clear, non-technical terms and in a way that provides genuine value and benefits to CAA colleagues.
- Panel members feel safe, engaged and valued, even when views differ.
- Relationships between the Panel, Board and Executive, and working level colleagues, are constructive, trusting and robust enough to withstand challenge.

Who we are looking for

The successful candidate will be genuinely committed to enabling the Panel to shape the CAA's regulatory and consumer work, ensuring it addresses the needs of current, potential and future aviation consumers, including those engaging with emerging technologies.

Candidates should be able to demonstrate:

- A broad understanding of, and a deep-seated commitment to, promoting and protecting the interests of consumers; in particular how these interests are shaped by regulation and policy.
- A strong understanding of the broader consumer landscape as well as the key strategic and regulatory issues shaping that landscape.
- A deep understanding of what the 'consumer interest' means in practice and how to protect and promote their interests in different policy contexts.

Candidates should also:

- Have strong experience of regulated markets/regulation.
- Be able to understand the impact of CAA policy on the aviation market and consumers.
- Be able to demonstrate strong chairing skills and experience, including by listening and challenging in a constructive manner, and providing an objective and independent point of view.
- Be highly credible and constructive, including by listening and challenging in a constructive manner, providing an objective and independent point of view.
- Work collaboratively with the ability to take account of different perspectives as part of a collegiate decision-making process and to take ownership for decisions made.
- Be able to analyse and evaluate complex information and data, in order to form opinions and make fair, balanced and proportionate decisions based on evidence and reasoned argument.
- Be able to influence at Board and Executive level, including:
 - The ability to build strong relationships and influence at various levels, including Board and Executive level.
 - Exceptional communication skills, including the ability to challenge and engage constructively and courteously.
 - Confidence to robustly challenge in a constructive manner, providing an independent point of view based on sound evidence, advice and insight.
 - A strong awareness of the wider policy, regulatory, and institutional context, including government priorities.

In terms of expertise and experience, knowledge of aviation and transport issues is not an essential requirement, provided those new to the industry can demonstrate their capability to quickly get to grips with the intricacies of unfamiliar sectors or industries. However, candidates should be able to demonstrate strong consumer and regulatory related experience and expertise, with the ability to engage credibly and influence technical specialists and senior decision-makers.

Potential or perceived conflicts of interest will need to be considered as part of the recruitment process. As such we ask that applicants highlight any potential or perceived conflicts when applying. New members will also be expected to undertake BPSS security clearance.

Terms of appointment

Remuneration

This role is remunerated at a rate of circa £650 per day. The CAA will also reimburse reasonable travel expenses for members making extensive journeys to meet Panel commitments, and the Panel Chair's attendance at two CAA Board meetings per year.

Location

Flexible / remote, but in-person attendance is required at quarterly Consumer Panel meetings at the CAA's London office in Westferry, and two CAA Board meetings per year.

Time Commitment

Approximately 3 days per month.

The Chair will also be required to contribute to various virtual sub-groups and committees in between formal Panel meetings, as well as maintaining good working relationships with key members of CAA staff.

Start date

1st January 2027.

The newly appointed Chair will be invited to observe the Panel meeting on 8 October 2026.

Term of Appointment

3 years with the option to extend for further 3 years.

Security clearance level

BPSS

How to apply

To make an application, please go to <https://starfishsearch.com/jobs/consumer-panel-chair-cao/> and click on the apply now button, with the following prepared:

- Your CV (no more than three sides).
- A covering letter that sets out your motivation for applying to be Consumer Panel Chair and describes how you meet the experience as set out in “who we are looking for”.
 - Please also set out any potential or perceived conflicts of interest in your Covering Letter.
 - Please confirm your availability to observe the meeting on 8 October.
 - If you use AI tools to assist with your application, please also make this clear in your Cover Letter.

Applications which do not include both a CV and a Cover Letter will not be considered.

We would also be grateful if you would complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form on the online application process. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

Deadline for applications is **Friday 24 July 2026**.

Recruitment timetable

Closing date: Friday 24 July 2026

Preliminary interviews: August 2026

Final Panel interviews: Mid-September