Annual Safety Report 2024



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What's inside

NATS is the UK's principal air navigation services provider (ANSP) and is split into two main businesses, NATS (En Route) plc (NERL), and NATS (Services) Ltd (NSL). This report addresses NATS' operational and occupational safety performance, focusing on safety of our services as well as the safety and wellbeing of our employees. The report includes performance and updates covering the 2024 calendar year.



Introduction

With more than 2.5m air traffic movements last year, close to the pre-pandemic record levels of 2019, I am particularly proud that NATS recorded another strong year of safety performance. Maintaining such high levels of performance requires constant effort, and is something that we will never become complacent about. Our aim is always to work to improve safety no matter how good the previous performance.

One of the major developments we have progressed in the past year is changing the way we think about safety through introducing risk based oversight to ensure a methodical and aligned approach across the business. This is driving a more holistic approach to risk management, including human-related risks such as fatigue. On this topic, we have published our first fatigue management manual, which documents how we manage fatigue across the operational environment. This builds on our robust management of Air Traffic Controllers' (ATCOs) operational time and rosters.

More widely, our approach of "safe in everything we do" encourages employee awareness not only during their working day but also in their personal lives. We have embedded our four safety behaviours – Communicate, Support, Challenge and Report – and expanded our training to reinforce our drive towards a positive safety culture across the whole business, shaping both individual and organisational behaviours.

In the air, our performance has stayed strong, meeting all five of our safety performance targets. Two ongoing areas of attention are airspace infringements, where we are working with the General Aviation community, and the emerging challenge posed by drones and the other new airspace users. We are developing our OpenAir proposition to establish a complete known environment across our airspace so that all air traffic can be integrated, making more efficient use of airspace than if we segregated each user into its own small area. We will be submitting our proposal on this to our regulator, the Civil Aviation authority (CAA), in June 2025.

We look forward to the coming summer and continuing to prioritise safety for the travelling public.

> **Our aim is always to work to improve safety no matter how good the previous performance.**
>
> **Martin Rolfe**
> Chief Executive Officer



Introduction

This is the second annual safety report that NATS has published publicly, and it therefore allows a direct comparison to last year's extremely strong report; that favourable comparison demonstrates that NATS has been able to maintain its excellent safety performance, even as traffic levels continue to grow. NATS approached this year as it does any other - with safety thinking and actions embedded into every aspect of the operation. Whilst it is always challenging for any organisation to maintain consistently a very high standard, NATS has dedicated considerable time and effort on learning from past performance and being proactive in embedding good practices early; it has done this ahead of peak periods of activity and focussed on any previously identified areas for improvement.

As the CEO states in his introduction, we are now seeing a return to pre-pandemic levels of activity, and safety management has been focussed on making sure that NATS was ready to handle this return. The revised approach to risk-based oversight has enabled the entire organisation to focus on the right areas and be predictive and proactive in establishing correct behaviours and activities in order to maintain their excellent record. In addition, innovative approaches to fatigue management are becoming an increasingly powerful tool to aid the optimisation of performance in individuals.

NATS has a history of a strong safety record, but the organisation is constantly learning and adapting to build on each incremental improvement. Not only is this the strong sign of a healthy, learning organisation, it means that they are well prepared for the challenges to come. These include the potential to revolutionise our airspace and the way we control it, whilst enabling its use for every type of user. I commend this report and the dedication and hard work that goes into the strong safety culture and activity that underpins it.

> **NATS maintained a strong safety record in 2024, comfortably meeting all safety performance targets while managing more than 2.5m air traffic movements.**

Greg Bagwell
Safety Review Committee Chair



Introduction

We maintained a strong safety record in 2024, comfortably meeting all safety performance targets while managing more than 2.5m air traffic movements. Our robust reporting culture generates essential safety intelligence that helps to inform our safety improvement activities and longer term plans. Maintaining a good safety performance is never taken for granted, as even established procedures can be intolerant to human performance variations. This is why we continue to drive focus on human factors, developing a comprehensive human-related risk assessment process as well as testing new technologies to support human performance decision making.

Our 2024 safety performance is echoed by the company's increasingly mature Safety Management System (SMS), which was independently recognised by the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO) Standard of Excellence assessments. This achievement marks a significant step towards our 2028 goal to elevate our SMS maturity. Likewise, internal and external audits provide an essential litmus test for the effectiveness of the safety management approach, producing insights into where things work effectively, as well as areas that need further improvement.

The health and safety of NATS employees is an essential part of overall safety. We have recorded 2 RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2012) incidents in 2024, compared with 0 in 2023. Although both incidents were investigated and improvements implemented to prevent recurrence, this highlights the importance of advancing our Health & Safety (H&S) practices. We endeavour not only to maintain ISO 45001 certification, but also to increase H&S competence across the business by improving our training offerings in a continuous effort to reduce H&S risks.



2024 Highlights

+1%

Increase in traffic levels across all NATS operations vs 2023

6

High severity (RAT A or B) events (better than target: 10)

-4%

Reported Health & Safety incidents

28.6

NATS RAT points per 100k movements (better than target: 52.3)

74.7

RAT points per 100k movements (better than target: 110.5)

2

Reportable (RIDDOR) Injuries (within target: 2)

0

NATS-attributable Airprox A or B (= to target)

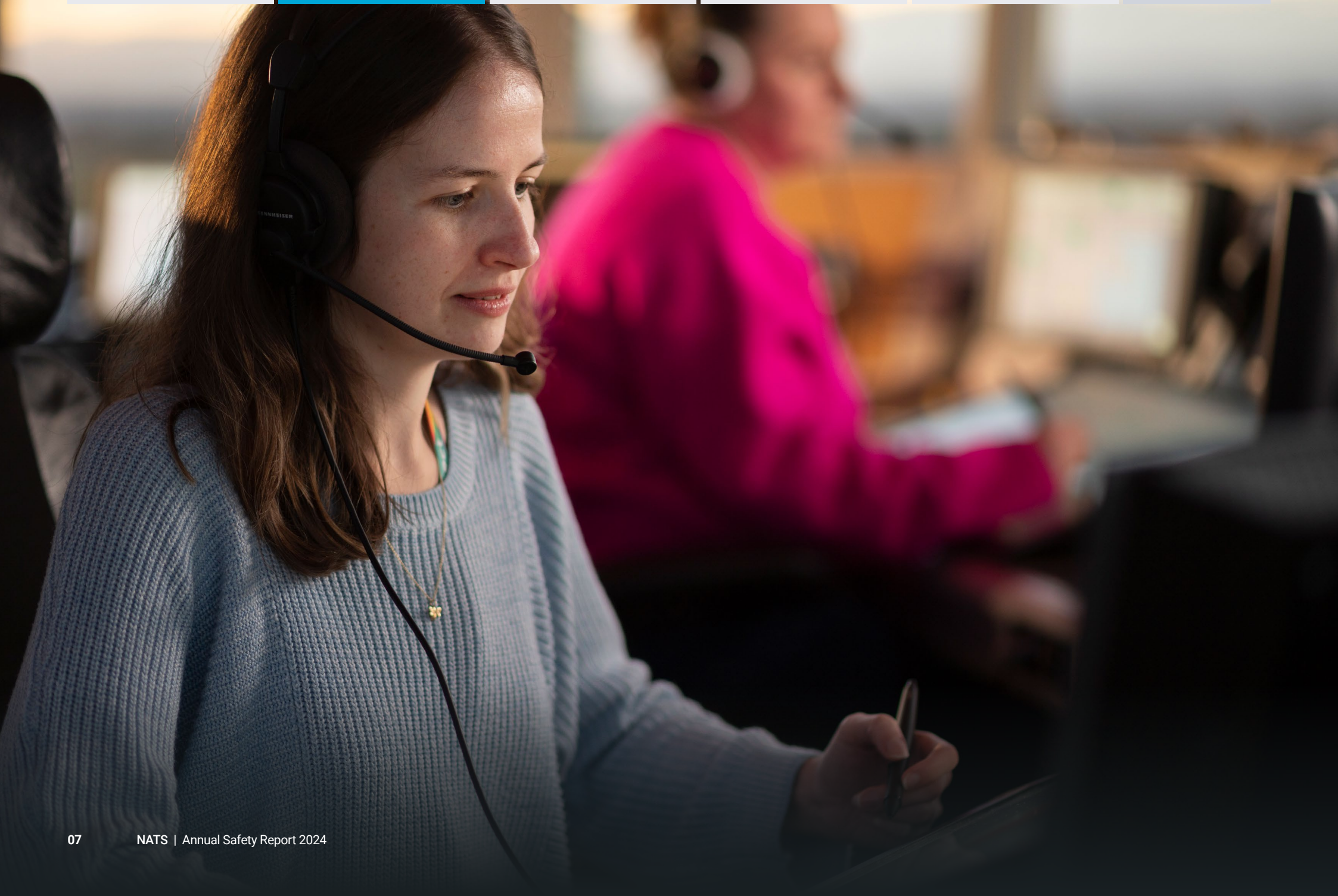
3.9

Losses of Separation per 100k movements (better than target: 5.1)

-18%

Peer Support interventions

Overall, NATS has met or exceeded all operational safety targets.



Safety Management Approach

Enhancing Safety Management: Progress and Future Direction.

Over the past year, our Safety Management System (SMS) has evolved to align better with our current and future business needs. We have developed a common set of outcomes for centres and units to report against when declaring risk; this aims to establish a unified language for discussing risk across the company, providing a consistent and simplified approach. Over the coming year, we will support the centres and airports in implementing this approach to ensure a smooth transition and consistent application.

Our progress in evolving the maturity of our SMS was recognised through the award of two CANSO SMS best practices and attainment of Level C maturity in the CANSO SMS Standard of Excellence (SoE) questionnaire, which is an advancement from Level B maturity last year. Work continues on the remaining actions to deliver our plan and achieve Level D in all study areas by 2028.

We have continued to develop our SMS training offering. This includes the first delivery of a specific safety assessment workshop for safety practitioners, which will be offered more widely to the practitioner community in the coming year, and the expansion of our introductory computer-based training (CBT) modules which are now available for five of our SMS processes. These efforts are designed to support practitioner competency and maintain safety standards.

An independent SMS review has been commissioned to take place in 2025, which will compare our SMS to safety-related industry practices, identifying strengths and weaknesses to allow for continued improvement. We expect this to provide valuable insights and help us further refine and enhance our SMS, ensuring it remains robust and effective.

Driving safety management effectiveness

Previously, assurance that safety is managed in accordance with the SMS was provided through a regular schedule of audits largely based on time elapsed since the last audit for each unit. 2024 marked the second year since we introduced SMS Risk-Based Oversight (RBO), where the assessment plan is constructed using a risk profile, safety performance intelligence and a prioritisation list for units, business areas and safety processes, ultimately aiming to address the following fundamental questions:

- Does the unit/business area follow the applicable safety processes?
- Are those processes demonstrably effective at the Unit/business area?

As a minimum, each business area is audited every three years with frequent support visits by the oversight team. In 2024, in-depth on-site audits were carried out at Swanwick and Prestwick Centres, Western Radar and at five NATS airports, focusing on a variety of areas including safety reporting and investigations, competency, safety improvement and ATC procedure safety analysis. The visits, safety reports, internal/external audit findings and other intelligence indicate that although the SMS is effective, there are opportunities to develop closer integration with other business processes, simplify the language and progress our alignment with SMS best practices, particularly in the areas of safety accountability management, and in event reporting and investigation.

External oversight audits are carried out by the CAA at our centres (twice per year) and airports (annually) to review compliance against the regulations related to NERL & NSL's ANSP certification within UK airspace. Following Brexit, NERL and NSL's provision of delegated Air Traffic Services (ATS) in EU airspace has been under the oversight of the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). Delegated ATS are in place to improve management of traffic into and out of UK airspace from France, Ireland and the Netherlands, and to ensure the safe passage of helicopters to the UK's North Sea oil rigs, which are in UK waters but fall within the Icelandic or Norwegian Flight Information Regions (FIRs). EASA has undertaken annual oversight audits since 2021, visiting Aberdeen in June 2024 and planning to visit Prestwick Centre in April 2025. Since January 2023, the CAA has provided equivalent oversight of the French, Irish, Icelandic, Norwegian, Danish and Dutch ANSPs' ATS operations inside UK airspace.

Divergence between the UK and EU Air Traffic Management (ATM) regulations continues to be monitored. For example, the approval of technical equipment under a new EU conformity assessment framework may require additional resource and, from 2028, is likely to require additional certification. Oversight of delegated ATS was discussed at the UK-EU Specialised Committee on Aviation Safety in November 2024, and whilst no changes to the existing oversight activities are currently anticipated, the UK CAA and EASA have proposed areas for increased cooperation.

Looking to the future

The NATS corporate strategy continues to inform our direction and planning is underway to ensure necessary foundations are in place to meet our targets for 2035 and 2040. In working towards longer-term timescales, we are ensuring that safety is actively prioritised and adequate resources are allocated to reinforce its core importance within our organisation. The NATS Safety Plan will clearly outline our goals as well as the activities necessary to step up to the challenge of continuous safety improvement.

One of those underlying foundations is Safety Culture, which shapes behaviours and practices of individuals and organisations. In our efforts to strive for a proactive approach to safety, we must maintain focus on leadership commitment to safety, just culture and safety decision-making. To identify best practice and areas for improvement, NATS is joining a CANSO Safety Culture benchmarking initiative.

Formalising our top risk outcomes across the organisation is part of the evolution of our SMS and will improve the way our business uses safety risk information. We intend to progress with the development of centralised risk registers in order to improve risk communication across different departments and to accountable managers. As part of a broader safety management system, a comprehensive list of hazards and risks will support proactive identification, prioritisation and mitigation of safety concerns. A mature safety culture requires foresight, and risk registers provide a mechanism to ensure we plan for safety challenges through proactive identification and management of potential safety risks before they materialise.

ATCOs manage many complex, time critical tasks where fatigue can lead to sub-optimal performance including reduced reaction times, impaired situation awareness and poor decision-making. To support our operational employees, we have consolidated its fatigue-related processes and practices and created a fatigue management manual. Our work to move towards a Fatigue Risk Management System ahead of regulation underscores our commitment to manage human-related risks. Initial work exploring best practice with over 15 companies including ANSPs, airlines and various other industries has helped us define key steps to enhance our understanding of fatigue risks.

In support of one of our strategic goals, to be relied on by every airspace user, we have developed the NATS OpenAir proposition, covered in more detail in the Airprox section of the Safety Performance chapter. This consultation proposal includes several scenarios for expected drone evolution. Drone sightings reports continue to be a concern for aviation safety, regularly receiving Airprox Risk Class A and B assessments by the UKAB panel. Studies to gather drone-to-crewed aircraft proximity data continue to progress with a goal to better understand and model the risk between drones and commercial aircraft. We continue to participate in Eurocontrol's Drone Impact on Network Operational Safety (DINOS) working group to develop a more consistent approach to dealing with drone-related network safety risks.





Safety Performance

Delivering safe air traffic services.

High-level safety performance measures and targets were set by the NATS leadership team and agreed with the regulator, the CAA, to enable us to track continuous safety improvement. Safety targets are regularly updated in line with performance plan periods with the current period, 2023 to 2027, known as NR23. The measures encompass NERL and Airports operations, although there is day-to-day tracking at all levels of the organisation from individual sectors to the whole NATS Group. Our strong reporting culture and 'just investigation' ethos continue to drive confidence in our reported performance.

Target 1: The annual number of risk-bearing Airprox (assessed as A or B events) attributable to NATS

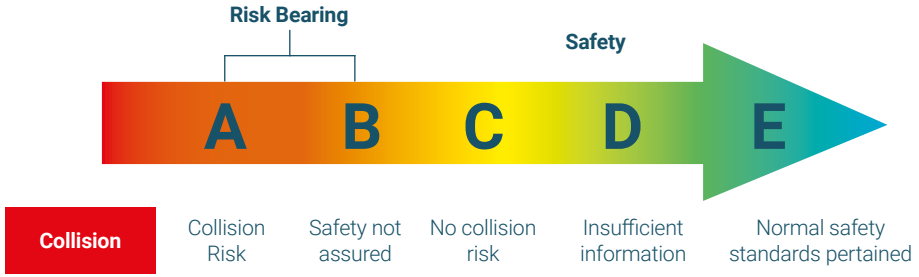
Target met
Target: 0

This measure is focused on Airprox, defined in ICAO DOC 4444: PANS-ATM as: a situation in which, in the opinion of a pilot or a controller, the distance between aircraft, as well as their relative positions and speed, as such that the safety of the aircraft involved was, or may have been, compromised.

Airprox severities are assigned by the UK Airprox Board using the ICAO Airprox risk designation categories, where Category A and B incidents are referred to as risk-bearing:

- Category A - serious risk of collision existed
- Category B - safety of the aircraft compromised
- Category C - no risk of collision
- Category D - insufficient information
- Category E - normal safety standards pertained

There were zero NATS-attributable risk bearing Airprox in 2024 – meeting our target. There is, therefore, a potential for a Q4 2024 event to be assessed as a risk bearing Airprox following the publication of this report.



Safety Performance

Target 2: The annual number of NATS high severity RAT events (assessed as A or B events)

Target met
Target: ≤10

This measure is based on the Eurocontrol Risk Analysis Tool (RAT) classifications of significant safety events. The severity category provides a system for consistent and coherent identification of risk elements such as: minimum separation, rate of closure, controller's awareness of the traffic situation, controller's plan to maintain separation, controller execution of that plan, pilot actions and incident recovery including TCAS/GPWS alerts. This target is focused on the NATS contribution to an event, though Target 5 considers the overall score, which is a combination of the scores for the ANSP and third-party contribution to the incident e.g. correct pilot readback followed by incorrect action

The classifications are defined as follows:

- A - Serious Incident
- B - Major Incident
- C - Significant Incident
- E - No safety effect
- D - Insufficient information to assess
- N - No ANSP contribution to the event

A	B	C	E	D	N
Serious	Major	Significant	No Safety Effect	Not Determined	No Contribution
>=31	30 to 18	17 to 10	9 to 1	RF too low	0

RAT scoring must be carried out by specialist investigators, with many incidents going through moderation to ensure consistency throughout the organisation. The target aims to maintain or reduce the number of RAT A and B events to below 10 – the average for a previous reporting period. In 2024, NATS had 6 RAT A/B events, meeting the target. Although each report is investigated to the extent necessary, serious events are followed up by the NATS board-level Safety Review Committee where recommendations and appropriate mitigating actions are scrutinised to ensure they effectively prevent recurrence.

Safety Performance

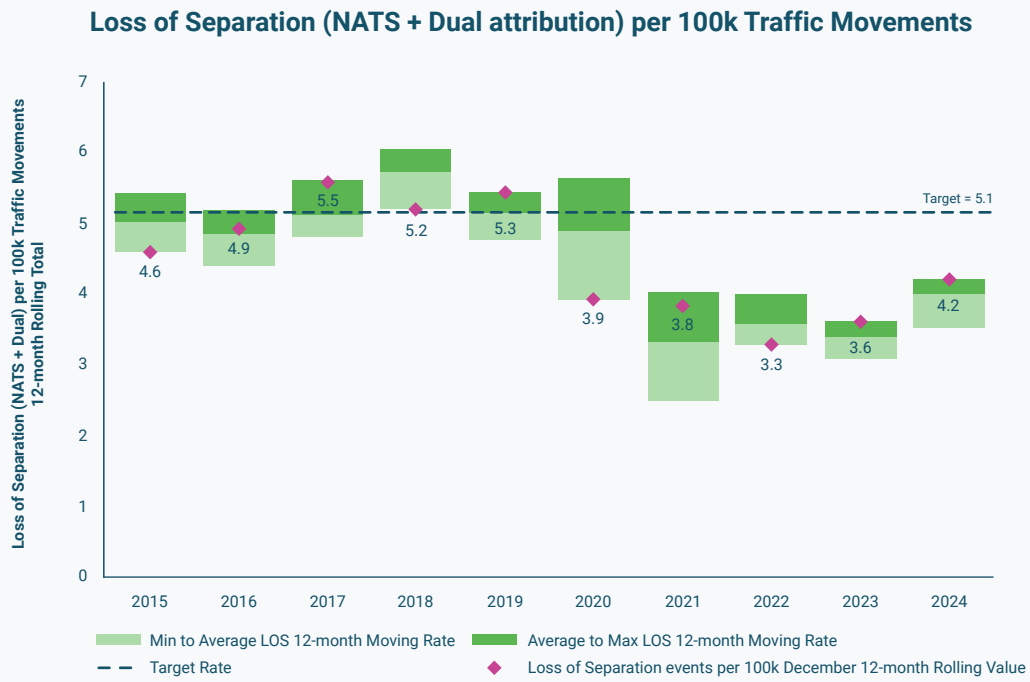
Target 3: Annual number of Loss of Separation events per 100,000 movements

Target met
Target: ≤5.1

Targets 3 to 5 are 12-month rolling totals per 100k flights based on historic averages (for years 2015 to 2019). The measures have been set as rates to help take into account the high correlation between the number of events and traffic levels. The 12-month rolling rate has been selected to even out the seasonal variations.

Aircraft are considered separated when either the horizontal or the vertical separation minima are met. For an event to be classified as a loss of separation, both must have been infringed (i.e. there is neither vertical nor horizontal separation between the aircraft).

With a large portion of NATS RAT points associated with losses, this measure is an important indicator to track. Although the 12-month rolling rate of losses has increased over the course of 2024, partly due to increasing pressure on the London Terminal Manoeuvring Area (LTMA), it remains within target.



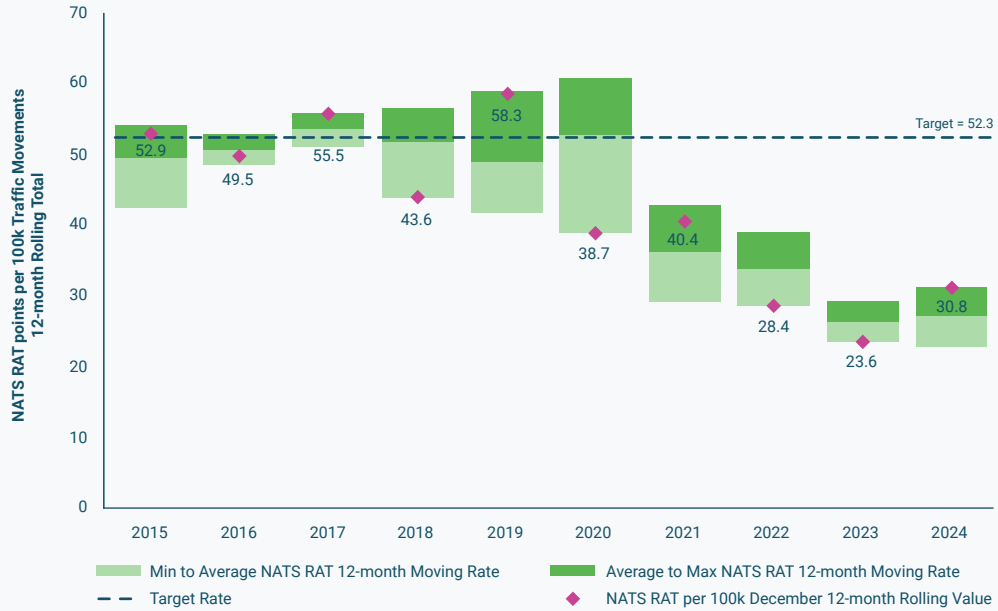
Safety Performance

Target 4: Annual NATS-attributable RAT score per 100,000 movements

Target met
Target: ≤52.3

NATS is allocated RAT points by trained investigators where it is judged either to be directly in the causal chain of events leading to an incident, or where at least one air traffic management event contributed to the level of risk or played a role in the emergence of the occurrence encountered by the aircraft. Therefore, the lower the number of RAT points attributable to NATS, the stronger our safety performance.

The 12-month rolling NATS RAT point rate in 2024 is one of the strongest on record since the RAT scheme was adopted at NATS in 2015. A large portion of the NATS RAT points accrued throughout the year concentrated around the London Terminal Area, triggering a survey of the airspace and the creation of a working group to identify best practices and progress actions in order to prevent recurrence of safety incidents.



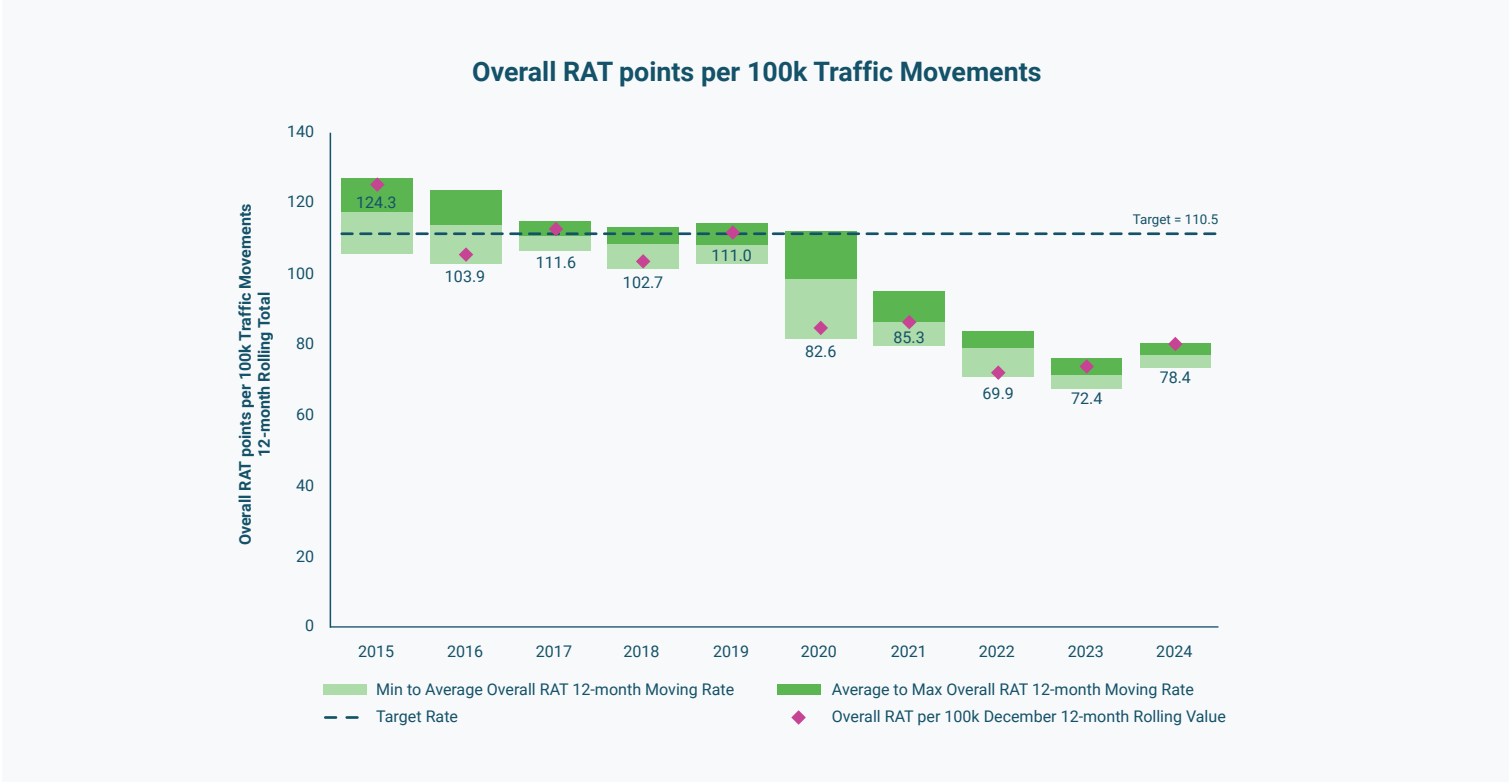
Safety Performance

Target 5: Annual RAT score per 100,000 movements irrespective of attribution (the Overall RAT)

Target met
Target: ≤110.5

The Overall RAT performance is a sum of NATS and non-NATS RAT points for each incident. A reduction in the 12-month rolling Overall RAT rate indicates a reduction in the risk in the air traffic management (ATM) sphere.

The Overall RAT rate has gone up compared to last year indicating increasing pressure in the aviation sector both NATS and non-NATS attributable. While safety performance remains one of the best on record, the increased number of RAT events and RAT points per event has triggered targeted safety improvement activities and lesson learning.

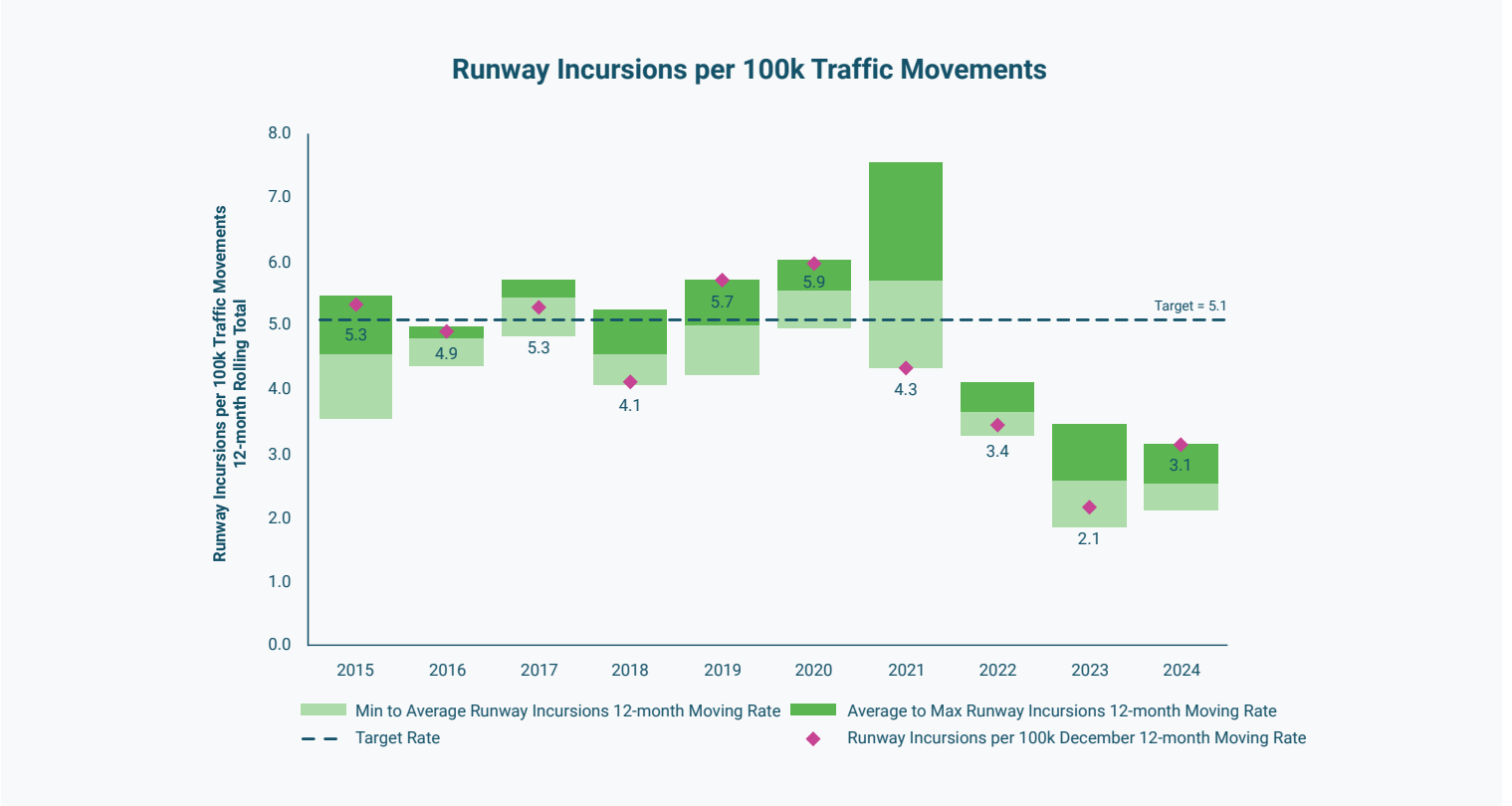


In 2024, we maintained a strong performance, meeting all five of the safety performance targets. In line with UK (EU) 2015/1018 – the UK Mandatory Occurrence Reporting (MOR) regulation, NATS monitors a wide range of other indicators including Runway Incursions, Airprox and Level Busts. This ensures that we are able to maintain a rich picture of aviation safety within the Air Traffic Management sector and quickly identify emerging trends.

Safety Performance

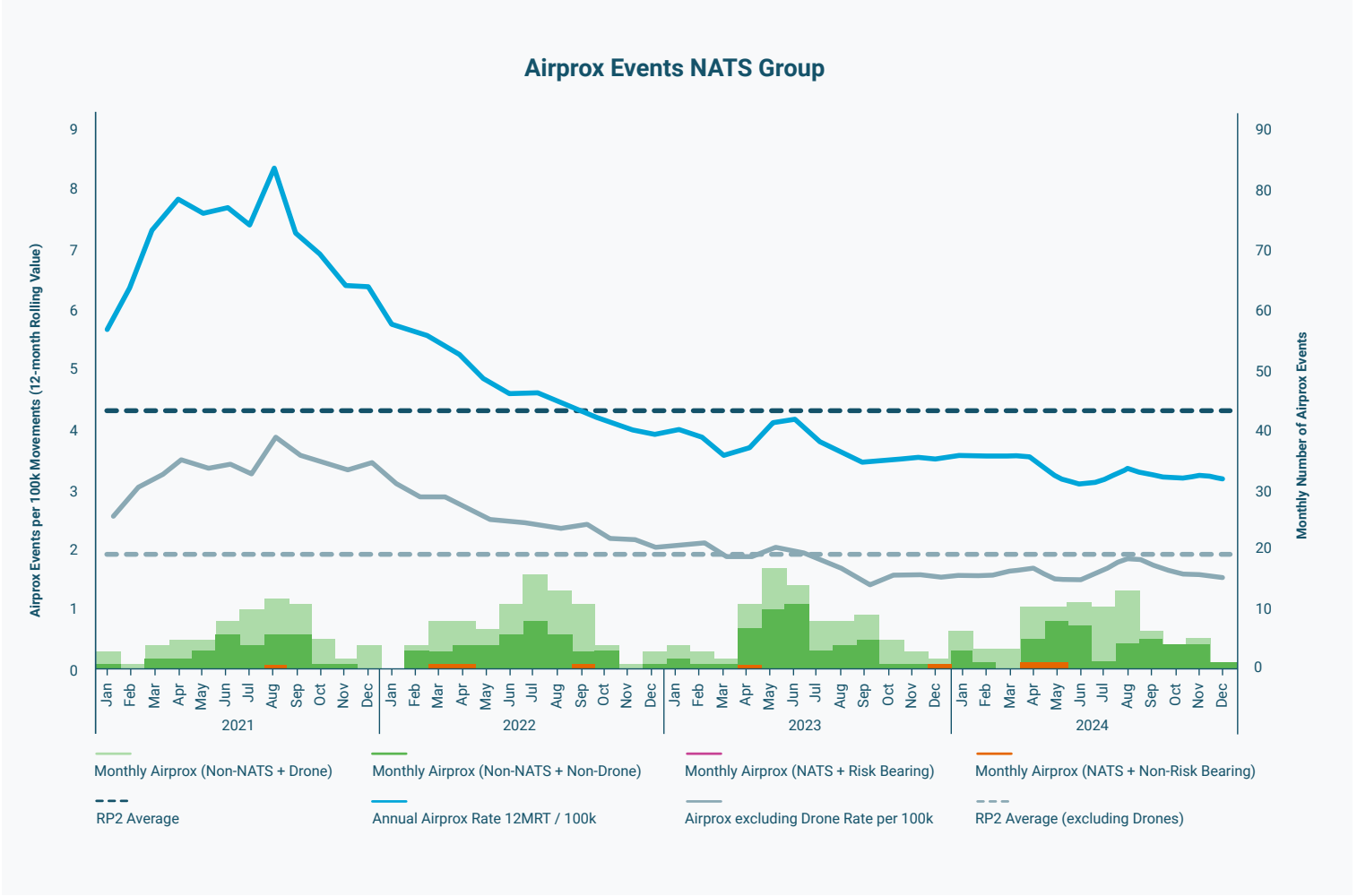
A Runway Incursion is any occurrence at an aerodrome involving the incorrect presence of an aircraft, vehicle or person on the protected area of a surface designated for the landing and take-off of aircraft (ICAO Doc 4444). The 'incorrect presence' may be a consequence of a failure of a pilot or vehicle driver to comply with a valid air traffic control (ATC) clearance or their compliance with an inappropriate ATC clearance.

The Airports 12-month rolling runway incursion rate remains below the pre-Covid average (2015-2019), although it has increased compared to 2023, largely down to pilot actions such as entering a runway without clearance. It is worth noting that the rate of NATS-attributable incursions has stayed broadly similar to 2023 levels. To help reduce our contribution to the risk, we have deployed focussed improvement activities including lesson learning articles based on recent events, such as a runway incursion by emergency vehicles during an aircraft accident exercise.



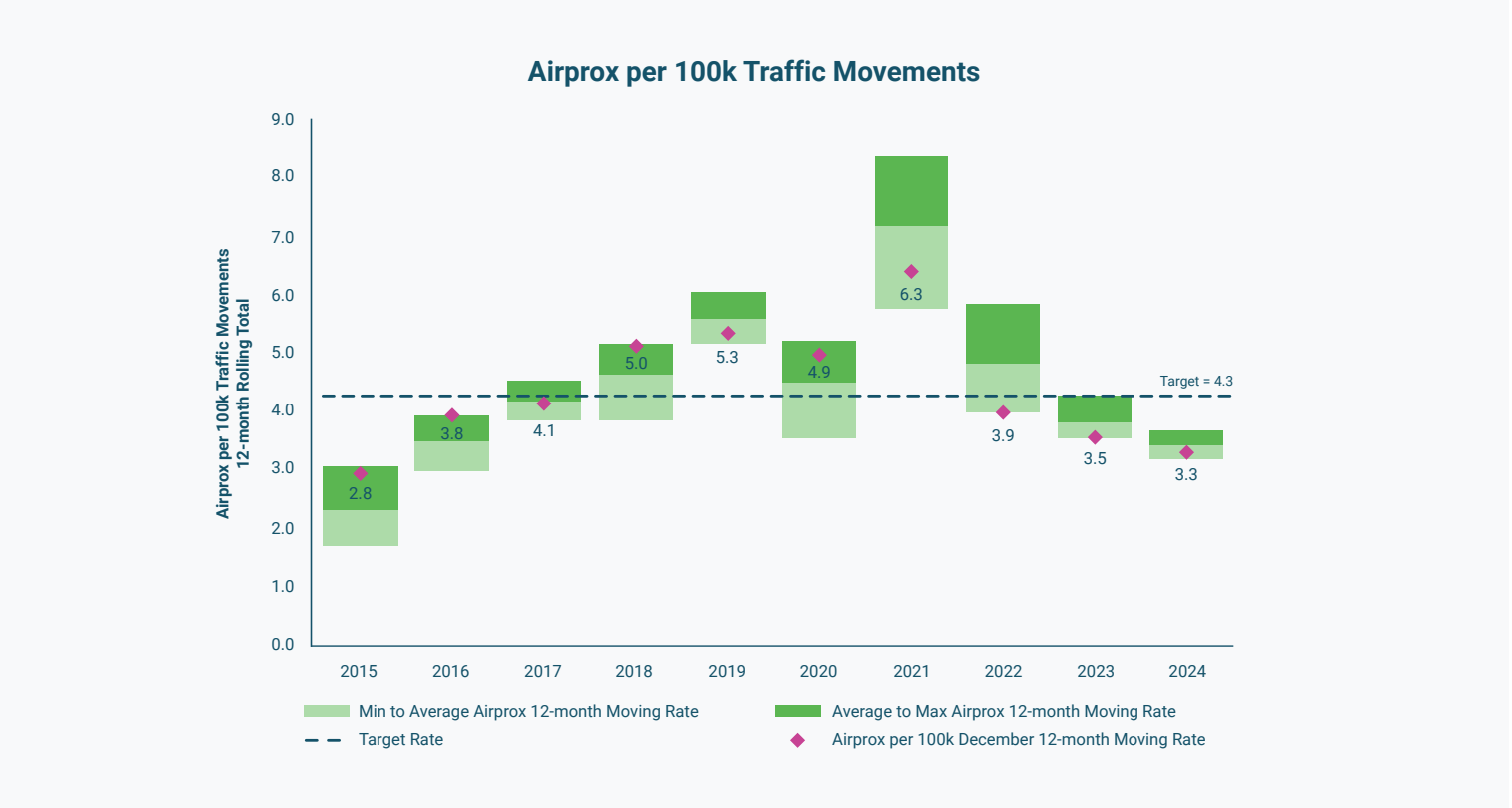
Safety Performance

All Airprox reports are externally assessed by a panel of experienced civilian and military aviator and controller voting members at the UK Airprox Board. The panel discuss and agree the Airprox causal factors as well as the degree of risk of collision, which is an important barometer of risk in the aviation sector.



Safety Performance

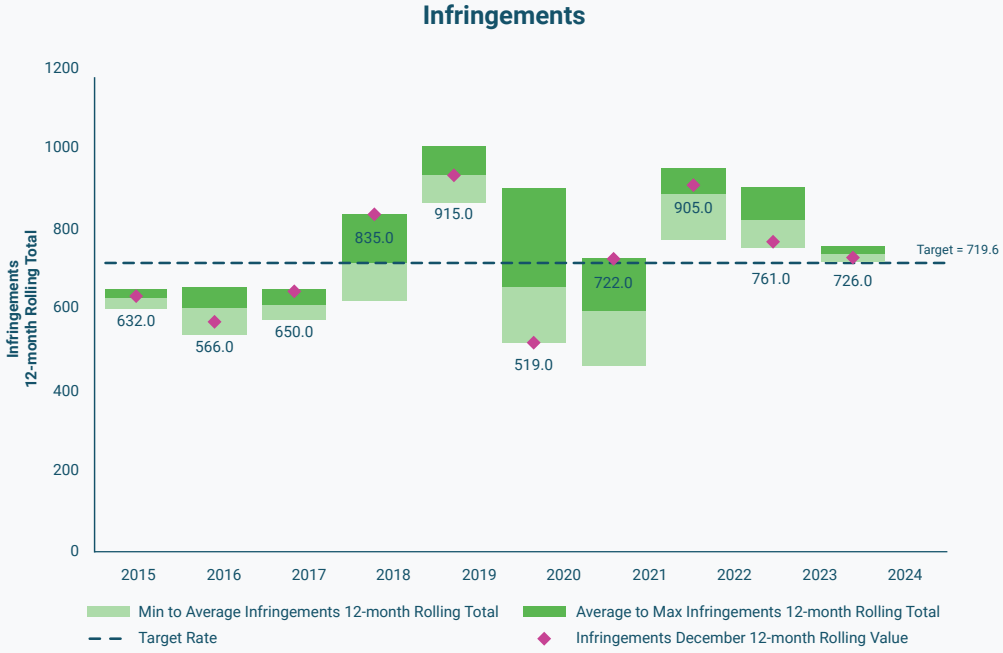
While the rate of Airprox looks disproportionately high during the Covid years, it is as a result of unusually low levels of traffic during that time. Low traffic levels significantly impact rate-based measures, especially those with relatively rare events. As traffic numbers have increased, the Airprox rate has made a steady recovery. 2024 data indicates that the rate has improved compared to last year's strong performance. Drones remain a significant proportion of NATS-reported Airprox events, especially during the summer months. There are very few, if any, ground-based barriers available for Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) as their pilots are not in contact with ATC and the systems rarely have electronic conspicuity, which makes them undetectable by radar. In anticipation of eVTOL aircraft, and with mass drone operations set to transform our skies in the future, we have published our OpenAir proposal, which offers to extend our aeronautical information services. Following an extensive and ongoing campaign of stakeholder engagement and previous industry consultations, we intend to take a detailed proposal for these new Specified Services to the CAA in 2025.



Safety Performance

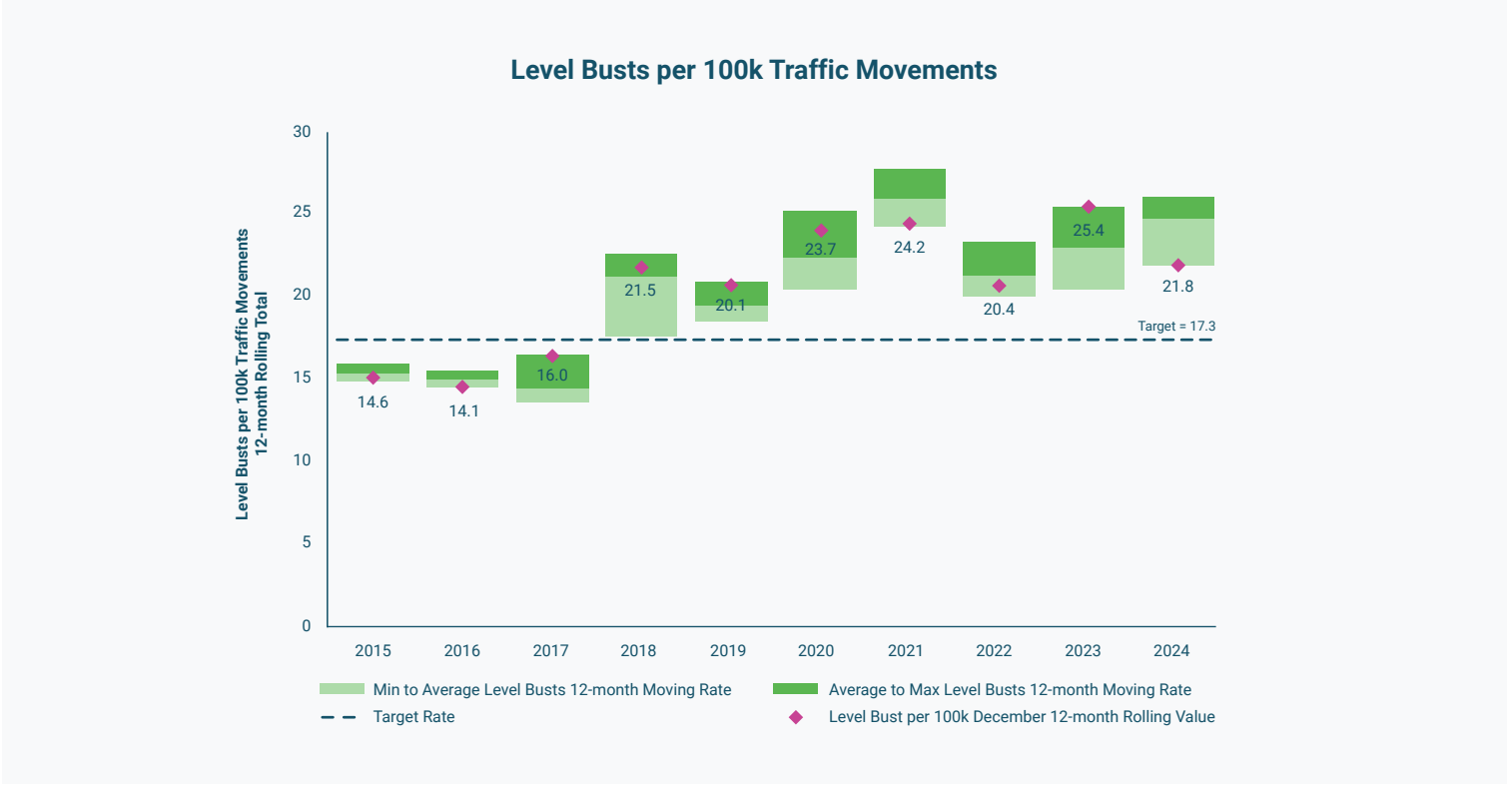
An airspace infringement occurs when an aircraft enters notified airspace without previously requesting and obtaining clearance from the controlling authority of that airspace, or enters the airspace under conditions that were not contained in the clearance. Notified airspace includes controlled airspace structures in International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) airspace classes A to E, such as Airways, Terminal Control Areas (TMAs), Control Zones (CTRs) or Aerodrome Traffic Zones (ATZ) outside controlled airspace, as well as restricted airspaces such as danger areas, restricted areas, prohibited areas and temporary segregated/reserved areas.

Airspace infringements continue to be a serious safety hazard that can cause significant disruption and aircraft delays, as well as loss of separation minima and potentially even mid-air collision. Safety incident investigation data highlights trends such as the rise in infringements around Easter holidays when general aviation (GA) pilots return to flying after a few months' absence. Pre-empting spikes in GA flying numbers means we can develop targeted materials to support the GA community in keeping the skies safe. Wherever possible, we contact the infringing pilots with a request to fill in a questionnaire to determine the underlying reasons behind infringements. This feeds into the NATS Airspace Infringement Working Group (NAIWG) to tackle the risks with targeted safety improvement actions. NATS controllers continue to adopt proactive and defensive controlling techniques to manage infringements, evidenced by the low annual overall and NATS RAT totals associated with infringements. Due to the significant level of disruption that infringements can cause to the smooth running of safe and expedient operations, especially around London approach sectors, this risk remains a significant external factor requiring ongoing management.



Safety Performance

A level bust or altitude deviation occurs when an aircraft fails to fly at their cleared flight level. Incident data indicates this most often occurs when the pilot correctly reads back a clearance but follows up with an incorrect action, or as a result of altimeter setting errors. 2024 saw the number of levels busts peak and start to decrease towards the end of the year. Despite the rising traffic levels, the number of level busts has started to decrease in the last few months of the year, meaning the overall number of losses of separation as well as Overall RAT points related to this event type has improved compared to 2023. Controllers continue to manage altitude deviations well despite increasing traffic complexity. A joint CAA and NATS analysis report has highlighted a number of recommendations that will help reduce the risk.



Safety Performance

Air Traffic Management Technical Services

The ATC technical systems are the backbone of both NERL and NSL, ensuring operational safety and efficiency. As air traffic levels have continued to increase, the performance of our Technical Services in terms of safety and service has remained strong. There were no Engineering RAT A or B incidents throughout the year within the NERL En Route operation and one RAT B within the airport business.

In 2024, there was a decrease in the number of safety reports, continuing the strong safety performance and delivering our best technical safety results since 2018. During the year, incidents having a notable impact on customers were limited to four, with engineering attributable delay totalling 2,153 minutes. These events included a network fault at the Prestwick centre and events relating to the provision of delegated air traffic services in airspace around Cardiff Airport.

Technical Services has continued to enhance its 'Safety Culture' programme for employees, which includes the provision of monthly, themed safety information updates for promulgation by managers and mandated, updated, safety culture training.



Improving Performance

Embedding our safety behaviours.

Safety performance across operations continued to be strong in 2024; an excellent achievement considering traffic had risen to 96% of 2019 levels. Both Swanwick and Prestwick Centres have been within both targets for Overall RAT points and NATS RAT points since September 2020 and our airports business has been within both targets since August 2022, one of the longest-ever periods of sustained strong performance. This culminated in a 49% reduction in NATS RAT points.

Strong safety performance post-COVID has been attributed to a variety of different elements. At the heart of these is a cultural change which has taken many years to achieve and is the context which underpins all performance. The pandemic was most certainly a disruptor and had the effect of amplifying and accelerating some of those cultural shifts and resetting the operational environment. We launched a company-wide campaign in 2024, focusing on our four safety behaviours – Communicate, Support, Challenge and Report – reinforcing a positive safety culture.

The 2024 safety day, delivered to En Route operational staff, used the four safety behaviours as a vehicle to embed Team Resource Management (TRM) techniques. In-person discussions centred on the good TRM witnessed during a safety event, rather than the traditional outcome-focused approach based on areas for improvement. This change in the way we discussed safety was well received by participants, and the Centres Safety Improvement Team (CSIT) will continue with this approach in 2025.

At airports, various initiatives were undertaken: operational leadership sessions were delivered at Gatwick; an innovative project utilising eye tracker technology to support 'learners' was undertaken at Heathrow; annual conferences were held for Unit Safety Managers (USM) and Unit Competence Managers (UCM); quarterly UCM and USM Forums were instigated to further foster collaboration; ATCO Refresher Training (ART 9) was published; a Capability and Competency Framework was established; eight 737 Max workshops were held at Bristol, Glasgow, Luton and Military units; Safety Culture and Behaviour sessions were delivered to new learners; the Lesson Learning Hub (LLH) published six articles on NATS events and many external articles and LLH Engagement remains high with over 5,500 views since its inception.

Safety improvement teams across our operation continue to provide fast-paced lesson learning and identify weak signals before they evolve into major incidents. Working alongside operational teams, they look to continue the collaborative approach that has served to achieve strong safety performance.





Health & Safety

Ensuring H&S compliance and the safety of all has been our primary focus.

During 2024, there were a total of 202 NATS Occupational H&S incident reports (2023: 293). While this suggests a reduction, changes to the incident reporting system and process allow us to better illustrate incidents that are investigated and managed by our contractors. In total, the number of work-related incident reports received into the incident reporting system was 290 (2023: 303), an overall decrease of 4% versus 2023.

Proactive reports (safety observations and close calls) remained stable with 246 reports in 2024 (2023: 249). There was a significant decrease in non-lost time injuries at 23 (2023: 41). Lost-time injuries were unchanged at 4 (2023: 4), however from these lost-time injuries, NATS recorded 2 reportable events under RIDDOR (2023: 0). While we achieved our target of two or fewer reportable events per year, the increase highlights the importance of continued good H&S practice and a need for a robust reporting culture.

Investigations into the two injuries reported under RIDDOR during 2024 revealed no linked causes. The first reportable injury incident arose due to an unsafe condition presented at a non-NATS maintained site outside of our direct control; the second reported injury was caused by a hand tool, which has now been replaced with a safer alternative and an improved approach to PPE selection.

Improvements in September 2024 to the reporting system and process have also allowed investigators greater flexibility to scope investigations to an appropriate level for the nature of the reported hazards, and brings NATS process into line with published Health and Safety Executive investigation guidance and timescales. This has resulted in a 100% on-time completion rate for high-potential investigations since the updates were launched.

Our incident report data shows that while slips, trips and falls remain the most prevalent hazard in the business, accounting for 16% of all H&S incident reports (2023: 24%), there has been a demonstrable fall in the number. To address the ongoing presence of incidents related to slips, trips and falls, we have improved hazard identification, risk assessment and H&S planning processes and has embarked on a programme of training for responsible persons across the business. By improving our systems for risk management and the competence of our assessors, we expect to further reduce H&S incidents across our workplaces.

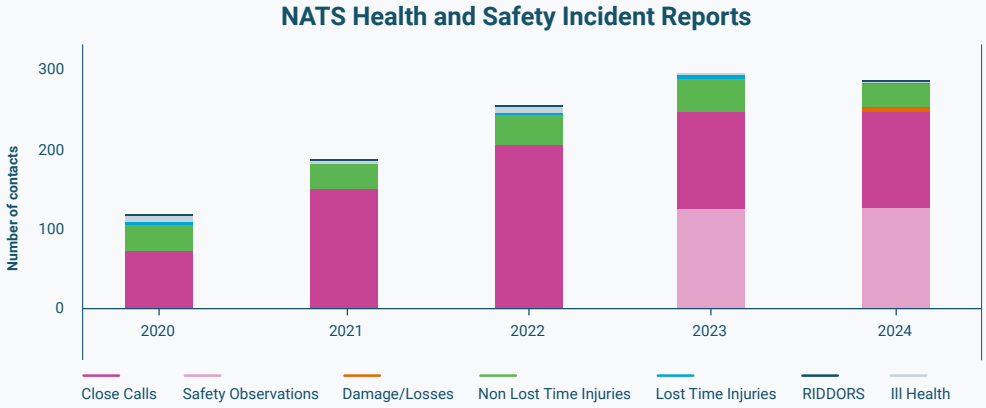


Health & Safety

Of further note, electrical hazards reported in 2024 accounted for 6% of reported incidents compared to <2% in 2023. Analysis of these incidents has revealed cause trends associated with installation and maintenance of electrical equipment at centres and offices. In response to this, we have initiated action to conduct a structured improvement project led by the NATS Electrical Principal Authorising Authority. This will include a detailed analysis of all electrical incidents and will establish an improvement plan to target identified root causes and drive risk reduction in those areas where NATS holds accountability for maintenance and installation of electrical systems and equipment.

In 2024, NATS advanced its H&S practices, building on lessons learned and maintaining ISO 45001 certification through targeted enhancements to the management system and reporting tools. Updates to the Health & Safety Incident Reporting and Investigation tool streamlined workflows, enabling investigation lengths to align with incident complexity for efficient resolutions.

We also concluded a review of H&S training processes and released revised and updated guidance to managers and employees on training needs analysis and increased training offerings; and this has set expectations for competence at the different career levels of the organisation. This clarity provides business areas with the tools they need to establish risk-based training plans for 2025, which will be developed and assured against in the coming year. Implementation of these plans will build on existing training offerings to increase H&S competence across NATS, delivering against our statutory commitments and reducing risk.

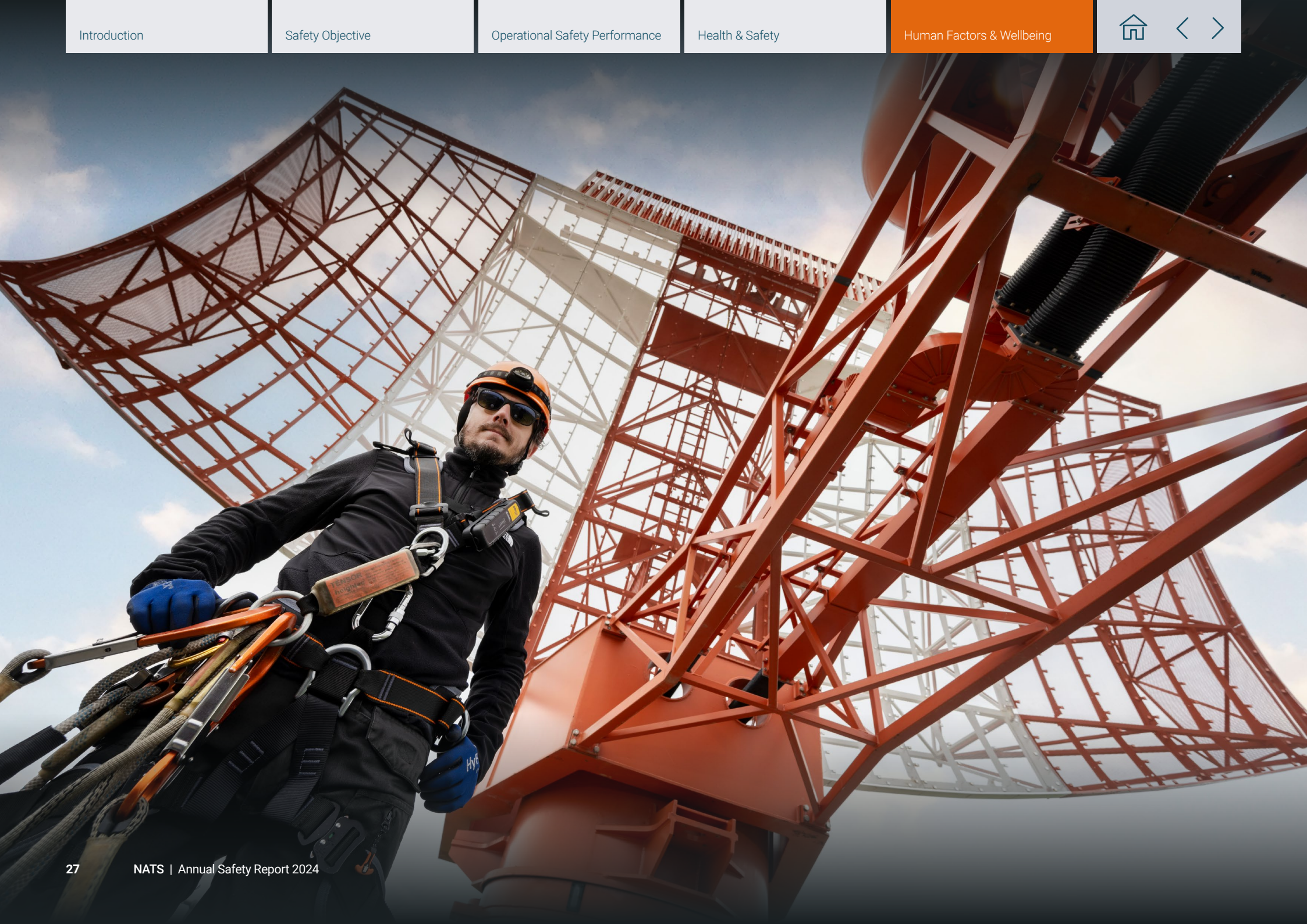


Health & Safety Improvements

Using the lessons learned to further develop H&S Improvements.

A 'People Safe' conference, held for the first time in 2024, provided a valuable platform for discussing safety culture across the organisation. Attendees, some with military, airline and airport sector experience, shared insights and challenged existing practices to champion improvements. Table discussions fostered in-depth, open dialogue, reinforcing the importance of collaboration in creating a safer working environment. We have maintained certification against the ISO 45001 Occupational Health and Safety Management System standard. During 2024, our accredited certification body, DNV, undertook a range of systems and site-based audits revealing no major non-conformances. The outputs from these independent audits assure that we have an effective management system and that it is used to minimise H&S risks to our employees, contractors, partner organisations and people visiting our sites.



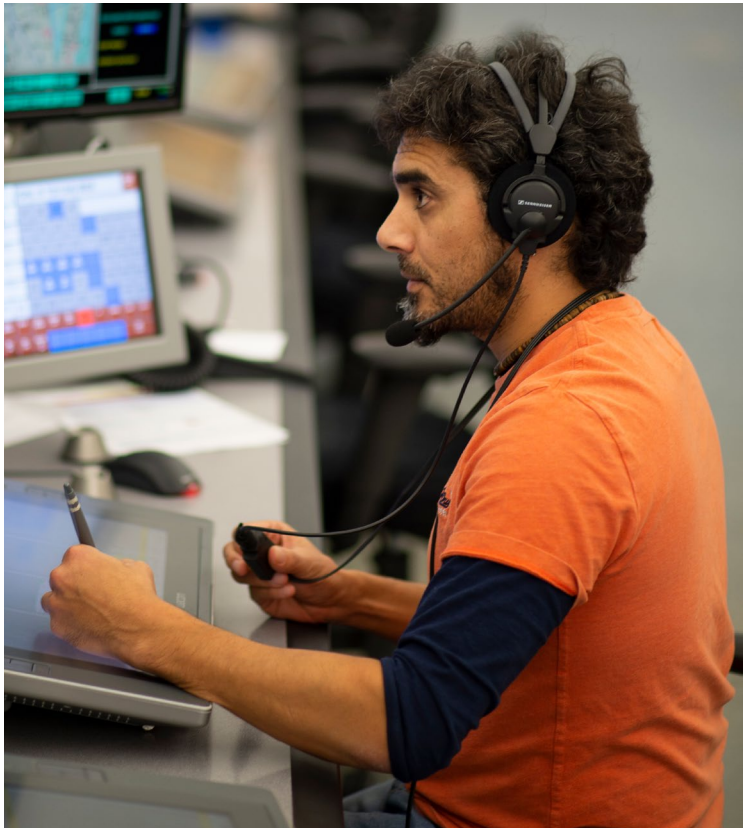


Human Factors

Our Human Factors & Wellbeing teams have continued to drive safety improvements across the business, focusing on how the individuals in the organisation contribute to safety and performance. The Design and Assurance team has tailored their ways of working in both projects and day-to-day operations. The improvements this team have made include the creation of a comprehensive human-related risk assessment process and a tailored risk-based approach to address human error risks. Assurance practices have been standardised and rigorous quality controls implemented, and we have introduced a competency framework and launched an extensive internal training programme to enhance our skills. These improvements have led to a reduction in human factors efforts within projects and a reduction in the length of assurance activities which, in turn, has reduced the number of days ATCOs have had to be released from operations. In addition to these projects, two further initiatives have been trialled: a Task-Based Hazards Tool and a Data-Driven In-Service Risks Assessment procedure. By using data and a standardised risk assessment tool, we expect to see a reduction in cost, time and staffing requirements on projects, whilst ensuring we have a robust risk-capture process.

Our Strategy and Development team has developed new tools and processes that will enable NATS to tackle current and future human factors challenges more efficiently and effectively. We have created a set of guiding principles for automation, human machine interface and alerting that address common ATC issues for all staff to understand. We have also tested new technologies including heart rate monitoring and eye tracking hardware in operations. Trials show a connection between task load and heart rate and pupil size which could provide real-time workload insights. This has led to trials of desk-mounted eye tracking, potentially providing support for real-time human performance decision-making.

The Human Factors team has been focused on developing our fatigue management capabilities, with the first Fatigue Management Manual published consolidating fatigue management practices across NATS. We are reviewing fatigue reports and introducing a bio-mathematical modelling tool across the business to further develop our understanding of potential fatigue factors across our operational roles. The Human Performance team continues to deliver and develop operational coaching programmes, and proactive education and training activities continue to inform and educate employees on techniques and strategies to aid confidence and decision making, driving operational and safety performance.



Employee Wellbeing

We have continued to champion the five pillars of the Wellbeing Strategy — Health, Relationships, Security, Purpose, and Environment — through close collaboration with the wider business. Peer Support and the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), delivered through Health Assured, remain cornerstone elements of the team's wellbeing offerings.

We completed a gap analysis for ISO 45003 compliance, underscoring the business's robust portfolio of wellbeing resources while highlighting an opportunity to enhance trend analysis capabilities. Addressing this gap will enable more targeted improvement initiatives, forming a key focus area for the year ahead.



Peer Support & EAP

The Peer Support programme is delivered through trained peer supporters across the business and has been in place for 20 years. The programme has grown to include topics such as mental health first aid and is available for all NATS employees. The hard work of our volunteers is showcased in the number of interventions they deliver each year. For the first time in seven years, we have seen an 18% drop in the number of interventions requested. This is due to pro-actively delivered education direct to employees, notably through the Mental Health Awareness course. Our staff understand their reactions to incidents and know the resources available to them, resulting in less need for interventions. Feedback for the service remains overwhelmingly positive.

In parallel to Peer Support, NATS offers an EAP provided by an external provider, Health Assured. During 2024, there was a 5% drop in the number of calls to the EAP of which 75.7% were counselling calls (1.7% above the benchmark) and 24.3% (1.7% below the benchmark) legal advice calls.

The EAP is available to colleagues and their immediate families. During 2024, 2% of our employees' family members used the EAP service, which continues to be above the average use Health Assured has seen compared with other companies in their portfolio. Following media reports in 2024 that raised concerns about Health Assured's working practices, the team conducted a site visit and quality review, restoring trust and confidence in the service.

The topics discussed with Peer Support and the EAP show that the two programmes continue to complement each other; employees use Peer Support more for work-related issues without requiring further support from the EAP; and use the EAP for personal issues such as anxiety and family relationships. The data also shows employees are continuing to work whilst they are making use of the service, indicating that the programme is having a positive impact on overall sickness rates.



Contact

Your views matter to us, please let us know if you have any feedback.

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