



Shannon
Chamber
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ÚDARÁS EITLÍOCHTA NA hÉIREANN
IRISH AVIATION AUTHORITY

IRISH AVIATION AUTHORITY
**STATEMENT
OF STRATEGY**

Shannon Chamber Submission
May 2025

Introduction

As the business representative organisation for Shannon and the wider Shannon areas, where a vibrant aviation sector has developed, encompassing aircraft leasing, MRO, technical documentation, inspection, and many other sub areas, we are conscious that the region is uniquely positioned to play a transformative role in Ireland's aviation future.

Reviewing the Irish Aviation Authority's existing strategy statement, we noted two key areas where relevant chamber members and/or Shannon businesses should be asked to input to this call for submissions, notably:

1. Aircraft leasing where IAA has two key areas of focus:
 - a. To provide focused services for the registration, storage and cross border transfer of aircraft; and
 - b. To ensure regulatory support for maintenance check flights and other support flights under EASA regulation.
2. Regulate and support the development of unmanned aircraft in Ireland.

We are in a position to share the feedback received from one member - Future Mobility Campus Ireland (FMCI) - presented in this submission, and hope that the points raised can be accommodated when compiling your 2026 – 2028 Strategy.

General Commentary from Shannon Chamber

We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Irish Aviation Authority's 2026–2028 Strategic Plan as a business representative organisation with a percentage of members operating in the aviation sector aviation businesses. We make the following comments:

1. Recognition of Shannon as a Strategic Aviation Hub

Shannon Airport and the surrounding aviation ecosystem represent a critical component of Ireland's national infrastructure. We ask that the IAA's strategy:

- Recognise Shannon as a designated strategic hub, vital to balanced regional development and national connectivity.
- Support regulatory and policy frameworks that allow Shannon Airport to grow transatlantic and European traffic in line with national capacity objectives.

2. Enable Growth of the MRO and Aerospace Cluster

Shannon hosts Ireland’s largest concentration of aviation maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) operators and related aerospace firms. To support sectoral growth, we recommend:

- Continued regulatory flexibility and streamlined certification processes for Part 145 and Part 147 operations.
- Proactive engagement with industry on emerging technologies, including electric and hybrid aviation, to ensure regulatory readiness (*as outlined in the FMCI submission included in this overall submission*)
- Support for cross-border recognition of approvals to facilitate international competitiveness.

3. Facilitate Innovation and Sustainable Aviation

The next strategic plan should position Ireland—and Shannon in particular—as a leader in aviation sustainability and innovation. We suggest:

- Inclusion of regulatory pathways for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) usage and infrastructure development.
- Collaboration with industry on pilot programs for zero-emissions aircraft, SAF testing, and digitalisation of maintenance and operational records.

4. Support for Regulatory Efficiency and Customs Clarity

Given Shannon’s unique role in global aircraft leasing and trade:

- We urge continued simplification and digitalisation of customs, aircraft import/export procedures, and registration workflows.
- Enhanced coordination between the IAA, Revenue, and other state bodies would significantly reduce administrative burdens and support growth in high-value aviation services.

5. Skills and Talent Pipeline

Shannon companies continue to face challenges sourcing skilled aviation professionals. The strategy should:

- Support initiatives to develop a sustainable talent pipeline, including close coordination with educational institutions and support for aviation apprenticeships and certification programs.
- Explore regulatory pathways to facilitate recruitment of international talent where domestic supply is limited.

6. Stakeholder Engagement and Policy Coordination

We welcome ongoing and structured dialogue between the IAA and regional industry stakeholders. In particular:

- A dedicated industry liaison function for regional aviation clusters would ensure that regulatory developments align with the needs of Ireland's diverse aviation ecosystem.

We believe that Shannon can continue to deliver significant economic value and global connectivity for Ireland. A forward-looking, regionally inclusive strategy from the IAA is essential to that vision. We remain available for further consultation and collaboration as the strategy is finalised.

Submission on behalf of Future Mobility Campus Ireland (FMCI)

As a stakeholder in the civil aviation sector in Ireland, Future Mobility Campus Ireland (FMCI) would like to provide insights on how the IAA can support its efforts in promoting **innovative air mobility**, electric aviation, and the creation of advanced R&D facilities for testing and certifying new aviation technologies.

1. Effective Regulation

The development and implementation of **U-space Digital Sky Demonstrator in Shannon as part of EALU-AER project**, is a key strategic priority for Shannon. The infrastructure has been deployed with support of major stakeholders in Ireland and beyond under the European Commission funding within SESAR JU master plan for European Digital Sky. FMCI believes that the IAA can support this project and leverage its capabilities for the **regulation of innovative air mobility** by ensuring the integration of these systems within the national airspace. This includes facilitating **regulatory frameworks** that encourage safe and efficient operations for **commercial, research, and regulatory activities** in the **innovative air mobility** sector. The U-space demonstrator will serve as an essential tool for developing these frameworks and driving innovation in the field.

In parallel, **electric aviation** near Shannon offers an exciting opportunity for Ireland to lead in sustainable aviation. The IAA's regulatory support for **electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL)** aircraft and related technologies is crucial to ensuring their safe and effective integration into the Irish airspace.

2. Consumer Protection

As the use of **innovative air mobility** technologies and electric aviation becomes more widespread, ensuring **consumer safety** and **accountability** in their operations is crucial. FMCI encourages the IAA to continue its collaboration with **EASA, ICAO**, and other relevant bodies to create clear guidelines for consumer protection regarding these technologies, including safety standards, operational protocols, and public awareness.

3. Stakeholder Engagement

FMCI believes that **stakeholder engagement** in the field of **innovative air mobility**, U-space systems, and electric aviation is vital. The company suggests that the IAA facilitate stronger collaboration with both **national and international bodies** to promote **regulatory and standardisation** activities around these technologies. This could include workshops, consultations, and working groups focused on the regulatory challenges and opportunities for innovation. In this regard, FMCI is working on a proposal for the development of world-class **R&D facilities** for **eVTOL** testing and certification near Shannon would further strengthen Ireland's position as a leader in aviation research and development. **Future Mobility Campus Ireland** is an invaluable national asset that can play a central role in fostering these innovations, supporting **R&D**, and positioning Ireland as a global leader in **aviation technology** with the support of the IAA.

4. Our People and Organisation

Supporting **workforce development** in the rapidly growing sectors of **innovative air mobility** and **electric aviation** is essential. The IAA can play a critical role in providing **training programs** for professionals working with **eVTOL** aircraft and **U-space systems**, as well as developing **sustainable aviation** solutions. FMCI also recommends increasing collaboration with **universities** and **research institutions** to further develop the workforce for the future of aviation technologies, with **Future Mobility Campus Ireland** serving as a hub for research and skills development. FMCI has recently been awarded a European project (AIRMOB) for the analysis of skills gaps in this sector and proposing a roadmap for Ireland and the IAA would be a valuable stakeholder in this project.

5. Innovation and Collaboration

The deployment of our **U-space demonstrator** in Shannon provides an excellent platform to foster **innovation** and **collaboration** between industry, research, and regulatory bodies. FMCI encourages the IAA to continue supporting initiatives like ours that explore **autonomous operations, airspace integration, electric aviation, and eVTOL technologies**. Additionally, supporting the development of **world-class R&D facilities** for **eVTOL testing**

and certification near Shannon will create significant opportunities for collaboration with **EASA, ICAO**, and other international bodies to shape global standards.

6. Exercising Influence

Ireland can play a **leading role** in advocating for the **standardisation** of **innovative air mobility, electric aviation**, and **eVTOL technologies** on a European and global scale. The IAA's continued engagement with bodies like **EASA, ICAO**, and **ECAC** will help shape the future of regulations and ensure that the country remains at the forefront of aviation technology. FMCI also sees the opportunity for Ireland to influence the future of **U-space systems** and the **regulatory environment** for **eVTOLs**, strengthening the country's position as a leader in **sustainable aviation**.

7. Environmental Responsibility

Both **innovative air mobility** technologies and **electric aviation** hold the potential to significantly reduce the **carbon footprint** of the aviation industry. Supporting these initiatives is key to aligning with global sustainability goals. FMCI encourages the IAA to support **green aviation** solutions, particularly through **electric aircraft** and **sustainable aviation fuel (SAF)** initiatives. The development of **eVTOL aircraft** in Ireland offers a unique opportunity to reduce emissions, particularly in **urban air mobility** applications.

Conclusion from FMCI

FMCI believes that the continued development of **U-space systems**, the promotion of **innovative air mobility**, and the support for **electric aviation** and **eVTOL technologies** in Shannon will have significant benefits for **regulatory, standardisation, commercial, and research activities**. The creation of world-class R&D facilities near Shannon for **eVTOL testing and certification** will also ensure that Ireland remains at the cutting edge of **aviation innovation**. **Future Mobility Campus Ireland** is a vital asset in this process, fostering collaboration and technological advancements in **aviation** and **sustainable mobility**. The IAA's support in these areas will be essential to ensuring that Ireland maintains its leadership in both **sustainable aviation** and **advanced aviation technologies**.

ENDS

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