



AirportWatch bulletin 48 January 2012
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From John Stewart, Chair of AirportWatch

This year will be important. The Government will put its draft aviation policy out for public consultation in March. It will be followed in April by public consultation on a new night flight regime at the three designated airports: Heathrow, Stansted and Gatwick. We know that the aviation policy will be less expansionist than that of the previous Government. What will be interesting though will be the level of growth proposed. And whether there is any mention of an estuary airport. There could well be opportunities to make some headway on some issues that have bugged many campaigners for decades - such as the way noise contours are drawn up. This bulletin includes an interesting account of how HACAN and BAA – very much on opposite sides over Heathrow’s third runway – have cooperated to produce joint suggestions on flight path and noise issues to the Government.

But perhaps the most startling news in this bulletin are the continuing mass protests at Frankfurt Airport where up to 5,000 residents occupy the terminal building every Monday in protest against the newly-opened and bitterly-contested 4th runway at Frankfurt Airport. Residents are complaining that they were badly misled about noise levels. Together with the huge protests against the proposed new airport outside Nantes in South West France, it is a sign that new airports and runways are becoming increasingly difficult to build in Europe.

Huge Protests Each Week at Frankfurt Airport

Every Monday up to 5,000 people gather in Terminal 1 of Frankfurt Airport to protest against the impact of the 4th runway which was opened on 21st October. The new runway has created noise problems for over 100,000 new residents. People who have not been over-flown have been appalled by the extent of the noise problem they now face daily, and many find the level of noise unacceptable. Some 20,000 people took part in a demonstration the day before the runway opened. Although the authorities have (reluctantly) agreed to ban flights between 23.00 hours and 05.00 hours, a huge number of people are suffering from noise.

The residents – and some local politicians – are arguing they were misled about the true impact noise from

the new runway would have on residents. With its focus on creating growth and jobs, the state government had for years underestimated just how extensively noise from the airport expansion would impact local residents, only to discover to its shock that it may have sentenced its own voters to a life smothered in aircraft noise.

The runway was only built after a bitter battle, over many years, by local residents and environmentalists.

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=593>



Airlines entered emissions trading scheme from 1st January 2012

On 1st January, aviation joined the European Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). Airlines will have to obtain carbon credits for all carbon emitted during flights into and out of all the 27 countries in Europe. This could perhaps save around 180 million tonnes of CO₂ each year by 2020. Passengers could expect between €0.5 and just under €3 to be added to ticket prices in due course as a direct consequence of the ETS and easyJet said the cost would be about 30 – 50p per passenger for flights



within Europe. Permits do not need to actually be handed over till 2013 for the year passed. In practice all airlines are getting 85% of the permits they need in the first year free, so they are in a good position to make windfall profits out of them scheme. They can do that by charging passengers more than the actual cost of the permit. Between 2013 and 2020, airlines will get 82% of the permits for free, with 15% auctioned to meet additional needs and 3% set aside for new entrants to the scheme. There is a lot more detail and explanation on the scheme at <http://bit.ly/wEarOB>

Airlines are trying to make out that they are already being charged an environmental tax, in APD. But APD is not seen by the government as being an environmental tax. <http://bit.ly/A5r32z> (Treasury said: “APD is primarily a revenue-raising duty which makes an important contribution to the public finances, whilst also giving rise to secondary environmental benefits.”) Air passengers are therefore not being charged twice for their travel carbon emissions. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=6940>

Airlines and governments outside Europe have continued to oppose the scheme. On 21st December the European Court of Justice gave its ruling that the ETS is fully compliant with international law. It does not infringe the Open Skies Agreement. Airlines can choose whether or not to fly to EU countries. The Court’s decision makes clear that existing law bars precisely the discriminatory treatment of airlines that the United States and others are calling for. The US House of Representatives passed a measure two months ago directing the US transport secretary to prohibit US carriers from participating in the scheme if it were to come into force. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=6793>



The price of carbon is now very low - at about €7 - 8 per tonne of carbon, (*Point Carbon at <http://bit.ly/wg344c>*) making permits cheap. Airlines can choose when they buy their permits, before Jan 2013, according to the price. Increases in air fares are not likely to happen till 2013, and will be very small amounts. The 4 main Chinese airlines, Air China, China Southern Airlines, China Eastern Airlines and Hainan Airlines, which fly millions of passengers to Europe each year, have said they will not pay the ETS charges. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=687>

HACAN East formed, representing residents near London City airport



HACAN East was launched at the end of last year. It represents residents in East and SE London affected by aircraft from City and/or Heathrow airports. It incorporates Fight the Flights which fought the plans to expand City Airport. HACAN East will be a semi-independent arm of HACAN.

<http://hacaneast.org.uk/>; email: info@hacaneast.org.uk; twitter: @hacaneast

HACAN works with BAA to produce joint recommendations to Government

Last year, for the first time, HACAN worked closely with BAA and the AEF (Aviation Environment Federation) to produce a joint document. We set aside the things we disagreed on and made joint recommendations the Government on areas of agreement. Each of us, along with BA and NATS, signed up to an agreed report.

We got a fair bit out of the joint venture:

- A commitment by the industry to explain the impact of aircraft noise much more clearly to the public;
- A commitment to move towards using new metrics to measure noise annoyance that will be put in place alongside the 57 db Leq contour;4
- A commitment to trial alternation for take-offs within the Noise Preferential Routes so that no one community has planes flying over them all day long – note: this is not putting noise to new areas;
- A public recognition (after about 15 years of effort!) that noise is now a major problem for communities well beyond West London as a result of the decision to move the joining point for landing aircraft 2/3 miles further east in 1996; and a promise to seek to improve matters for those residents;
- A commitment to involve representative residents’ organizations at a very early stage when consultation proposals are being formulated.

Read the full joint paper at <http://bit.ly/zkqKfw> (from John Stewart)

CAA Report: 28% of people in Europe affected by aircraft noise live under the Heathrow flight paths

A report published by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) in December revealed that 28% of people in Europe affected aircraft noise live under the Heathrow flight paths. A total of over 720,000 people are affected by Heathrow aircraft. The report calls for measures, such as steeper descents by aircraft, to mitigate the impact of noise on residents. It also urges airport owners to “engage constructively” with residents. The CAA has sent its report to the Department for Transport which will be publishing its draft aviation policy for consultation in spring 2012. The CAA is urging the Government to make clear its preference for concentrated or dispersed flight paths.

The full report: http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/589/CAA_InsightNote2_Aviation_Policy_For_The_Environment.pdf

The top fifteen airports in the UK account for over one-third of the population affected by noise at the European level using standard measurements.

Population as a percentage of the total number of people affected across the European Union

Heathrow	725,500	28.5%	Gatwick	11,900	0.5%
Manchester	94,000	3.7%	East Midlands	10,500	0.4%
Glasgow	63,600	2.5%	Stansted	9,400	0.4%
Birmingham	47,900	1.9%	Luton	8,600	0.3%
Aberdeen	16,300	0.6%	Leeds Bradford	8,400	0.3%
Edinburgh	15,000	0.5%	Newcastle	5,900	0.2%
London City	12,200	0.5%	Liverpool John Lennon	5,700	0.2%
Southampton	12,100	0.5%	Totals	1,044,300	41.0%

Source: European Commission, CAA. Figures based on the populations affected by noise using the standard measure of 55 LDen-2006 figure

HACAN calls on Government to ditch for good outdated way of measuring aircraft noise

HACAN has called on the Government to include plans to change the way it measures aircraft noise in its draft aviation policy, expected to go out to public consultation before the end of March. The current method the Government uses – Leq – varies from the one recommended by the European Union – Lden.. It also contradicts the guidelines for noise annoyance recommended by the World Health Organisation. The EU estimates that around 720,000 people are disturbed by noise from Heathrow aircraft. The UK Government puts it much lower at less than 300,000.

HACAN Chair John Stewart said that the way UK governments have traditionally measured noise no longer tallies with reality. When drawing up its new aviation policy, the Transport Secretary and Putney MP Justine Greening has the perfect opportunity to bring the way UK measurements noise up-to-date.

The Leq method works on the assumption that aircraft noise only becomes disturbing for people when it averages out at 57 decibels measured over a 16 hour day. The EU uses what is known as the Lden method to measure aircraft noise. It averages the noise out over a 12 hour day; then a 4 hour evening; and finally an 8 hour night. It adds 5 decibels to the evening level and 10 decibels to the night level to allow for the lower background noise levels at those times. HACAN has welcomed the fact that BAA is to publish annual Lden contour.

HACAN East has called on the Government to improve the way its measures noise annoyance in East and SE London. When noise measurements are taken for flights from each of London City and Heathrow airports, they are not combined. This underestimates the total noise suffered by people living under the flight paths of both London City and Heathrow airports. This problem has been known since 2007. If the noise levels are combined, aircraft noise levels in parts of East London matches those in West London. 2.1.2012 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=645>

HS2 high-speed rail project gets green light - it doesn't go direct to Birmingham airport or to Heathrow

Justine Greening has given the go ahead for the rail link from London to Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds, on 10th January. It will cost at least £32bn. (DfT website details at <http://bit.ly/wJ6khi>) This is the first phase of the route on which high-speed trains will start running in 2026 and this first phase should be only the foundation of a future network. Opponents question the huge expenditure for time savings of just half an hour between London and Birmingham. Between 2026 and 2032 other northern cities (Manchester, Leeds, will get their high speed links from the Y shaped network. There will be huge opposition and anger in constituencies through which HS2 would pass, which will face the prospect of years of construction for no direct local benefit. Legislation to enable the building of HS2 would go through Parliament in 2013.

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=720>

The timetable of future activity is on P7 of the Government summary document <http://bit.ly/xpnNUQ> However, the rail link will not go into Birmingham airport, or even to the main rail station but under the plans, a new station will be built in Curzon Street, which is about a 15-minute walk from New Street Station. This is the so called interchange station which is on the other side of the M42 and will be linked to the airport and international station by a people mover which may be a monorail or something similar.

Birmingham Friends of the Earth want money spent on transport within the city - what is the point in a super-fast link to London if it takes an hour to reach the station, across the suburbs? 10.1.2012 www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=7136

There is a lot of detail from the Stop HS2 campaign at <http://stophs2.org/facts> and the Stop HS2 protest song 'Oak Tree Lament' on YouTube at <http://bit.ly/yoEirg> and <http://bit.ly/xkIsYl>



AirportWatch welcomes Government announcement that APD will rise in April and APD distance and class bands are retained

On 6th December, the government confirmed that APD will increase 10% from 1 April 2012 as announced in the Budget. Air Passenger Duty rate banding for both distances (4 bands) and seat class would not be changed. There will be no reduced APD rate for premium economy, compared to first class. The government said any banding system would produce some anomalies, and the 4 band system produces fewer than a 2 band system. In these difficult economic times it is absolutely right that the aviation industry and its customers join the rest of society in making their fair contribution towards the country's finances. Aviation remains greatly under-taxed compared with most other sectors of the economy. Aviation still pays no fuel duty and no VAT and even with this APD increase the industry still benefits to the extent of around £8.5 billion per annum. The Treasury confirmed that APD is not primarily an environmental tax. www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=296

Business Jets over 5.7 tonnes to be charged APD after April 2013

Business jets will be charged Air Passenger Duty from April 2013. The Treasury says the reason for not charging it from April 2012 is that "changes will bring a substantial number of new operators into the APD regime and will require the introduction of special rules tailored to business aviation." APD will be charged on any jet with more than around 6 - 8 seats, depending on the model. Many private jets in practice carry just 2 or 3 passengers. AEF figures on the CO₂ emissions per private jet passenger, compared to premium class on a commercial airline, show them to be 3 - 8 times higher. Rough calculations show the carbon emissions for one passenger flying from London to New York to be around 380 Kg CO₂ for a commercial airline economy seat, around 760 Kg CO₂ for commercial airline premium seat, around 2,990 Kg CO₂ for a seat on a Citation X, and around 2,700 Kg CO₂ on a Dassault Falcon. Private jets are indeed a very high carbon means of travel. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=456>

The CAA (owned by airlines) produces advice to government to increase capacity in the south east and keep flights cheap

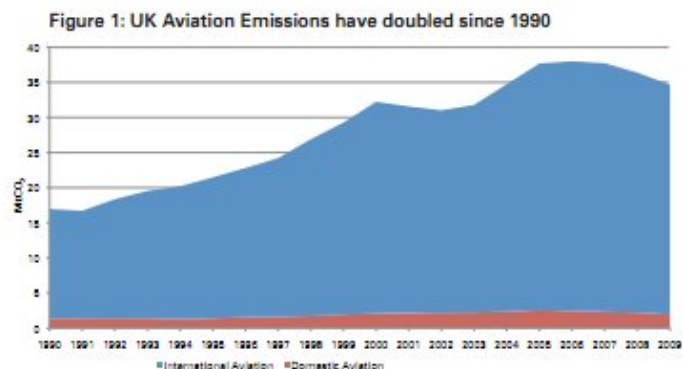
The CAA has now produced the third of its three "Insight Notes" for the DfT. (Details of the 3 papers at <http://www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?pageid=12375> entitled Aviation Policy for Consumers; for the Environment; and for the Future). The CAA hopes these will influence the formation of new UK aviation policy, on which a public consultation will start in March. The CAA is not a neutral government agency; its membership is entirely airlines and air travel companies, and all its funding comes from them. It is therefore entirely biased in favour of aviation growth. The last Insight Note, entitled "Aviation Policy for the Future" wants more airport capacity in the south east. It also wants policies to keep the price of flying cheap, and stresses the importance of aviation growth to the UK's economic prosperity, while keeping remarkably silent on the impact of air travel in taking UK money out of the country. It includes strange suggestions on noise like introducing a cap and trade system, and increasing the degree of community trust in airports. 10.1.2012
<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=773>

CAA Insight Note:

Aviation Policy and the environment

Its aim is to find ways to mitigate the problems while allowing UK aviation to grow. The chart on the right, from Page 15 of the document, shows that UK aviation emissions of CO₂ have doubled between 1990 and 2009 to 35 MtCO₂.

<http://bit.ly/yVs8V2>



Draft Civil Aviation Bill published putting passengers first and largely ignoring environmental concerns

In late November, Transport secretary Justine Greening published a draft version of the new Civil Aviation Bill, which is expected to be introduced by parliament early in 2012. The Bill will replace the current economic regulation duties of the aviation regulator, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), with a single primary duty to promote the interests of passengers. She “This Bill couples our commitment to make our airports better rather than bigger with the Government’s wider agenda on better regulation”.

There is almost nothing on environmental impacts of airports or aviation, with the CAA’s responsibilities on noise, emissions etc reduced – it just has to publish environmental information. This abandons the DfT’s December 2009 promise “to make environmental considerations a ‘mainstream issue’ for the organisation [the CAA] and a strategic priority for its Board.” In the draft bill, a Further duty of the CAA (not a Primary duty) will be to “have regard” (?meaningless) to the effect on the environment and on local communities of activities connected with the provision of airport services. The Government aims to give the Transport Select Committee and wider stakeholders the opportunity to consider the draft Bill before it is brought before Parliament. 24.11.2011 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=23>

On the CAA and the environment, the response from the Aviation Environment Federation (March 2010) is at http://www.aef.org.uk/uploads/AEF_response_to_DfT_CAA_consultation.pdf putting the case for the CAA having a greater role on environmental regulation for airports. One paragraph from their response states: *“We consider it important that the new environmental duty is mandatory rather than voluntary on the part of the CAA. If the duty is to have any meaningful impact on the CAA’s day to day operations, it should become a systematic requirement for environmental impacts to be considered at every level. Were the CAA simply to be empowered to consider environmental impacts it would be possible for environmental concerns to be discounted in cases where there were budgetary shortages or where a conflict of interest arose between the interests of consumers of air travel and those of the public at large.”*

Autumn statement by Chancellor.

U-turn on Gatwick and Stansted airports and consideration of estuary airport

November 29, 2011 In this autumn statement, George Osborne – in a desperate attempt to boost the economy – has turned his back on environmental safeguards and the green economy, to encourage high carbon infrastructure. He has said he wants to improve, performance and resilience of airports – and that Government is committed to maintaining the status of the UK as an international hub for aviation, with excellent connectivity to both developed as well as emerging markets. He said “And we will explore all the options for maintaining the UK’s aviation hub status, with the exception of a third runway at Heathrow.” So that means runways at Gatwick and Stansted are to be considered again, as well as looking at an estuary hub. 29.11.2011 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=6295>

Chancellor’s autumn statement

– he regards environment rules as a burden on the economy

Chancellor's autumn statement slammed green policies as a "burden" and a "ridiculous cost" to British businesses, in a fillip to the right wing of his party. He told parliament: "I am worried about the combined impact of the green policies adopted not just in Britain, but also by the European Union ..." RSPB, WWF, FOE and CPRE all expressed their grave disappointment of this abandonment of environmental regulation and the environmental recklessness and lack of vision of throwing billions of pounds at roads and dirty energy that will only increase our dependency on gas, coal and oil instead of boosting greener alternatives. 30.11.2011 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=299>

Stansted update from Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE)

The last six months have seen increasing efforts by the aviation industry to try to reverse the Government policy of no new runways at Stansted, Gatwick or Heathrow. To counter this, SSE is pressing for a long term moratorium on any new runways at Stansted and for BAA to be forced to sell back the 300 or so homes it still owns in the vicinity of the airport, bought in connection with its allegedly abandoned 2nd runway plans.

2012 will also see a Government review of the current rules on night flights at Stansted and the aviation industry will inevitably be pressing the Government to relax the existing limits. SSE will therefore be mounting a concerted campaign to ensure that the Government also hears the voice of the local community and is left in no doubt about the disturbance caused by noisy aircraft landing and taking off at all hours of the night.

The Competition Appeal Tribunal sat in December but there was no indication of when the result on the airport sale will be announced. Passenger numbers have dropped so much – down by a quarter on their 2007 peak – that the airport has dropped from 3rd to 4th position in the league table of UK airports, trailing behind Manchester.

The Transport Committee called SSE, which had responded rapidly to the Civil Aviation Bill call for evidence for its enquiry into the Bill. Brian Ross gave oral evidence on behalf of AirportWatch, and Aviation Minister Theresa Villiers' own evidence to the Transport Committee shortly after made reference to his evidence when she was challenged on the withdrawal of environmental responsibilities since the last government. A follow-up meeting of SSE, GACC and HACAN took place with the Minister just before Christmas to see whether the issue could be addressed during the progress of the Bill. This is an issue which has been of concern to the three campaign groups for several years and one on which we will continue to apply pressure through every possible means as the Bill progresses.

Around Stansted, the airport operator clings onto some 300+ houses with no sign of any sales in the offing, though BAA continues to pretend it has no interest in being a landlord. It's worse at Heathrow where there isn't even any pretence about putting homes back on the market, and virtually the whole of the village of Sipson is under the BAA stranglehold.

To move things forward as part of the Regulatory Review for the next 5 year charging period, SSE has been actively pressing for the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to exclude the housing portfolios from the regulatory asset base for the airports which determines the amount which BAA can charge airlines using its airports. While the CAA can't force BAA to sell the properties, it can prevent BAA from profiting from them through increased charges to the airlines – and could give BAA advance notice of its intentions to withdraw the houses from the Regulatory Asset Base ahead of the next charging period.

It's a move which has won the support of Ryanair's Michael O'Leary whose recent outburst at a CAA meeting last November left poor old Nick Barton, Stansted's beleaguered MD, in no doubt of the contempt in which he is held for the additional charges levied because of BAA's continued ownership of the houses.

Opposition to £50bn Thames Estuary airport taking shape

Opposition to plans for a new estuary airport is growing, against either Boris Island or new Foster's Folly. Canvey town councillors are making preparations to join forces with parish councils in Kent to oppose the plans. Together they reckon they could be a very vociferous group. An Essex County councillor has put forward a motion to Essex County Council, to be discussed soon, on behalf of the town council opposing the estuary airport plans. There are many strong statements from a range of prominent people, showing their opposition to the plans. Opposition in Medway continues. There are articles of Thames Estuary Airport News at http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?page_id=5729

Estuary Airport - Public meeting: Friday 10th February near Southend

Many people are worried by the possibility of one or other estuary airport schemes. It has been agreed that a public meeting will be held to begin organising opposition. The meeting will be in Leigh on Sea (near Southend) at 7.45pm at Leigh Centre, Elm Road, Leigh on Sea, Essex SS9 1SP. More details in due course at <http://bit.ly/xdgNfl>



Birmingham Airport hopes to offer cut price holiday escapes during Olympics

Another bit of opportunistic publicity from Birmingham Airport's Paul Kehoe. He uses the opening of a new hangar at the end of January to get some publicity for hopes of growing the number of passengers this year. More business jets. More tourists during the Olympics, on cheap deals to escape Britain during August. And of course, the usual swipe at APD. www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=673

Alleged corrupt payments to Shepway District Councillors for Lydd runway extension

Private Eye's "Rotten Boroughs Awards 2011" lists Zaher Deir, former boss of Lydd Airport in Kent, who told a court that unusual spending patterns on his company credit card were accounted for by "gifts" to Shepway councillors who were to determine a planning application for a runway extension. Shepway Green Party and Lydd Airport Action Group are among those demanding a full investigation and the local MP agrees. An inspector is due to rule in March 2012 on whether the runway extension is to be allowed. 29.12.2011 www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=6877

British Airways owner IAG buys BMI from Lufthansa

International Airlines Group (IAG) has agreed a binding deal to buy BMI from Lufthansa - including their 56 slots (8.5% of Heathrow's total) at Heathrow. In September BA bought 6 pairs of slots at Heathrow from bmi, which gave BA 45% of Heathrow's slots, so they will now have over 50%. The deal will cost £172.5m, but IAG has warned the deal could lead to job losses. Virgin opposes the take over, as they also wanted to buy BMI.

BMI now employs more than 3,600 staff, but reported a £153m loss in the year to 2010. IAG and Lufthansa have agreed a purchase price of £172.5 million, but this is subject to heavy price reduction if Lufthansa does not choose to sell its budget arm BMIbaby before completion of the sale. The deal remains subject to clearance by competition bodies. 24.12.2011 www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=6841



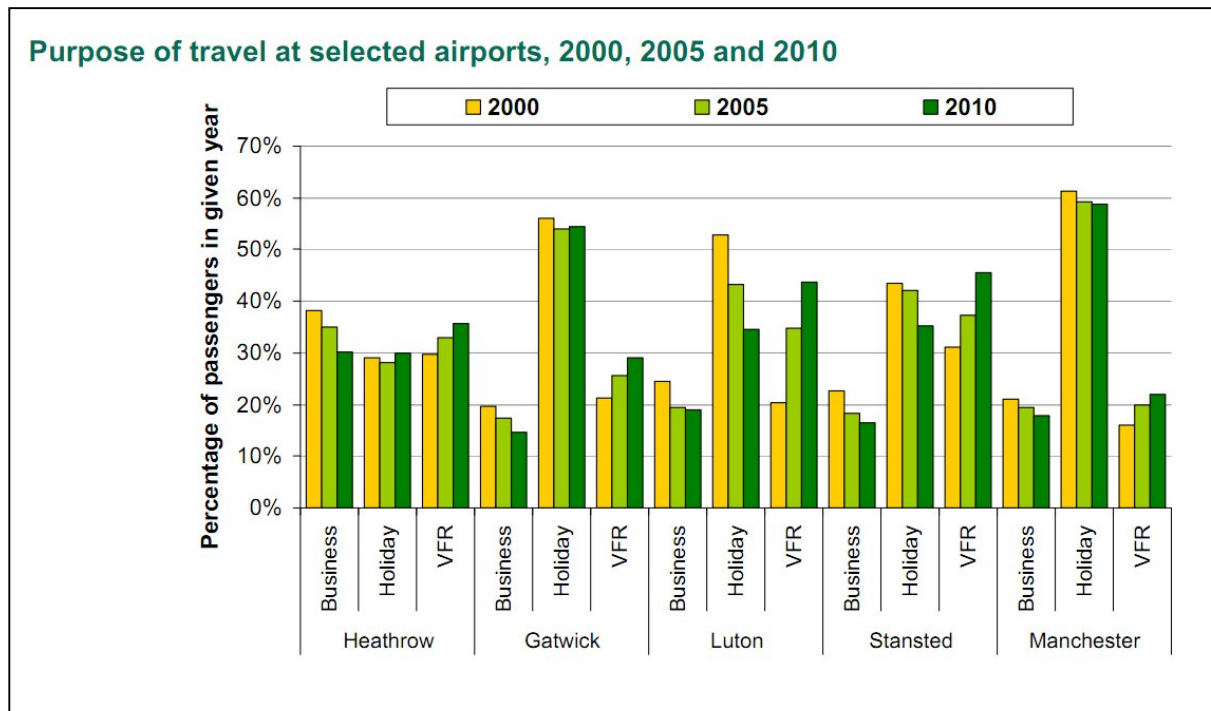
UK Airport Statistics show proportion of business passengers in 2010 had fallen significantly since 2000 at 5 largest UK airports

On 16th December, the DfT released Transport Statistics for Great Britain 2011. The aviation section is filled with facts and figures of all sorts. Details at <http://bit.ly/AkmOis>
Here are just a few of the key facts:

- ❖ At Heathrow in 2000 about 38% of total passengers were on business. This had fallen to about 30% in 2010. At Gatwick the % of business passengers was down from about 20% in 2000 to about 16% in 2010. At Stansted the drop was 22% down to 17% (So much for the vital

importance of these airports in boosting business etc & helping the economy. Most passengers are on holidays or visits)

- ❖ The proportion of business passengers (cf. holiday or visiting friends and family) declined between 2000 and 2010 at all 5 largest UK airports



- ❖ Between 2000 and 2010 overall terminal passenger numbers increased by 32% at regional airports compared with 10% at the 5 London airports.
- ❖ In 2010, the 5 London airports accounted for 60% of all terminal passengers at UK airports, down from 65% in 2000
- ❖ Regional airports experienced a proportionally larger fall since the peak in 2007 at 17% compared with a 9% fall at the London airports.
- ❖ DfT UK aviation stats for 2010: 31% of passengers went through Heathrow, 15% at Gatwick, 9% Stansted, 8% Manchester, 4% each Luton, B'ham and Edinburgh.
- ❖ In 2009, around 74,000 people were employed by UK airlines worldwide. This is a fall of 20% since 2000 and a fall of 6% since 2008? (*typo in the DfT figures, so unclear*).
- ❖ In 2010 Easyjet uplifted more passengers than BA (42m compared to 30m) but BA accounted for more than twice as many passenger kilometers (105 bn and 49 bn respectively) as Easyjet

Plymouth Airport has now closed as its routes are no longer profitable

Airport closed on 23rd December 2011 and no aircraft will be able to use the airport. The site has been used for flying since the mid-1920s. The closure will see the site's last eight staff lose their jobs. The last commercial flight by Air Southwest, the airport's sole carrier, departed in July. The local MP has written to Theresa Villiers about possible state aid for regional air services, but such subsidy looks unlikely. A group of business people calling themselves "Vision" have crazy ambitious plans for the airport to be rebuilt and expanded for 1m passengers per year.

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=577>

Flybe will quit Manston airport from March 2012 and Manston to stop fuelling Iran Air

Flybe will no longer fly its service from Manston to Edinburgh after March, because there are barely any passengers. The Edinburgh service was regarded as Manston's jewel in the crown. Flybe also runs a service between Manston and Belfast – which will also end. The Manchester flights were scratched earlier this year. A Flybe spokesman said "It is fair to say that Manston is one of the airports with the smaller catchment areas in the UK, and you have Gatwick not too far away." Manston does not have the makings of a successful passenger airport. 23.12.2011

<http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=605> The controversial deal allowing Iran Air to refuel at Manston will end. It was claimed Iran Air planes were using the airport to dodge US sanctions. Iranian planes are banned from refuelling in countries that have economic ties with America but can avoid sanctions by filling up at privately owned airports such as Manston. Iran Air has been refuelling at Manston for around eight months and they have now decided to make other arrangements. 16.12.2011 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=460> Regular updates on Manston on the No Night Flights blog at <http://nonightflights.blogspot.com/>



Belfast City Residents meet Environment Minister to discuss City Airport

The Northern Ireland Environment Minister has told local residents he has yet to make a final decision on the shape of his forthcoming inquiry into modifying the noise regulations governing George Best Belfast City Airport. He is awaiting legal advice. The inquiry would investigate how the planning agreement between the Department of the Environment and the airport could be altered. The aim of the agreement is to provide protection for residents against undue levels of noise pollution from planes.

Belfast City Airport Watch asked for assurances that the Minister would, in the meantime, enforce two crucial clauses in the planning agreement – relating to late flights and the number of seats offered for sale by the airport. In 2010, over 11,400 people were suffering from a level of aircraft noise deemed by the UK government to cause “significant community annoyance” – compared to just 3,500 in 2007. (57 LAeq or over, averaged over 16 hours). 28.11.2011 <http://bit.ly/uEJG5h>



Belfast City Airport Watch representatives, Dr Liz Fawcett, Joe Watson and Joe McGlade outside Parliament Buildings in Belfast where they met Environment Minister, Alex Attwood to discuss the issue of aircraft noise.

Belfast City residents are anxiously awaiting the commencement of 7 new international routes operated by bmibaby out of Belfast City – a move which will turn Belfast City into a second international airport – there is already a Belfast International Airport of course. One international route from BCA has already begun. While the airport had originally said it needed an extended runway to operate a comprehensive range of

international flights, bmibaby has got round the restrictions of the current runway length by simply adding more thrust to the engines as its planes take off – we're concerned about the impact on noise levels obviously.

However, bmibaby's whole future now looks very much in doubt if newspaper reports are correct, given the imminent takeover of BMI. Its new prospective owners IAG are reported to want BMI to get rid of bmibaby or shut it down before the takeover goes ahead. See:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-16298167>

There are also questions over the financial sustainability of the business model being pursued by Belfast City – both in terms of its own finances and its impact on Belfast International – see: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-15287428> (From Dr Liz Fawcett)

Buyer sought for nose-diving Durham Tees Valley Airport

Peel Airports has put their 75% stake of the airport up for sale, as it is losing money and has too few passengers. Most airports have seen a drop in traffic, but for Durham Tees Valley it's been more of a nose-dive than a controlled descent. In 2006, more than 900,000 passengers passed through its doors. This year that will have come down to 200,000. The recession has hit and airlines have also increasingly deserted Durham Tees Valley for the safety of bigger airports. The airport made a loss of more than £2m in the last full financial year. The Durham Tees Valley Airport Private Owners' Group asks "Who is going to invest in a failing airport with two other large airports close by?" and they want it to revert to being a general aviation airfield. 16.12.2011 and 5.1.2012 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=481>

Deutsche Flugsicherung plans bid for Nats stake

Germany's state-owned air traffic service Deutsche Flugsicherung (DFS) is planning a bid for a stake in Nats, the part-privatized company that runs the U.K.'s air traffic control service. DFS has asked investment banks in London to tender for an advisory role in a potential bid. George Osborne said last year that the government would sell its 49% stake but little has happened since. GIP is also interested. 11.12.2011 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=355>

Jet fuel price rose significantly during 2011 – likely to increase in 2012

The price of oil rose around 10 - 15% during 2011, depending which sort of oil is considered. IATA says the price of jet fuel rose by about 39% over the year, giving the average price of jet fuel in 2010 as \$91.4 / barrel and the price in 2011 as \$ 127.5. 2.1.2012 <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?p=6948> Meanwhile in October 2011 DECC published their estimates of future oil prices (they do not specify which sort of oil they are pricing) at <http://bit.ly/rUzcX1> DECC's Central forecast is \$111/ barrel for 2012 and \$117 in 2018 going up to only \$130 by 2030, with the price about the same in dollars as the number of the year. DECC's High Forecast is for \$112.5 in 2012, \$129 in 2018 and up to \$170 per barrel in 2030.

The Red Arrows Sparrows: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f_IXqMmevog

The Basingstoke Fire Brigade in 2009. It was on That's Life. A piss-take with a bunch of English Firemen in little planes performing death defying stunts with less than realistic props. By way of light relief ... (and thanks to No Night Flights at Manston for the link / laugh).

Useful Info

- For up to date news see **AirportWatch's** news pages http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/?page_id=148
- News and analysis on the **AEF** website at <http://www.aef.org.uk>
- For a **daily update on aviation and transport news** www.transportinfo.org.uk
- How to really **offset the climate change impact of your flight**: www.ThinkBeforeYouFly.com
- Flights emissions calculator** <http://calculator.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx?tab=3>
- Airport Noise Maps**: DEFRA produce rough maps showing the main noise contours around UK airports. <http://bit.ly/AC2RS3> They also give estimates of the number of people affected by noise (click on Noise Exposure Charts)
- Weekly update by IATA on **jet fuel price**. <http://bit.ly/gCtAnD> and <http://bit.ly/w8E0RE>

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