

ANNUAL MEETING – LIAISON GROUP OF UK AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

NOTE OF THE 39TH ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 11TH JUNE 2015 AT MANCHESTER AIRPORT

Present:

Aberdeen	-	Dr. Peter Smart
Belfast City	-	Mr. Alan Walker
	-	Ms. Carole Edwards
Belfast International	-	Mr. Tom McGrath
Bournemouth	-	Mr. Peter Thorne
Bristol	-	Mrs. Vicky Brice
East Midlands	-	Mr. Barrie Whyman
Edinburgh	-	Mr. Alastair O'Neil
	-	Mr. Tom Wright
Gatwick	-	Dr. John Godfrey
	-	Mr. Barry Smith
Glasgow	-	Mr. John Richmond
Glasgow Prestwick	-	Mr. Nigel Wallace
Heathrow	-	Mr. Roderick Smith
Inverness	-	Mrs. Pat Hayden
Leeds – Bradford	-	Mr. Michael Goodwin
Liverpool John Lennon	-	Mr. Bob Swann
	-	Mr. Mike Jones
London City	-	Mr. John Adshead
Manchester	-	Mr. Steve Wilkinson (Chairman of the Meeting)
	-	Mrs. Sandra Matlow
	-	Mr. Mike Flynn
	-	Ms. Denise French
Newcastle	-	Mr. John Scott
Prestwick	-	Mr. Nigel Wallace
Southampton	-	Mr. David Airey
	-	Mr. Richard Ward
Stansted	-	Mr. Stewart Ashurst
	-	Mr. Frank Evans
Conference Secretariat	-	Mrs. Paula Street
	-	Mr. Stuart Innes
DfT	-	Ms. Tamara Goodwin
Manchester Airport	-	Mrs. Wendy Sinfield
	-	Mr. Daniel King

NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING

1. The notes of the last meeting held on 12 June 2014 were received and noted.

UKACCS WORKING GROUP

2. The Secretariat's paper which summarised the key outcomes from the meeting of the Working group on 26 November 2014 was received and noted.

3. Peter Smart, as Chairman of the Working Group, presented a paper reviewing the future arrangements for the Secretariat and Support Service, including future tasks and priorities, and how best to secure resilience and succession planning. Members had been asked to complete a short questionnaire on the priorities for these issues to aid the discussion and to inform subsequent more detailed consideration. The main priorities for the Secretariat and Support Service were confirmed. Resilience covered the need for adequate back up arrangements, ensuring that the budget was sufficient, and the future development of the UKACCS website, including the hosting function for individual Committees.

4. It was agreed that there should be an early meeting of the Working Group to consider in more detail the response to the delegates' questionnaire and any other comments received from the Annual Meeting, including:

- the possibility of establishing an independent UKACCS bank account and accounting facility.
- an arrangement whereby Paula Street is invited to provide her services to UKACCS outside of her employment with WSCC – subject to agreement from WSCC that this is acceptable to them as her main employer.
- the potential for other ACCs (Chairmen/Secretaries) being able to offer skills and time to being part of the support mechanism.
- the remuneration of the secretariat and support staff.
- the current subscription fees/banding and whether these need to be reviewed.
- the preparation of an Action Plan for consideration by the full membership via email for comment and/or approval.

5. It was also agreed that the Working Group could take forward some actions identified in the Action Plan, if the total cost of providing the reviewed Secretariat and Support Service remained within the UKACCS budget.

6. Two vacancies had arisen in the membership of the Working Group over the past year, and, accordingly, the meeting was asked to appoint one Chairman and one Secretary/Adviser. It was agreed that Tom McGrath, Chairman, Belfast International ACC, be appointed, and that the Secretary vacancy be reconsidered at the next Annual Meeting. It was also acknowledged with regret that Heathrow (Chairman/Secretary) was not yet in a position to offer support to the Working Group but that the Chairman would be willing to participate in the Working Group at a future date when the new secretariat/technical support team at Heathrow was more established. It remained a possibility that Heathrow might be able to offer ad hoc involvement later in the year.

DfT GUIDELINES FOR ACCS

7. Following the publication last year of the DfT's new Guidelines for ACCs, delegates had been asked to review their Committee's terms of reference and membership. A schedule of the responses from ACCs was circulated and noted. Additional feedback had since been received, and the Secretariat would therefore update the schedule and recirculate it to all ACC's. There were no issues of significant concern. Newcastle had produced a new member induction pack which the Secretariat would also circulate as it was of general interest.

CONSULTATION CONSIDERATIONS AND THE ROLE OF “CRITICAL FRIEND”

8. Consideration had been given at last year’s Annual Meeting to the role of ACCs, and how the “critical friend” approach might best be understood. It had been agreed to return to this subject, and Stansted ACC had produced a discussion paper setting out considerations for consultation generally, including the role of “critical friend”. Daniel King, Customer Contact Manager, Manchester Airports Group attended to facilitate the discussion and to help the meeting to identify areas of best practice. It was accepted that the consultation process would differ from one Airport to another, but that effective consultation would have a number of common themes. A wide ranging discussion of the issues led to the identification of a series of key components for consultation and carrying out the “critical friend” role. The need for Committees to be provided with written reports well in advance of change proposals and to adopt a constructive approach was emphasised. Delegates highlighted the need for the ACC to have credibility with its communities and for airports to consult their ACC on emerging plans and new initiatives so that they have chance to influence and contribute to plans at inception or the earliest possible stage.

9. A number of common areas of best practice were identified which would be incorporated into a guidance paper, initially for consideration by the Working Group, and thereafter for circulation to all ACCs. The key areas for inclusion were:

- establishing independence, both financially and in terms of membership so as not to be seen to be under the control of the airport
- establishing trust by having an open and honest relationship with communities and the airport
- how to measure success
- timely reports looking to the future e.g. new developments and initiatives as well as current and past operations and reviewing performance
- constructive dialogue with the airport and all interest groups, having mutual respect for views of all such groups in order to ensure cooperation/collaboration.
- being the airport’s conscience.

PRE-NOTIFICATION OF PRM SERVICES AT UK AIRPORTS

10. Pre-notification by passengers requiring assistance was an important element in delivering service quality for PRMs at airports. As part of its overall review of PRM services at UK Airports, the CAA had intended last year to set up a pre-notification project, but subsequently decided that the project would not proceed. The background paper from the Secretariat summarised the current position and also included an update from the CAA on its approach to PRM issues, including pre-notification rates and the need to give priority to those passengers who had pre-notified. ABTA had also set up a Group working on the improvement of the current rates and supported prioritisation. Daniel King gave an overview of the issues from an airport’s perspective.

11. The good work of the CAA in encouraging airlines and airports to improve the overall experience for PRM passengers was acknowledged but there were continuing concerns across a number of member ACCs about the impact non pre-notified PRM passengers had on PRM service quality and performance at airports of all sizes. This was especially the case when large volumes of non pre-notified PRM passengers arrived on the same flight. Delegates highlighted that this was a particular problem on some inbound non EU flights.

12. Dealing with non pre-notified passengers had an impact on aircraft turnaround times and flight punctuality, and it was questioned whether an international standard should be

explored. Delegates were generally of the view that airports should give priority to those PRMs who pre-notify. There were concerns that if it was generally known that no apparent benefit applied to those who pre-notified, passengers would not bother to book the service and service quality would suffer. No differentiation was made between notified and non-notified passengers on inbound flights, which was unfair on the pre-notified passengers. There was a need for airlines to work collectively to improve pre-notification rates recognising that airports had a finite number of assistance staff to handle PRM passengers.

13. It was agreed to write to the CAA to highlight the on-going concerns and to make a case for the CAA to continue with its pre-notification project, and that a copy of the letter should be sent to the CAA Consumer Panel for consideration. It was also agreed to invite the CAA to next year's Annual Meeting to give an update on its PRM work generally and also specifically on the PRM pre-notification project.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

14. Wendy Sinfield, Community Relations Manager, Manchester Airport, gave a presentation outlining the airport's Community Strategy, which focussed on the adjacent communities affected by the airport's operations and took into account social deprivation issues. Beyond this, an intermediate area of approximately 10 miles radius, including areas where aircraft regularly flew and were heard, had been agreed with local stakeholders. For the area where the airport's operation had the greatest impact numerous structured interventions with communities had been established.

15. The five key pillars of Manchester's Strategy which had been developed through collecting data from Impact Studies and stakeholder meetings, were community, education, employment, enterprise and culture and colleagues (through volunteer programmes). Manchester Airport's Transformation Programme and the current consultation draft Sustainable Development Plan were highlighted. It was noted that it was only through good and effective community involvement that the airport had a mandate to grow. The airport had already started discussing with its local communities the implementation of Performance Based Navigation so as to start to develop an understanding and knowledge base within the adjacent communities. Clear targets had been set over the four year period of the Strategy, which also helped in measuring progress and performance.

16. A number of best practice points were discussed, and the presentation was received and welcomed.

AIRSPACE CHANGE

17. The Secretariat's briefing paper summarised the main aspects of the CAA's Future Airspace Strategy (FAS) and the implementation of Performance Based Navigation (PBN) technology. It explained the work of the Airports Commission's Senior Delivery Group on the issues arising from the implementation of PBN in the UK. The paper provided an update on the London Airspace Management Programme and airspace change proposals at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted in particular.

18. The Chairman of the Gatwick ACC highlighted the experiences at Gatwick and explained that the airport's management had been left to address local community concerns. The roll out of FAS and the airspace change management programme had significantly damaged the airport's relationship with its communities and a number of lobby groups continued to be formed to oppose not only the changes to flight paths but also the proposed second runway plans. Both the CAA and NATS were not present, or willing to be present, at the ACC meetings to discuss the issues arising from the roll out of FAS and PBN or the

proposed changes to flight paths. It was suggested that ACCs try to seek the engagement and attendance of CAA and NATS at their airports when consultations on airspace changes were undertaken.

19. With regard to UK Aviation Noise Policy and the work of the DfT's Aircraft Noise Management Advisory Committee (ANMAC), Tamara Goodwin from the DfT presented an overview of the key elements of the Government's policy in relation to aviation noise and airspace change. She highlighted the way in which current policy was being tested by the implementation of PBN as well as various flight path trials. The issues, which the DfT was actively considering with both the industry and community groups, included:

- concentration versus dispersal
- definition of "significantly affected"
- respite
- priority of noise against emissions
- tactical vectoring for arrivals and departures
- the role of the Secretary for State and the CAA in airspace changes
- transparency of the CAA's airspace change process

20. Defra's 2014 Survey of Noise Attitudes (SoNA) was carried out between October 2014 and February 2015. This survey included questions about aviation noise, which were more qualitative than technical and therefore welcomed. The results were currently being analysed and a report would be published in due course.

21. Delegates valued the update and details of the issues being considered as regards the impacts arising from the implementation of FAS and new navigation technology. As many member ACCs had yet to face the challenges posed, it was agreed that a further update should be given at next year's Annual Meeting.

THE RUNWAY CAPACITY DEBATE

22. The paper from the Secretariat which provided an update on the work of the Airports Commission, and progress made on implementing the recommended measures to manage and enhance existing capacity in the UK, was noted.

23. The briefing paper on Air Connectivity between London and UK Regions provided an update on the work of the Airports Commission and the National Connectivity Task Force examining regional connectivity. Delegates generally supported the National Connectivity Task Force's key conclusion that there was a compelling evidence base to support the case substantially to enhance UK domestic air access to London as part of a new runway being approved in the South East of England. Delegates also reiterated the UKACCS view that there was a need to address the issue of improving regional connectivity now before new runway capacity was delivered.

24. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Government urging that Airlines be encouraged to provide services between London and the regions to enhance economic growth across the UK; and that whatever decision is made on where new runway capacity should be provided, that the promises made by promoters are honoured so as to ensure regional connectivity is improved and sustained over the long term.

RESILIENCE PLANNING AT UK AIRPORTS

25. The Secretariat's paper highlighting the CAA's guidance on the preparation of resilience plans at UK airports was received. Gatwick and Heathrow airports were required

as part of their regulatory licence conditions to prepare and review annually resilience plans. Delegates considered the experience of the Gatwick ACC inputting to the process both in terms of the welfare of passengers and in ensuring the co-operation of the whole airport community, agencies and surface transport providers (train, bus, coach, taxi and highway authorities) in operational recovery.

26. As the regulatory provisions meant that the CAA had no powers to require other Airports to make resilience plans, ACCs were encouraged to report on the CAA's guidance at their next cycle of meetings to establish whether their airports were engaging with a wide range of stakeholders in the preparation of their airport's resilience plan.

EUROPEAN PASSENGERS FEDERATION

27. Consideration was given as to whether UKACCs should become a member of the European Passengers' Federation whose remit was extended by the European Commission in 2009 to consider air passenger issues. Delegates were not convinced about the value of membership of the Federation as there was no clear focus on air passengers, and there was a joining subscription. It was agreed to revisit the matter once the review of the secretariat and support service and UKACCs budgetary arrangements had been completed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Disruptive passengers

28. Glasgow Prestwick ACC raised the issue of the increasing number of disruptive passengers and drunkenness at the airport and wished to know how other airports/ACCs addressed the matter if they experienced similar problems. It appeared from the discussion that this was not a significant issue at other airports. However, the Secretariat reported that IATA had issued in January 2015 guidance to airlines on "Unruly Passenger Prevention and Management". The guidance was not intended to replace or to contradict any current State regulations but contained additional guidance including developing policy, the categorisation of incidents, sample passenger warnings and a sample passenger awareness leaflet – see <https://www.iata.org/policy/Documents/2015-Guidance-on-Unruly-Passenger-Prevention-and-Management.pdf>

CAA CONSUMER PANEL

29. The paper reviewed the work of the CAA Consumer Panel over the last year and was initially presented for information. However, there were concerns over the CAA's decision to end its involvement in consumer complaint handling and the transfer of this activity to private sector alternative dispute resolution (ADR) bodies. It was felt that there was potential for inconsistency and confusion for the passenger under the process if multiple organisations were involved. Delegates took the view that there should be one organisation with a track record of dealing with ADR to deal with complaints against airlines and/or airports. Accordingly, it was agreed that a letter would be sent to the Panel highlighting UKACCS concern.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

30. The following papers were received and noted:

- (a) Membership of the UKACCS Liaison Group
- (b) UKACCS Support Service Update

(c) UK Aviation Update

(d) European Aviation Update

VENUES FOR FUTURE CONFERENCES

31. 2016 - Belfast International Airport

2017 – Glasgow Airport

VOTE OF THANKS

32. A vote of thanks was extended to Steve Wilkinson, Chairman of Manchester Airport Consultative Committee, for his excellent conduct of the meeting, and to the team at Manchester Airport for their generous hospitality in hosting this year's Annual Meeting.

33. Best wishes and thanks were also extended to John Adshead, Chairman of London City ACC, and previously Chairman of the UKACCS Working Group, who was standing down from his Consultative Committee after many years of service.

Mike Flynn

Secretary, Manchester Airport Consultative Committee