

***Airports Commission - Update***

**What this paper is about**

Provides an update on the work of the Airports Commission since the last Annual Meeting and the progress made on implementing the Commission's recommended short to medium term measures to manage and enhance existing airport capacity in the UK. The paper is essentially for information and provides an opportunity for delegates to discuss issues of concern.

**Points for Discussion**

- Whether there are any issues of concern about the work of the Airports Commission and/or the Senior Delivery Group or the Government's response to the Commission's Interim Report.

**Possible Action**

- Dependent on the outcome of discussions at the meeting.

## Introduction

1. At last year's Annual Meeting the Secretariat<sup>1</sup> informed delegates of the Airport's Commission's recommended measures for airport capacity and connectivity in the UK in the short, medium and long term as contained in its Interim Report to the Government which was published in December 2013<sup>2</sup>.
2. At that meeting Philip Graham, Airports Commission Secretariat, outlined the key areas of interest of the Commission's work to UKACCs and also informed delegates of the recent publication of a discussion paper on "Utilisation of the UK's Existing Airports Capacity (Discussion Paper 06)"<sup>3</sup> which focussed on the domestic and international connectivity provided by regional and DA airports and airports serving London and the South East other than Heathrow and Gatwick. It also examined the connectivity trends at airports, how the business models of these airports were developing and whether the connectivity provided by these airports could be enhanced.
3. Delegates were also advised that the Commission had amongst its recommendations for the short to medium term asked that a Senior Delivery Group (SDG) drive forward the CAA's Future Airspace Strategy (FAS). The work of the SDG is considered elsewhere on the agenda.
4. At the time of the Annual Meeting the Government's response to the Commission's Interim Report was awaited.

## Progress since June 2014

5. Below is a summary of the Commission's work and progress since the last meeting:
  - **1 July 2014 – Airports Commission** issued a consultation on "Delivering new runway capacity: call for evidence" This discussion paper called for evidence on the issues which the Commission identified as being of particular interest to the delivery of new runway capacity. The paper explored:
    - legal and planning issues surrounding runway capacity
    - engagement with local communities including compensation and mitigation
    - the role of the state
  - **15 July – In a statement given by Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP, Secretary of State for Transport**<sup>4</sup> the progress the Government had made in addressing the Commission's more immediate recommendations was given. Overall, the Government welcomed the open and inclusive approach that Sir Howard Davies had taken on the first phase of the Commission's work. The Government recognised the scale and depth of the Commission's analytical programme, which had significantly improved the Government's understanding of the aviation landscape and the UK's capacity needs and commented that the Commission's strong analytical approach had taken account of the extent of aviation demand and the UK's future requirements for international and domestic connectivity. He also confirmed that it would be for the Government of the day to respond to the Airports Commission's recommendations once it published its final report in summer 2015.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ukaccs.info/14almfiles/14AirportsCommissionfinal.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/271231/airports-commission-interim-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271231/airports-commission-interim-report.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/318211/utilisation-existing-capacity.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/318211/utilisation-existing-capacity.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/government-progress-update-on-the-airports-commissions-interim-report>

He confirmed the work of the SDG and referred to the publication of the SDG's first report of its work<sup>5</sup> (also published on 15 July 2014). Good progress had also been made in moving work forward on the surface access recommendations, which is important in helping to secure vital connections to emerging markets.

In relation to the Commission's recommendation for an Independent Aviation Noise Authority, the Government believed that it would be more appropriate to consider the role for such a body alongside the Commission's final recommendations on long term capacity. Delegates will be interested to note that the DfT's Aircraft Noise and Management Advisory Committee (ANMAC) has questioned the need for a further body as many issues were local to airports which needed to be addressed and resolved locally rather than by a national body.

The Government's commitment to continue its support for airports outside the south east was reiterated. In the Budget 2014, the Chancellor announced that the Regional Air Connectivity Fund would be doubled to £20 million per year and extended by a further 3 years up to March 2019. The fund would continue to support public service obligations (PSOs) to maintain existing air links to London where there was a risk of regional connectivity being lost. The Chancellor also announced that the scope of the funding had been extended to include Start-up aid for new routes from airports handling fewer than 5 million passengers per annum. Guidance clarifying how the Government expected to implement EU aviation state aid guidelines on start-up aid was published last Autumn.

- **2 September 2014 – Airports Commission** published its report on the Inner Thames Estuary setting out its decision not to proceed further with this option.
- **11 November 2014 - Airports Commission** published its consultation on the three options it had shortlisted for increasing the UK's long-term aviation capacity.
- **16 March 2015 – the National Connectivity Task Force, chaired by Lord Shipley**, submitted its report to the Airports Commission (considered elsewhere on the agenda).
- **8 May 2015 - Airports Commission** issued a consultation on detailed dispersion modelling to supplement the air quality analysis of the three shortlisted options which gives details of the air quality implications of each proposal and the scope for mitigation. That consultation ran for three weeks and closed on 29<sup>th</sup> May.

6. The Airports Commission is expected to submit its final report to the Government in the next few weeks.

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<http://www.caa.co.uk/application.aspx?catid=33&pagetype=65&appid=11&mode=detail&id=6314>