

# STANSTED AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

## CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

### Paper by the Chairman

#### Introduction

In the margins of recent meetings, I have been asked to consider two matters which would impact on our STACC Constitution. This report primarily addresses having a Committee Vice or Deputy Chairman and then touches on membership issues.

#### Committee Vice Chairman

Last autumn, a Chairman's decision was needed when I was on holiday for three weeks in the USA. I was without my 'work' phone and could not therefore be readily contacted. It has been suggested that having a Vice Chairman (or Deputy Chairman) would be helpful in such circumstances.

The argument in favour is simply stated:

1. A Vice Chairman could help progress Committee business by being able to take on behalf of the Chairman decisions which the Chairman was on occasion unable to take.

There are perhaps some reservations:

1. Under our Constitution, the Chairman is independent. As the Vice Chairman would be standing in the shoes of the Chairman when deputising for him or her, then strictly speaking the Vice Chairman should be similarly independent with all the consequential implications of appointment - and presumably with an appropriate fee!
2. Many important decisions can be taken by the Working Groups (and by extension, within reason, their Chairmen) if the fall of their meetings is more timely than that of the main Committee. (See Paragraph 2 of the Urgent Business Section on pages 5 and 6 of our Constitution). On general procedural matters, I would expect these to be resolved by the two Working Group Chairmen acting together in consultation with the Committee Secretary and Technical Adviser.
3. The Committee may feel the palaver is somewhat disproportionate to the size of the potential problem. The number of occasions on which the Vice Chairman would be required to act is probably small. The occasion last autumn was the only time in the past ten years when I was not readily contactable for more than a day or so.

Perhaps simpler remedies are:

- a. the Chairman to designate an 'Acting Chairman' for when he/she is away for a length of time or
- b. the Chairman to have a 'work' phone with him/her for the very rare occasions when his/her decision is needed immediately!

If however the Committee is minded to make an amendment, then the simplest adjustment to Paragraph 2 of the Membership Section on page 3 of our Constitution is to add the words “and Vice Chairman” after the existing word “Chairman”. This would result in the following wording:

2. ”There shall be an independent Chairman and a Vice Chairman of the Committee appointed in accordance with arrangements approved by the Committee from time to time”.

However, the Committee might think it more appropriate to defer consideration of the matter until the new Chairman is in post (particularly given the relationship of the two positions) and has also had the opportunity herself/himself to discuss the matter with the Committee.

### **Membership Issues**

It has also been suggested that it might be appropriate to review the current membership categories to ensure that they remain fully representative and fit for purpose after ten years. For example, the Committee might benefit from having in its Airport Users category of membership a representative of Retail Interests. Whilst I lost the Committee vote on this ten years ago perhaps, with the clear growth and importance of retail to the Airport, its time has come again!

Again however, as with the Vice Chairman issue, further Committee consideration of the above could be deferred until the new Chairman is in post.

Stewart Ashurst  
Chairman  
April 2017