

41st ANNUAL MEETING BETWEEN AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

THURSDAY 8 JUNE 2017 - GLASGOW AIRPORT

The Chairman and Secretary and Technical Adviser attended the 41st Annual Meeting between Airport Consultative Committees held at Glasgow Airport on 8 June.

The Meeting considered a wide range of issues which included:-

Aviation Policy debate update

Tim May (Department for Transport) updated the Group on Government plans to update its Aviation Strategy. Given the General Election, the timing was fluid and dependent upon the election outcome. However the Government proposed to consult in 2017/18 on a number of underlying themes to assist policy development. These included consumer experience; impact of new technology; market access; sustainable growth; environmental impacts; competition and regulation and skills.

In terms of the Department's consultation on airspace, whilst delegates welcomed the proposed call in facility for the Secretary of State for Transport to intervene but considered the qualifying threshold needed to be revisited. On compensation the Meeting welcomed the broadening of the criteria to include residents living directly under flight paths. Delegates were not persuaded the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise as currently proposed was either necessary or viable. It was also important to realise that each airport had different local circumstances and that one size fits all approach should be avoided. It was also pointed out that the consultation did not appear to highlight the importance of safety.

As regards the draft National Policy Statement, delegates considered that the roadshows that had been held in both London and regionally had been very professional with DfT officials being very ready to engage with attendees. In terms of the Draft Policy Statement, delegates urged that it should not over focus on Heathrow at the expense of other South East airports. In addition it was important to ensure that there was good regional connectivity particularly for those airports where rail travel was not an efficient or viable option.

It was also noted that the election had also meant that decisions on a number of consultations eg the National Policy Statement and a new London night flights regime would be delayed.

CAA Strategic Plan

The meeting received an informative paper from the Secretariat on the CAA Strategic Plan (2016-2021).

CAA Airspace

The CAA gave a presentation providing an overview of their current consultation on the draft airspace design guidance. The meeting was also informed by a Secretariat background paper. Delegates welcomed the improved transparency of the process proposed by the CAA and the greater role proposed for ACCs. On the latter point, it was agreed that the CAA should engage further with the Group to help develop an efficient and prescribed process. Delegates also registered concerns about the length of time and resources needed by the airspace sponsor to complete the process. The CAA

highlighted those areas where the views of ACCs would be particularly welcomed. These were the questions that might be used to structure the conversation at the Define Stage and the engagement evidence the CAA needed to validate for a sponsor to pass the Gateway. Again delegates advised a one size first all approach should not be adopted. In terms of the proposed Tiers, it was considered that further clarity would be helpful in helping understanding the scope of each Tier.

Edinburgh

Gordon Robertson (Edinburgh Airport) provided a comprehensive presentation on the airport's approach to its recent consultation and engagement on proposed changes to airspace around Edinburgh. This demonstrated that the airport had engaged in a very detailed consultation to show that they had adopted a legally compliant process. The consultation had only resulted in 1% of consultees objecting to the proposals. (A copy of the presentation will be circulated to delegates)

ACC engagement with wider communities around airports

The Meeting considered a Secretariat paper which reported on new fora set up by the DfT and the CAA and highlighted concerns raised by community groups about ACCs. These suggested that ACCs were not representative and the membership rarely changed. Delegates noted that whilst ACCs operated according to DfT Guidelines, community groups were self appointed, lacked legitimacy and were pressure groups. In terms of representation, delegates further noted that in some cases community groups had a seat on an ACC, in other cases, the groups had the option of asking their local authority to represent their interests at an ACC. As regards membership, delegates commented that this was reviewed on a regular basis.

Looking forward, it was suggested that the Group need to raise its profile particularly with Government Ministers and senior officials. For example a small delegation might seek a meeting to remind Ministers of UKACCs's role. The Steering Group would consider further. It was also suggested that the DfT and the CAA might attend future meetings of ACCs particularly outside the South East as appropriate. It was suggested that ACCs could provide added value if involved upstream in the development of projects and consultations.

PRM services at UK airports

At last year's meeting, the CAA had reported on the outcome of its first year's monitoring of PRM services standards at individual airports. Delegates reported that their airports had responded positively to short comings in service standards identified at their airports and introduced a number of improvements. The CAA was aiming to publish the results of its 2016 monitoring of PRMs service standards in July. In terms of passengers with hidden disabilities, it was noted that this could be a sensitive issue for such passengers, many of whom might not wish to disclose they had a disability. It was important that airports adopt a sensitive approach.

CAA Review of Issues Affecting a Passenger's Access to UK Airports

The previous year had seen the CAA publish the outcome of its review of issues affecting passenger surface access to UK airports. It was noted that the CAA review did not extend to rail. Delegates reported that airports had been reviewing their surface access arrangements but pointed out that in a number of cases transport services were provided by third parties. This might mean that the airport's influence was limited.

CAA Consumer Panel

Keith Richards (outgoing Chairman of the Panel) outlined the work of the Panel over the five years of his tenure. The Panel had sought to act as a critical friend to the CAA. The Panel's work had been wide ranging including the provision of information to passengers; consumer research ; PRMs; and disruption/network resilience. The Panel had also sought to benchmark itself against other consumer panels.

UK Border Force and ACC engagement

At the previous year's meeting, ACCs had been encouraged to develop close and constructive relationships with the local Border Force. Delegates reported that progress had been made at a number of airports and relationships were being developed.

Brexit : the implications for airports and the aviation industry

The Meeting received a comprehensive and very helpful paper from the Secretariat. This outlined a number of possible implications. Delegates registered a number of concerns and it was agreed that the Steering Group might consider further. The DfT advised that the aviation industry had already been very active in making representations to Ministers.

Any Other Business

Delegates were updated as to the future of APD in Scotland

Administration

The Group had met the previous day in private session to discuss financial and administrative issues affecting the Secretariat. It was noted that the venues for the 2018 and 2019 had been agreed and delegates were asked to consider whether their airport would be prepared to host a future meeting

The Group thanked Jack Richmond (Chairman of Glasgow ACC) for arranging a very constructive and interesting meeting. It also passed its thanks to Glasgow Airport for facilitating the meeting.

The Group further expressed its appreciation to Alistair O'Neil (Chairman Edinburgh) and Stewart Ashurst (Chairman Stansted) who would shortly be retiring from their posts. The meeting noted the valuable contributions played by both Chairmen over a long period of time.

UKACCs Secretariat June 2017