

Department for Transport Consultation “Beyond the Horizon”

Paper by the Secretary and Technical Adviser

1. The Government has launched its call for evidence to help shape and promote the future of the aviation industry both up to 2050 and beyond. [Click here](#) to see document

2. At this stage the Government is seeking initial views on its approach and the suggested key elements of the strategy. It is not intended at this stage to seek detailed views on the various topics. Following this initial consultation, there will be a series of discussion papers on specific topics leading up to the publication of a new aviation strategy at the end of 2018. At this later stage, there will be an opportunity to offer detailed comments.

3. The Department for Transport states that the purpose of this initial consultation is to build on the success of the aviation sector, recognising its vital role in driving economic growth, boosting economic activity and delivering the government’s vision to build a global Britain that is outward-looking. The new strategy will look beyond a new runway at Heathrow, which has dominated aviation policy in recent years, and look at how the whole sector might respond to a range of technological, security, environmental and customer service challenges. It also looks at how the Government can support jobs and economic growth throughout the whole of the UK.

4. The new strategy includes looking closely at how best use can be made of existing capacity at airports throughout the UK, and making sure transport links to and from these airports meet the needs of passengers.

5. The strategy has one headline aim, supported by six more specific objectives:

To achieve a safe, secure and sustainable aviation sector that meets the needs of consumers and of a global, outward-looking Britain.

The strategy objectives are to:

- help the aviation industry work for its customers
- ensure a safe and secure way to travel
- build a global and connected Britain
- encourage competitive markets
- support growth while tackling environmental impacts
- develop innovation, technology and skills

The strategy will be guided by three overarching principles:

- consumer focused – it will put passengers and businesses at the centre of everything we do;
- market driven – it will emphasise the role of government as an enabler, helping to make the market work effectively;
- evidence led – it will target intervention on specific problems which government can address, avoiding activity that does not respond to a clear problem

At this stage the Government is seeking to confirm that it has correctly identified the key objectives that will underpin the new strategy.

Discussion

6. It is suggested that the Committee welcomes the Government's wish to develop a new strategy. However it needs to be recognised that given Brexit, it is not clear at this stage whether the current open skies policy within Europe will continue or operate in a modified form. It is also noted that the objectives will be tackled in a phased basis. It is not clear whether these have been set in order of Government priorities. If so, it is disappointing that the sustainable growth and environment impacts will not be considered until the final third tranche.

7. Turning to comment on the specific objectives, The following comments may be appropriate:-

Help the aviation industry work for its customers

- Does the Committee agree that the customer experience should be a key focus of the new policy and that the complete process i.e. from booking to arrival at the final destination should be fully investigated. This is particularly important at airports such as Stansted that are experiencing or planning growth that facilities are developed to match the increasing number of passengers.
- Does the Committee agree that the Government should seek to facilitate development of digital services to the benefit of passengers?
- Does the Committee agree that accessibility should be a key focus both in terms of increased awareness and the provision of suitable facilities for passengers needing assistance. This is important as it is predicted that the number of passengers requiring assistance is expected to grow as a higher percentage of total passengers.
- Does the Committee agree that surface access should be a key consideration ? As airports grow, access to airports will need to keep pace

with the increased number of passengers whether arriving by train, coach or private car.

Ensure a safe and secure way to travel

- Does the Committee support the Government's wish that aviation should be a safe and secure way to travel? It is noted that in the past, the UK has sought to set the global benchmark in this respect. No aviation activities should be permitted unless they meet the highest levels of safety and security, on the ground and in the air, to ensure that everyone who is impacted by aviation is protected to the highest global standards.

Build a global and connected Britain

- Does the Committee support the Government's policy of seeking to ensure there is an appropriate level of air services both internationally and domestically matching both business and leisure needs?

Encourage competitive markets

- Does the Committee support the Government's policy of seeking to ensure that aviation operates on a level playing field ?

Support growth while tackling environmental impacts

- Does the Committee support growth provided this is developed on a sustainable basis?
- Does the Committee agree that the consultation does not appear to give great focus to environmental issues? As airports develop, it is vital that this does not result in adverse disproportionate impacts on local residents living around airports. The development of the strategy should investigate the scope for new and appropriate mitigation measures. It is also disappointing that there is little focus on the health effects of aviation and the strategy should examine available and emerging research or commission new work to provide an informed view of the effect of aviation on health.
- It is also disappointing that there is no mention of planning guidance which would help ensure that any new developments e.g. housing, schools hospitals etc are not built in areas that are impacted by aircraft noise.

Develop innovation, technology and skills

- Does the Committee support the Department's continuing wish that the UK should become a leader in relation to all aspects of aviation technology, from cleaner, less noisy aero engines to anti-terrorism, and in developing the relevant key skills required?

Summary

8. The above would appear to be key issues to register with the Department or are there any other issues that Members consider should be included in the Committee's response ? Once Members are received, a draft response to the consultation will be circulated to the Committee.

**Secretary and Technical Adviser
Stansted Airport Consultative Committee**