



News Bulletin

No 12

April 2007

## **16<sup>th</sup> June: European Day of Action on Aviation**

### **Short-haul flights to be the key theme**

The second-ever Europe-wide Day of Action on Aviation promises a feast of activities across Europe. The first action day was held last year when almost 30 groups took part. This year, many more are expected to participate. The recent Campaigners' Conference in Brussels chose short-haul flights as the key theme of the day. Individuals and groups are encouraged to take part. A wide range of activities are possible. Last year they ranged from street-stalls in local high streets to the invasion by Dutch campaigners of the taxiway at Schiphol Airport.

- **If you want any suggestions on what you can do, contact us at [info@airportwatch.org.uk](mailto:info@airportwatch.org.uk)**

### **Campaigners from across Europe attend Brussels Conference**

Over 50 people from across Europe attended the Aviation Campaigners' Conference at the end of March. The talks covered climate change, noise, aviation taxation (or the lack of it!), light aviation and direct action. The main point of the day, however, was to allow campaigners to network with each other and to sketch out a programme of co-ordinated activities. Key areas on which we decided to work together included campaigning against the absurdity of short-haul flights, pressing for more taxes on aviation, lobbying more effectively to influence the noise directives currently being revised by the European Commission, pushing for tighter controls on recreational aircraft and devising a strategy for a freight campaign.

- **For more details contact us on [info@airportwatch.org.uk](mailto:info@airportwatch.org.uk)**

### **AirportWatch Campaign:**

#### **Climate Change Bill**

#### **Bill to exclude aviation emissions**

The Government's much-heralded Climate Change Bill, unveiled in draft form on 12<sup>th</sup> March is set to exclude emissions from aviation. The Bill, out to public consultation until 12<sup>th</sup> June, aims to achieve a 60% reduction CO2 emissions by 2050, (from the 1990 level) with an intermediate target for 2020. But it excludes aviation emissions from international flights and from shipping. Many campaign groups are also arguing for a tougher overall target, of an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050 with a review of progress towards meeting the targets more often than 5 yearly.

**AirportWatch Campaign:** to press for international emissions from aviation to be included in the Bill. One key request is that aviation is included in the UK carbon targets. The World Development Movement has a simple email action you can do, off their website, to send a response.

Click on the **WDM email action on Climate Change Bill**

(<http://www.wdm.org.uk/campaigns/climate/action/consultation.php>)

For those of you who want further information, the following are useful links:

**Climate Change Bill consultation documents - Defra website**

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/climatechange-bill/index.htm>

**General information on the consultation**

<http://www.aef.org.uk/downloads/TheCCBillbackground.doc>

**Consultation form - version to send by post**

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/climatechange-bill/response-form.pdf>

## **Around the Airports**

### **Angry Heathrow residents disrupt Minister's speech**



West London residents, together with members of Plane Stupid, confronted Douglas Alexander, the Transport Secretary, at an airline industry conference at Chatham House in Central London in early March. The group managed to storm past security, and interrupted Mr Alexander's speech. John Hunt, of Isleworth, led the charge onto the stage and delivered a speech denouncing the Government's plans for a third runway at Heathrow before being escorted away by a security guard. At the same time residents staged a demonstration outside Chatham House. Click to [view the full story in the Times](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article1480361.ece) (<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article1480361.ece>)

### **Heathrow 3<sup>rd</sup> Runway/2<sup>nd</sup> Stansted Runway to be twin-tracked?**

In an interview with the Sunday Times, BAA chief executive Stephen Nelson said that the company was looking to "twin-track" the proposed Heathrow and Stansted runways. The original intention had been to go for a 2<sup>nd</sup> runway at Stansted first, followed by a 3<sup>rd</sup> runway at Heathrow (assuming air pollution levels could be kept within the EU legal limits).

#### **It now appears that the timetable could be something like this:**

**Summer 2007:** Publication of the Project Heathrow Study into future air pollution levels around Heathrow. The Government is expected to go for the highly optimistic scenario that air pollution limits can be kept within the EU legal limits due to a mix of cleaner planes and controls on car traffic around the airport.

**Autumn 2007:** Consultation on a 3<sup>rd</sup> runway, 6<sup>th</sup> terminal and proposals to end runway alternation. At present planes landing over West London switch runways at 3pm to allow residents a half day's peace and quiet. The Government wants to end this practice in order to make fuller use of the existing runways. It could eventually mean residents having a plane landing overhead, one every ninety seconds, virtually throughout the day.

**Winter 2007:** BAA expected to move towards a Public Inquiry into a 2<sup>nd</sup> runway at Stansted.

**March 2008:** Terminal 5 set to open at Heathrow. This will provide the extra terminal capacity to allow BAA to bring in extra planes on the existing runways.

**End 2008:** BAA moves towards Public Inquiry into 3<sup>rd</sup> runway at Heathrow?

**Lydd Airport.** There are proposals to build an international Airport near Lydd which would devastate the local area and gravely threaten one of the East Coast's finest bird and nature reserves, at Dungeness, where 120,000 birds feed and roost daily. People living near Lydd voted on 4th April on plans for expansion in two town referendums, with 66% opposed. See the RSPB news story <http://www.rspb.org.uk/news/details.asp?id=tcm:9-157257>.

There is a petition to 10 Downing Street against development of Lydd airport on [Lydd Airport Petition](http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/LyddAirport). (<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/LyddAirport>)

## AirportWatch Action

Key Date: 30<sup>th</sup> May

### **The Public Inquiry into BAA's expansion plans for the existing runway at Stansted opens**

BAA is seeking two changes to its current permission which allows 25 million passengers a year to use Stansted at present:

1. It wants to remove any limit on passengers. While BAA has repeatedly indicated that by 2014 this might mean around **35 million passengers a year**, calculations by not only Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE) but also the airlines using Stansted show that by 2030 this could easily rise to around **50 million passengers a year**.
2. It wants an increase in the number of permitted aircraft movements allowed at the airport which in practice would enable **the present number of flights at the airport to increase by around 80,000 a year**.

BAA has had to go to Public Inquiry because Uttlesford District Council refused to give it permission to expand.

**AirportWatch Action:** This Public Inquiry is critical for us all in the battle against airport expansion. **AirportWatch is urging all its supporters to turn up on 30<sup>th</sup> May to show solidarity with Stop Stansted Expansion.** Some campaign groups, such as HACAN, have chosen that date to give their evidence to the Inquiry in order to emphasise their opposition to all expansion proposals. The Inquiry will be held at Endeavour House, Coopers End Road, Stansted Airport (close to Stansted railway station).

For more details of venue, times and the opening day activities check our website [www.airportwatch.org.uk](http://www.airportwatch.org.uk) or contact Stop Stansted Expansion on 01279 870558, or **SSE's Public Inquiry** webpage, ([http://www.stopstanstedexpansion.com/r1\\_public\\_inquiry.html](http://www.stopstanstedexpansion.com/r1_public_inquiry.html)) or email [info@stopstanstedexpansion.com](mailto:info@stopstanstedexpansion.com)

### **Passenger numbers at regional airports double in 10 years**

Figures released in March from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) revealed that passenger numbers at regional airports (those outside the London area) have doubled from 48 million in 1996 to 98 million in 2006. Over the same period, traffic at London airports has grown from 88 million to 137 million.

#### **All over the country excessive expansion is taking place:**

Last year **Liverpool's John Lennon Airport** saw the fastest rate of growth with passenger numbers up to 5 million from 4.4 million in 2005, an increase of 13%.

Passenger numbers were also up by 13% at **East Midlands Airport**. In the next bulletin we are hoping to do a special feature on East Midlands Airport which the Government seems to have earmarked for significant freight and passenger expansion. Last week it announced considerable funding for the building of a new station, designed to serve the airport.

The total number of passengers using the three main Scottish airports – **Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen** – increased by almost half a million last year, with the strongest growth taking place at Aberdeen (an 11.5% rise in passengers). Already in 2007, 34 new routes have been confirmed to serve Scotland's airports.

- **For detailed increases in flight numbers at all the UK airports go to the **CAA flight statistics website****

([http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/80/airport\\_data/2006Annual/Table\\_06\\_Air\\_Transport\\_Movements\\_2006\\_vs\\_2005.pdf](http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/80/airport_data/2006Annual/Table_06_Air_Transport_Movements_2006_vs_2005.pdf))

## **AirportWatch Research**

**AirportWatch is hoping to carry out a number of pieces of research to counter the growth in flights at regional airports.**

AirportWatch has been awarded a grant from the Ecology Trust to publish a report, complete with eye-catching graphics, on the way **flight paths** across the country are expanding and being more heavily used as a result of the increase in flight numbers. We hope to publish it in the autumn.

AirportWatch is seeking money to commission work on the impact of airport expansion on local and **regional economies** - the reason so many local authorities give for supporting the expansion of airports.

AirportWatch is also seeking money to produce an illustrated account of the effect that the expansion at a regional level is having on **communities** across the country.

## **National News**

### **Open Skies agreement will lead to more growth**

The recent open skies treaty agreed between the UK and the EU will liberalise transatlantic flights by opening up the routes to competition. It is predicted that the number of flights between the United States and Europe could increase by half over the next five years. Essentially, the treaty will allow any airline to operate from virtually any airport in Europe to virtually any airport in the US. In the UK, this is bound to add to the pressure for expansion at Heathrow as the airport is currently almost full, but is regarded as the gateway to America. The agreement came just weeks after the EU agreed a climate change goal to decrease greenhouse gases by at least 20% by 2020. In the words of Green MEP, Caroline Lucas, "It is simply incompatible to be encouraging a large increase in the number of flights between the EU and the US at the same time as cutting greenhouse gas emissions."

### **Billions face climate change risk, warn top scientists**

Billions of people face shortages of food and water and increased risk of flooding, top scientists have warned. In the second in a series of three reports, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has spelt out the potential effects of climate change. The Chairman of the IPCC Rajendra Pachauri said, "It's the poorest of the poor in the world, and this includes poor people even in prosperous societies, who are going to be worst hit." The first IPCC report, which we featured in the last bulletin, concluded that it was 90% likely that human activities were principally responsible for the global warming observed since 1950. The third report, due in May, will focus on ways of curbing the rise in greenhouse gases. Check out the IPCC website [www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch)

### **As anti-poverty pressure group urges higher air taxes**

The World Development Movement has published a hard-hitting report calling for higher aviation taxes to curb the growth in flying and for the money to be redirected to provide cavity wall insulation for UK households in fuel poverty, electricity to every household in the world lacking it and to halve the number of people without access to safe drinking water in sub-Saharan Africa. The report, *Dying on a Jet Plane*, published in mid-March, argues that "Flying is an activity dominated by the rich. The richest 18% of the UK population account for 54% of flights, while poorest 18% are responsible for just 5%. The average salary of passengers at UK airports is £48,000." The full report can be found at [www.wdm.org.uk](http://www.wdm.org.uk)

## Tories consult on green taxes on flights

The Conservatives stole a march on Gordon Brown by announcing just days before the Budget that they were to consult on plans for new environmental taxes. The proposals include levying VAT or fuel duty on domestic flights and a plan to charge frequent flyers higher taxes. The money from the tax increases would go to reduce taxes elsewhere in the economy. The aviation industry reacted with predictable disdain to the plans, but they received a cautious welcome from a number of campaign groups. The consultation ends on Monday 11th June 2007. To find out more about the proposals and to how to respond [www.conservatives.com/pdf/greener skiesconsultation.pdf](http://www.conservatives.com/pdf/greener skiesconsultation.pdf)

## Select Committee demands taxes to curb aviation growth

In a report published just before the Budget, the Environmental Audit Committee condemned Gordon Brown's proposals to double Air Passenger Duty (APD), announced at the end of last year, as "not going nearly far enough". The report argued that doubling the tax "will do nothing to stabilise aviation emissions, merely slow their growth." The Committee called for APD to be levied on each flight, rather than per passenger and added, "We cannot understand why the entire aviation industry is zero-rated for VAT". The full report can be read on [www.parliament.uk/commons/selcom90/eahome.htm](http://www.parliament.uk/commons/selcom90/eahome.htm)

## Greenpeace offers free rail tickets

Greenpeace activists stormed a check-in queue at Gatwick and urged passengers to take the train instead of boarding the flight the first flight from the airport to Newquay on a route that BA had just reinstated. The campaigners offered the queuing passengers free train tickets but were unfortunately hustled away before negotiations could begin. Greenpeace said that if BA was serious about green issues, it would ground these flights. It pointed out the train costs exactly the same as the flight and takes only marginally longer, allowing for check-in times.

### Heard the rumours about a new aviation industry pressure group?

*The Independent* reported on the 18<sup>th</sup> March that "low-cost airline easyJet and airports operator BAA are spearheading a new coalition to lobby against what they believe are unfair environmental taxes being levied on the aviation industry." *The Independent* said that the group was due to meet first of 27<sup>th</sup> March. But so far nothing has been heard or seen of them. Any sightings? E-mail us at [info@airportwatch.org.uk](mailto:info@airportwatch.org.uk) And the direct action group Plane Stupid might also have a more than passing interest in their whereabouts – [www.planestupid.com](http://www.planestupid.com)

### Useful Info

- If you want a free **daily digest of transport stories in the papers**, check out Anthony Rae's excellent site [www.transportinfo.org.uk](http://www.transportinfo.org.uk)
- Remember, if you want help with organising your campaign, **Seeds for Change** offer free advice. Seeds for Change also do direct action training. They provided very useful training for the Heathrow residents who disrupted Douglas Alexander's speech. Contact [oxford@seedsforchange.org.uk](mailto:oxford@seedsforchange.org.uk) or check out their website [www.seedsforchange.org.uk](http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk)
- For good legal advice contact the **Environmental Law Foundation**. They will give initial advice free. [www.elflaw.org](http://www.elflaw.org)
- If you want to catch up on the latest **direct action** activities, check out Plane Stupid's website on [www.planestupid.com](http://www.planestupid.com)