

BAA to give up on third Heathrow runway

On 11th October, the Sunday Times reported that BAA has bowed to opposition to a 3rd runway at Heathrow. It will not submit a planning application before the general election and will not sign large contracts to “bounce” a future Conservative government into accepting it. Senior BAA figures have also told the Tories the company will cease to fight for the runway if they form the next government. Its new stance means the taxpayer will not be forced to pay a large sum in compensation for any wasted work. Publicly, BAA executives are urging the Tories not to “close the door” on expansion plans and say they are still working on the project. But they admitted they were surrendering. But



Comment on Heathrow from John Stewart:

The battle is not over yet! But things are looking good that a third runway will be dropped. The Conservatives have said that the scrapping of Heathrow expansion will be a firm commitment in their General Election Manifesto. BAA has said it will not stand in the Conservatives way. But the constant mantra coming from the aviation industry and those Conservatives who disagree with party policy at their recent Party Conference in Manchester was that the “door must not be closed forever on Heathrow expansion.” However, a victory next year would be momentous and, in a world threatened ever more by climate change and peak oil, it would be hard indeed for the industry to come back.

One Tory MP, though, did warn me that this all depends on the expected Conservatives winning the General Election! If Labour were to scrape back in, who knows what might happen? But the Heathrow campaign is preparing for every eventuality. If plans for expansion are not dropped, there is likely to be widespread civil disobedience. Quietly, behind the scenes, residents and activists are preparing for the worst. A number of people from Plane Stupid have moved into the area around Heathrow threatened by expansion. In early October residents and activists joined with campaigners from Scotland to stage a Ceilidh in West Drayton, one of the threatened communities. It was enormous fun but it also had a serious purpose: if a third runway is not dropped, the people who were partying together will be standing shoulder to shoulder to defend the communities....if need be, on the tarmac at Heathrow.

City Airport protest as BA "Son of Concorde" luxury all business flight launches

Protestors at London City Airport gave the new BA all business, luxury service to New York a noisy send off. The flight, which has to refuel at Shannon on the way because City's runway is too short for a fully fuelled plane, will bring yet more misery to those affected by the airport. The new flight is one of the least fuel efficient means there is to get to New York, in plane designed for 110, but converted for only 32 full length bed seats. The new service has been given the same



flight number as Concorde (about the most noisy and most polluting passenger plane ever produced) - BA001. (29th September)



This new flight provides luxury for a few rich passengers - and more noise pollution for everyone living under the flight path. However, the BA all-business flight grounded by engine fault on second day. After its PR launch with great fanfare the day before, the fault left them grounded on the runway for nearly two hours. An engine sensor had to be delivered from Gatwick.

Newham is being sued for their handling of the City flights increase application

City airport is in the news again, as Newham Council is being taken to court for allegedly failing to consult residents before allowing a 50% increase in flights from City Airport. With the help of Friends of the Earth Rights and Justice Unit, Fight the Flights have begun the legal challenge process leading to



Judicial Review in order to try and overturn Newham's climate wrecking decision. They are taking the action because the council approved the expansion in October without consulting residents and other affected boroughs - and failed to consider the government's policy to reduce aviation emissions to below 2005 levels by 2050. Councils should have a duty to cut emissions. (28th Sept) Fighting funds are needed, and if you can help with a small donation, it will be gratefully received. Fight the Flights at <http://bit.ly/c51L> (28th Sept)

At Climate Camp at the end of August, there were two protests in London - one outside the Treasury. At the other, around 100 activists launched a flash mob at London City Airport, to protest against the recently approved 50% increase. Adding ammunition to local opposition to the airport, it was revealed in September that the economic benefits of the airport have been exaggerated. Instead of projections that the development would bring 1,000 new jobs to East London, in a recent letter to Newham MP, Stephen Timms, Newham Council said the airport had now acknowledged that only 480 new jobs will be created.

Stansted passenger and traffic figures continue to decline - so why are they persisting in demanding a second runway?

BAA's figures for September show Stansted passenger numbers continue to decline at a far faster rate than BAA's other airports. This is the 23rd month in a row that Stansted has posted a decline. Stansted carried 11.6% per cent fewer passengers in September 2009 compared to the same month last year whilst the decline at both Heathrow and Gatwick was less than 1%. Stansted was down by -7.8% in August, -5.7% in July, by -11.5% in June, 18.5% in May, by 12.6% in April and 15.9% month on month, in March .

On this basis, Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE) estimates that Stansted will handle fewer than 20 million passengers this year compared to the 24 million reached during its 2007 heyday. The decline in the number of flights is even more marked. SSE projects that Stansted will handle 155,000 flights this year - the lowest annual total for seven years. There were 177,000 flights in 2008.

With the current runway having massive spare capacity, it makes a complete nonsense of BAA's claim that Stansted needs a second runway. The airport already has permission to handle 35m passengers and

264,000 flights on the existing runway. SSE says BAA should face up to reality and withdraw its second runway planning application without further ado. While BAA persists in its plans for the runway, the uncertainty and stress for local residents continues.

Note from John Stewart, Chair of AirportWatch

National Picture

The coming months are going to be filled with announcements that will impact on our campaigning. There is, of course, Copenhagen. In December, the Committee on Climate Change, set up by the Government, will publish its report assessing whether the expansion of aviation is compatible with the Government's targets to cut emissions. Early in the New Year, the report of the Government Working Party looking into the potential of High-Speed Rail will be published.

The big event next year will be the General Election, which has to be held by mid-Summer. After the party conferences the position of the parties has become clearer. Labour will go into the Election supporting the expansion proposals in its 2003 White Paper. The Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats would scrap plans for new runways at Heathrow, Stansted and Gatwick. Instead they support high-speed rail and an element of expansion at "regional" airports.

The focus of AirportWatch's work will move towards supporting campaigners at the "regional" airports, including campaigners fighting expansion in London and the South East, at airports such as London City, Manston and Southend.

Gatwick application for North Terminal extension

On 21st July, Gatwick put in a planning application for an extension to the North Terminal and other works to enable the airport to expand from its previous peak of 35 million passengers a year to 40 m, with 20,000 extra flights a year. The increase sought is larger than the total size of many regional airports, and will mean more noise, and more pollution. The impact of the application would be more than double the total climate change impact of Crawley Borough.

GACC (Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign) has objected to the application on the grounds

1. that it is premature, and that the proposed development would mean:
2. more noise,
3. more pollution,
4. more traffic,
5. more danger to the public,
6. more pressure on scarce water resources, and would have
7. damaging economic consequences, and would be
8. contrary to Government climate change targets.

Their comments in detail can be seen at [GACC letter of objection](#) . GACC has asked the Government Office for the South East to call in the planning application so that there can be a full public inquiry.

Global aviation industry pledges to cut its emissions - eventually ? No plans to cut total aviation emissions before 2020

Ahead of the climate change summit in Copenhagen this December, the aviation industry has tried to seize the initiative by making a 'pledge' to reduce emissions. The UN climate change summit in New York on 22nd September was told by IATA (International Air Transport Association) that the industry as a whole will cut emissions to 50% below 2005 levels by 2050. They said the same thing at a

Greener Skiers meeting in Hong Kong in early October. The three targets IATA has for their industry, to try to appear to be attempting to be environmentally responsible, are:

1. *Improving carbon efficiency with a 1.5% average annual improvement in fuel efficiency to 2020*
2. *Stabilizing emissions with carbon-neutral growth from 2020*
3. *Emissions reductions with a 50% absolute cut in emissions by 2050 compared to 2005*

Forecasts for emissions growth from the aviation sector have previously suggested that emissions could rise up to four-fold by 2050, if not appropriately controlled. The **Aviation Environment Federation** (AEF) has the following comments on these supposed cuts, showing just how inadequate the IATA proposals are.

**** To reduce net carbon dioxide emissions by 50% by 2050, compared with 2005 levels.***

This is far less than the target for other sectors, given international agreement to achieve global cuts of 50% on 1990 levels (not 2005), with G8 countries agreeing to 80% cuts. It means that other sectors will have to make reductions even greater than 80% to make up for aviation.

Net 'cuts' would in any case allow 'emissions trading' and 'offsets'. This means that the industry need NOT actually cut its emissions by 50%, if it can buy offsets or carbon credits by negotiating with other sectors.

**** To make all industry growth carbon-neutral by 2020.***

A commitment to stabilise emissions by 2020 would allow emissions to continue growing until then. BBC business editor Robert Peston has wryly observed "The industry does not expect to stabilise emissions until 2020. Which most psychologists would say is too far away to serve as much of a deadline." After 2020 emissions would have to be even more drastically cut to meet the aspirational target for 2050.

**** To achieve a 1.5% average annual improvement in fuel efficiency to 2020.***

A 1-2% improvement in fuel efficiency (a 1-2% reduction in CO₂ per passenger km) is what airlines have historically achieved regardless of any environmental targets, this being achieved through technological improvements in new aircraft. But as traffic has been growing at around 4-5% per year, total emissions have been increasing rapidly. A 1-5% fuel efficiency target would simply reflect the trend.

**** To submit plans for joining a global carbon trading scheme to the UN by November 2010.***

Having failed to get international aviation included in the Kyoto protocol, pressure is on make sure that aviation does not slip through the net again at Copenhagen. The aviation industry's 'pledges' are intended to pre-empt Copenhagen and substitute for real action and strong targets for aviation a virtually meaningless plan. *For more details see AEF's website at <http://www.aef.org.uk/?p=942>*

Government to be challenged by the Committee on Climate Change over expanding aviation industry

The Government is likely to be challenged by its own climate change advisory body on its decision to approve a 3rd runway at Heathrow and permit a doubling in air travel by 2030. The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) believes rapid expansion of air travel is inconsistent with the Government's legally binding commitment to cut overall CO₂ emissions by 80% on 1990 levels by 2050. In a letter published on 9th September the Committee says that if aviation is allowed to continue to grow, and its emissions are at 2005 levels in 2050, the rest of the UK economy will have to make



90% cuts to achieve the overall 80% emissions reduction target.

Allowing aviation to expand at the rate proposed by the Government could place an unacceptable burden on other industries to achieve the cut. The committee is also concerned that the expansion of air travel will undermine efforts to persuade developing countries to agree emissions cuts at the UN summit on climate change in December.

Back in January, the government agreed that UK aviation emissions would return to 2005 levels by 2050. (Ministers avoided using the 1990 baseline, because this could have forced airlines to halve the present number of flights). UK air passenger numbers grew from 102 million in 1990, to 240 million in 2007 and are due to reach 470 million by 2030.

The CCC believes that if adaptation to climate change in developing countries is not funded via auctioning of allowances in cap and trade schemes, then an alternative source of funding should be clearly identified. So a great deal of money will have to be raised through flight taxes to compensate developing countries for the damage air travel does to the environment.

The Committee will be publishing their advice on how the UK can meet the 2050 target to reduce gross aviation emissions back to 2005 levels- including consideration of scope for improvements in technology, the implications of further aviation expansion and appropriate policy levers - on **December 8th 2009**. *More details and links at http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/news/detail.php?art_id=3570*

Noise Action Plans - not a lot of actual action

Of the 18 airports which are required to issue draft Noise Action Plans (NAPs), 15 so far have done so, and the consultation periods for Heathrow, Stansted and Gatwick are over. The consultations for East Midlands, Birmingham, Newcastle, Manchester and Bournemouth NAPs end on 21st October. Bristol's consultation ends on 22nd December. Luton's and London City have been very late in publishing theirs, which have only just been produced for consultation - ending in mid January 2010.

The UK is the only European country that has given responsibility for producing draft Noise Action Plans to the airports themselves, and they appear designed to avoid any restrictions on, or costs to, airlines. The Environmental Noise Directive (END) aim of "measures to **reduce** noise exposure" has been changed by several of the NAPs to "measures to **manage** noise exposure".



None of the draft noise action plans have any specific targets of reducing existing levels of aircraft noise, or the harmful effects on the communities close to the airport and under the associated flight paths - and no timetables. They are strong on "monitoring and managing" with as little actual practical action as possible. The airports generally plan to largely carry on with business as usual. The NAPs should go further in specific, quantifiable actions to reduce noise, particularly at night. The NAPs have made interpretation more difficult by using 5 decibel bands, while in the pre-consultation discussions they were using 3 decibel bands. SSE have already written to Hilary Benn on this banding issue, to complain.

The NAPs highlight the future problem of a trade-off by airports of carbon emissions / fuel efficiency, and noise. Using some aircraft manoeuvres, tiny fuel savings can be made if more noise is made. With open rotor engines, this will be more of a problem. For airports such as Stansted, where a high proportion of those affected by the airport regard noise as their top priority, this will be unacceptable.

Local communities will not accept increased noise nuisance for a very tiny increase in aircraft efficiency around the airport. Several airport groups have produced and published their detailed responses. An example of an excellent one is Stansted's at

http://www.stopstanstedexpansion.com/documents/SSE_Response_to_STAL_NAP_30.9.09.pdf

The next stages are that the draft NAPs have to be formally adopted and approved by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. It is not clear how much note is to be made of comments sent in to the consultation. Once adopted by the Secretary of State at DEFRA, the Noise Action Plans should be published by the airport operator as a public document in an electronic format, within 28 days of being informed that the Noise Action Plan has been adopted. There should also be a summary document. *BAA expect to publish their Noise Action Plans in January.*

Survey indicates the public won't fly less to reduce carbon footprint

The extent of the public's refusal to fly less often has been revealed by research that suggests attempts to slash emissions from aviation will struggle. The Loughborough University "Propensity to Fly" study shows that less than 1 in 5 people are trying to reduce the number of flights they take for environmental reasons. It found that 88% of those asked would be willing to cut energy use at home than go without flying for a year. Only a quarter said they would not fly in the next 12 months. This is odd, because the CAA's own data in their 2007 CAA Passenger Survey - <http://bit.ly/OdhhbK> - said almost half the population do not fly in any one year. "Propensity to Fly" reports four out of five saying that an extra £50 on a ticket would deter them, though the survey's results are confusing. It looks as if the small extra costs of up to £10 on flights will only put a small number off flying. This is in contrast to the continuous whine of the aviation industry, making out that an extra £1 cost on a short haul flight is ruining their business. Unfortunately, the full survey results are not available to the public. 5th October

IATA predicts bigger global airline losses in 2009

IATA has predicted that global airline losses could total \$11 billion for 2009, which is \$2 billion more than it forecast in June. The June forecast loss figure was itself almost double the forecast in March of a \$4.7bn IATA said it expected European carriers to make a \$3.8bn loss in 2009, which is more than double what it originally forecast. IATA said the revised prediction was based on rising fuel prices and exceptionally weak yields, which could fall by 15% compared to 2008 levels. This could take airlines years to recover from. Europe and the US were particularly badly affected.

Three main factors are driving the expected losses are:

- **Demand:** Passenger traffic is expected to decline by 4.0% and cargo by 14% for 2009
- **Yield:** Yields are expected to fall 12% for passenger and 15% for cargo The fall in passenger yield is led by the 20% drop in demand for premium travel. Cargo utilization remains at less than 50% despite the removal of 227 freighters from the global fleet.
- **Fuel:** Spot oil prices have gone up in anticipation of improved economic conditions. Oil is now expected to average US\$61 per barrel (Brent) for the year. This will add US\$9 billion in cost for a total expected fuel bill of US\$115 billion.

IATA now says that in 2008 the global industry made a loss of loss of US\$16.8 billion. Combining the losses of 2008 and 2009, they will have made a loss of US\$27.8 billion - larger than the impact of 9/11 when the global industry lost US\$24.3 billion in the two years 2001and 2002.

IATA expects losses to continue into 2010 with the industry expected to report a US\$3.8 billion net loss. This is based on a limited revival of growth in traffic volumes of 3.2% for passenger and 5% for cargo; very little increase in yields of 1.1% for passenger and 0.9% for cargo and oil at US\$72 per barrel. (IATA) 15th September. <http://www.iata.org/pressroom/pr/2009-09-15-01.htm>

Carlisle -High Court judge defers judgement on Judicial Review

Carlisle airport was bought in 2006 by Stobart Air. In 2007 they submitted an application for a new runway and integrated terminal and massive regional freight storage and distribution centre for Eddie Stobart road haulage, to be built on a greenfield site. In April 2008 Carlisle City Council (CCC) imposed various conditions. By summer 2008, and once the Government Office for the North West (GONW) called in the application, Stobart Air withdrew it. Later in 2008 a second application was submitted, for landside development only, which comes with a draft s106 agreement that binds Stobart Air to resurfacing the existing runway to increase its strength. Included also is the provision to convert as yet empty office space to a terminal building, all under Permitted Development rights. The accompanying Environmental Impact Assessment does not assess any of the proposed airside works. The Development Control committee then passed the plans despite warnings of potential judicial review from objectors.

A local farmer, Gordon Brown, applied to Newcastle High Court for leave to get a Judicial Review. This was refused in July. The basis of the case is that the airside works are not environmentally assessed, the matter has not been referred to GONW as a departure and that CCC misrepresented their barrister's advice. On 28th September, Gordon had a hearing in the High Court in London, Royal Courts of Justice, Queen's Bench Division, and the judge has now deferred his judgement. This is still awaited. Gordon's father and three other tenant farmers have been given Notice to Quit the site (where they have been since 1910).

Meanwhile, the airport has hopes of getting passenger flights started in late 2010 or 2011.

East Midlands runway extension decision (probably) due on 3rd November

A planning application for a runway extension of 190 metres is likely to be determined by the NW Leics District Council planning committee on 3rd November. The application was submitted back in November 2008. The proposed runway extension would allow larger aircraft to depart at slightly heavier take-off weights, so they are likely to be noisier. The airport first asked for this back in 2000. The airport claims plans to extend the runway will barely increase the noise and will actually reduce the level of noise from the majority of landing aircraft for some residents. The application was due to go before the council in March 2009, but it disappeared off the planning agenda. Local people affected by night flight say noise levels in homes near to the airport are already intolerable, with houses vibrating and windows rattling. They fear the extension would make the problem worse. East Midlands airport already has the second highest air cargo tonnage in the UK, and the most night flights. The campaign group, DEMAND (Demand East Midlands Airport is Now Designated) wants the Government to control the airport, so night flights are regulated.

Bristol - waiting for decision on airport expansion

The airport planning application consultation period ended on 17th August. The airport wants to expand to increase passengers by 60% by 2016, increase passenger flights by 40%, summer night flights by 50%, car journeys by over 2m per year, and carbon emissions by at least 40%. SBAE (Stop Bristol Airport Expansion) have put together the arguments against expansion, including:

- Escalating growth in passenger numbers.
- Huge noise pollution.
- More traffic on our roads.
- More light pollution.
- The cost to the planet, especially climate change
- Building on Green Belt land.
- Only 20% of BIA's passengers are business travellers.

- Cheap flights create a tourist deficit In the UK.
- Bristol Airport's rate of growth is not sustainable.
- The planning system is designed to favour development

Bristol City Council has formally objected to the airport expansion on a number of grounds including climate change, surface access and noise. Bath and North East Somerset Council (BANES) has called for plans to expand the airport to be refused because of climate change. The South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) has raised major concerns about the economic benefits weighed against the climate change implications of Bristol airport's expansion plans, which is a hugely significant position statement. However, it is North Somerset council which will determine the application, and they have already received around 6,000 objections to the expansion. Lots of detail on the SBAE website at <http://www.nobristolairportexpansion.co.uk>

Southend expansion including runway extension now submitted

On 13th October, Stobart Air finally submitted their planning application for a £30 million development of the airport, including an extension of the runway of 194 metres, to make it 1,799 metres. The move follows negotiations with Southend and Rochford councils over night flights and noise controls, if the expansion is allowed. Under the current lease there are no restrictions on the number of flights coming in and out of the airport during the day and there can be up to 900 flights a month at night. The recent negotiations have come up with some fairly meaningless concessions by the airport. The limits they have agreed to are ineffective because they are still way higher than their current usage and there is no evidence yet that there would be anything to stop the airport going back to the Council and asking for an increase if things did get busy in future.

The planning application would involve the demolition of six houses and closing Eastwoodbury Lane to traffic. Work is already under way on a new railway station on the Liverpool Street to Southend Victoria line, and a new control tower is planned for the near future. The airport is claiming it will create huge numbers of jobs (6,500 jobs). Southend Council is likely to make a decision on the application in January. Documents are not yet available (14th October). The local group, SAEN, will be working hard campaigning on this application for the next few months. <http://saen.org.uk/>

Manston plan to increase night freight flights

On 17th August, Kent International airport put out information on a consultation about increasing night flights. Infratil, who own the airport, want to start night time flying in 6 months time. They plan to move to a Quota Count system - which is highly unsatisfactory as a means of measuring noise at night. Manston's long-standing 'S106' agreement with Thanet District Council bans all scheduled night flights in the 8 hours between 11pm and 7am. An extension to allow for flights between 6am and 11.30pm was approved in principle by Thanet council in February for British Airways Cargo, but the company then decided to remain at Stansted. There is a petition to oppose night flights, because the approach flight path is directly over Ramsgate, flying over thousands of homes. The runway ends 0.8 miles from the nearest houses. <http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/nonightflights>

Delightfully eccentric Climate Rush crosses the country by horse and cart

"Climate Rush on the Run" was a horse-and-cart tour designed to raise awareness and get people involved with campaigning to reduce carbon emissions. They set off on 4th September, with Sipson the first stop. Their tour, which was (almost) petrol-free, wound its way to Exeter and Totnes, via Bristol, by the end of September, with Oxford airport as one of its stops. One of many activities in the run-up to the Copenhagen summit in December. Some great photos at <http://climaterushontherun.blogspot.com>



Climate Rush on the Run At Sipson



Climate Rush on the Run At Oxford

The things airlines are cutting to save money - now pee before you fly

Airlines across the world are looking at every sort of cut, in order to save money. Northwest Airlines in the US has excluded spoons from its cutlery pack if the in-flight meal does not need one. JAL shaved a fraction of a centimetre from all its cutlery. BA has cut out soothing hot towels on their short-haul business class flights. Southwest Airlines have cut out lemons, and olives, which saves them \$100,000 and \$40,000 respectively each year.

But now the Japanese are asking that people go to the toilet before flying, in order to cut the weight of the plane. All Nippon Airways hopes to cut the carbon emissions if each passenger is just that bit lighter when they board. They reckon that if 50% of passengers relieved themselves before boarding, it would reduce Nippon's carbon dioxide by 4.2 tons a month.

How UK airports have been doing during June, July and August

June

Passengers: 20.5 million passengers, down -9% on June 2008. The London airports were down -6%.

Air Transport Movements: 192,543 ATMs, down -9% on June 2008. London airports down -7 %.

July

Passengers: 23 million passengers, down -6% on July 2008. The London airports were down -3%.

Air Transport Movements: 202,075 ATMs, down -8% on July 2008. London airports down -6%.

August

Passengers: 23.6 million, down -6% on August 2008. ATMs down -8.1% on August 2008. (CAA data)
September figures not out yet.

Useful Info

- **Daily digest of transport stories in the papers**, with many on aviation, www.transportinfo.org.uk
- For information from the many **local groups at airports in the UK**, see the **Campaign Community** section of the AirportWatch website. <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/campaigncommunity.php>
- For more about the growing problem of biofuels, see **Biofuelwatch** www.biofuelwatch.org.uk and biofuels and aviation at http://www.biofuelwatch.org.uk/docs/aviation_biofuels_article.pdf
- For more information about aviation, and aviation stories, see the AEF (**Aviation Environment Federation**) website at www.aef.org.uk and the AirportWatch website
- For **actions and events** see AirportWatch's "Take Action" <http://www.airportwatch.org.uk/action.php>

Bulletin compiled by Sarah Clayton - with thanks to many contributors 13.10.2009

www.airportwatch.org.uk