

# Exchange

## Newsletter for Aviation Campaigners across Europe

No 1

April 2011

### Welcome!

Welcome to the first newsletter for aviation campaigners in Europe. It is called *Exchange* because its main purpose is to enable campaigners to exchange information. I will be compiling it in my capacity as the newly-elected President of UECNA (European Union Against Aircraft Noise) but it will be emailed to all campaigners whether or not they are members of UECNA. Please free to email to other campaigners and campaign groups you may know. We want it to reach as many people as possible. We hope to produce it every two months. If you have news about what is happening in your country or your campaign, please email it to me – [johnstewart2@btconnect.com](mailto:johnstewart2@btconnect.com). The newsletter will be in English but feel free to email me your news in your own language and I will get it translated. **John Stewart**

### Taking Action Together

One reason the aviation industry is so successful in influencing the European Union is that it co-ordinates its lobbying activity. UECNA is hoping to try to help aviation campaigners to do the same.

**Over the next 18 months there will be a number of things we can influence:**

- At present the European Commission is revising its **VAT Directive**. VAT is Value Added Tax. There is no VAT on airline tickets or on the purchase on new planes. This subsidy to the aviation industry is one reason why air fares can be so cheap. Cheap fares mean more people fly. That means more flights, more noise and more emissions. We have an opportunity to lobby the European Union to put VAT on airline tickets and the purchase of planes. The consultation on the VAT Directive ends on 31<sup>st</sup> May. ***Later in this newsletter we suggest the action we can take together on the VAT Directive.***
- In 2012 the European Commission is expected to revise its **Energy Directive**. This is also important for us because this is the opportunity for the European Union to impose tax on aircraft fuel. At the moment there is no tax paid on aircraft fuel. This is losing the European Union countries billions of pounds each year. It is also the reason that companies like Easyjet and Ryanair can keep their prices so low. ***Future newsletters will keep you up-to-date with developments on the Energy Directive.***
- Later this year the European Commission is expected to start to revise its **Noise Directives**. There are two noise directives. Directive 2002/30 only deals with noise from aircraft at airports. Directive 2002/49 deals with noise from all other

sources. The European Commission usually revises its directives about every five or six years. The reason why it has not revised the noise directives since 2002 is that it has been waiting to look at the noise maps and the noise actions plans which each member state of the European Union was required to produce. UECNA argues that the revised noise directives should include a clear strategy to reduce noise to the levels recommended by the World Health Organisation. *Future newsletters will keep you informed about the progress of the noise directives and how we can work together to influence them.*

## Two Conferences on Noise in May

There are two conferences taking place on noise in Brussels in May which aviation can campaigners can attend.

**25<sup>th</sup> May: Quiet Please: The Future of EU Noise Policy, 12.30 – 18.00**

<http://www.transportenvironment.org/News/2011/3/25052011-Conference-on-EU-Noise-Policy/>  
organised by the environmental lobby organisations Transport & Environment (T&E) and the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) as well as the health lobby group HEAL

**26<sup>th</sup> May: European Environmental Bureau's Noise Working Group, all day**

<https://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?formkey=dEpCN2hRajZmU0ltbkNhaHJBWDFORmc6MQ>

The second conference is likely to be a more technical conference.

Click on the links for more information about the conferences.  
You need to book now!

## Take Action on VAT

**The consultation on the VAT Directive ends on 31<sup>st</sup> May.** You can download the consultation paper on [Green Paper on the future of VAT– Towards a simpler, more robust and efficient VAT system\\_\(pdf 103 Kb\)](#) 

 For other language versions, please click on the bubble

The part of the European Commission which is responsible for the consultation is the Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union. We need to email our responses to [TAXUD-VAT-greenpaper@ec.europa.eu](mailto:TAXUD-VAT-greenpaper@ec.europa.eu). The Commissioner in charge of the Directorate is Algirdas Semeta ([cab-semeta-commissaire@ec.europa.eu](mailto:cab-semeta-commissaire@ec.europa.eu)). The main official in charge of taxation at the Directorate is Maria-Elena Scoppio ([maria-elena.scoppio@ec.europa.eu](mailto:maria-elena.scoppio@ec.europa.eu)). I suggest it is worth emailing our response to these two people also. After the Directorate has drawn up its response to the consultation, the proposals will be considered by the European Parliament's Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs. Here is the link to the list of members on the Committee and their email addresses.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/committees/membersCom.do;jsessionid=518A5C8F6F7A5B603D7F45D1C076EEEEA.node2?language=EN&body=ECON>

I would suggest you email at least the Chair of the Committee, Sharon Bowles, and the MEPs from your own countries. You can email all members of the Committee if you want! *See next page for a sample response.*

## **What to say in your response**

**Below is a sample letter you could use in all the responses and letters you write. But feel free to adapt it as you want or to write your own letter!**

We are writing to you to ask you to support the introduction of Value Added Tax (VAT) on aviation.

The European Commission is currently consulting on the revision of the VAT Directive - Directive [2006/112/EC](#). The consultation ends on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2011. We believe that this presents an opportunity to end the special treatment which aviation receives. At present there is no VAT on tickets, airline fuel is zero rated and no VAT is paid on purchases of new aircraft.

There are good reasons to impose VAT on aviation:

It would create a 'level playing field' with other industries;

It would raise billions of euros each year for EU countries;

It would end the strange situation where one of the noisiest and dirtiest industries in the world receives a significant tax subsidy.

The European Union needs to take the lead on charging airlines VAT because individual member states are reluctant to do so in case it will put them at a competitive disadvantage with other countries.

At present EU law requires that the standard VAT rate must be at least 15%, with member states free to charge a higher rate if they want to do so. We believe the case for applying this law to aviation is strong and urge you will support it.

## **Reports**

### **World Health Organisation: Noise And Health**

A new report on noise and health has been published by the World Health Organisation: [http://www.euro.who.int/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/136466/e94888.pdf](http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/136466/e94888.pdf)

### **HACAN: Economics of Night Flights**

A new report commissioned by HACAN, the Heathrow Campaign, from the Dutch economists CE Delft, has found that a night flight ban at Heathrow before 6am could benefit the national economy by as much as £860 million over a 10 year period. This is because of the high costs of sleep deprivation: stress; heart problems; loss of productivity at work. Because of the huge number of people living under the Heathrow night flight path, these savings could be expected to be greater than the economic benefits of night flights. You will find more about the report on the HACAN website: [www.hacan.org.uk](http://www.hacan.org.uk) or you can read the [full report](#).

## **UECNA On-line Library**

**UECNA is setting up an online library where we can all access reports, campaign materials and useful information. We all have a lot of material that would be useful for other campaigners. Email me if you want to put anything on to the online library**

## **Tell us your news!**

**Each newsletter will have a section about what is happening in the different campaigns in the different countries around Europe.**

- Let us know what is happening at your airports
- Send us information about events you are holding or campaigns you are doing
- Tell us about your successes.....and failures!
- Make this newsletter a real exchange of information

**Also send you material to the UECNA website: [www.uecna.eu](http://www.uecna.eu) email JP Pago on [jp.pago@free.fr](mailto:jp.pago@free.fr)**

**If you want to be able to track the flight paths in your area, UECNA can help. Look at [www.dflfd.de](http://www.dflfd.de) or email Horst Weise on [mail@DFLD.de](mailto:mail@DFLD.de)**

### **Finally, here's some videos:**

To make us think:

<http://www.youtube.com/HeathrowCampaignTV#p/a/f/2/1XBwjQsOEeg>  
(showing who actually flies in the world...and who doesn't)

To make us smile:

<http://www.youtube.com/HeathrowCampaignTV#p/f/4/AT2U0vbg7hQ>

And to make us hopeful:

<http://www.youtube.com/HeathrowCampaignTV#p/f/20/1r-nw5zGMW4>  
(the campaign was one!)

**If you have videos you want to share, email them to [johnstewart@btconnect.com](mailto:johnstewart@btconnect.com)**

**This newsletter has been published by UECNA. We are a network of almost 40 airport community campaign groups across Europe. Our main concern is the noise for residents living around the airports and under the flight paths. We have regular meetings, organize conferences and take part in marches, demonstrations and other visible activities. We also lobby the European Parliament and the European Commission. To find out more visit our website: [www.uecna.eu](http://www.uecna.eu) If your group is interested in joining UECNA email [johnstewart2@btconnect.com](mailto:johnstewart2@btconnect.com)**