

The latest from AEF on UK and international aviation policy change and environmental impacts

Welcome to the Autumn 2013 edition of Flying Green, AEF's newsletter to our supporters and those interested in the environmental and social impacts of aviation. In the absence of Cait, who is currently away on maternity leave, this edition has been edited by James Lees, our newest member of staff who is with AEF for the next year.

In Flying Green Autumn 2013, we provide news and opinion on:

- **The recent announcement by the head of the Airport's Commission, Sir Howard Davies, on the need for extra runway capacity in the south east**
- Progress on international negotiations to tackle aviation's growing emissions at ICAO
- **New research linking aviation noise and health impacts around Heathrow**
- The Department for Transport's guidelines for Airport Consultative Committees
- **The European Union's review of state aid for aviation**

Latest from the Airports Commission

Sir Howard Davies concludes a new runway is needed in the south east

The Airports Commission was set up last year to take out the politics from the debate on whether a new runway is needed in the UK. The head of the Commission, Sir Howard Davies, concluded in a speech on October 7th that the Commission's current thinking supported the need for extra runway capacity in the south east. However, prior to his conclusion much of what Sir Howard said was in line with evidence that AEF provided to the Commission.

AEF opposes the need for new runway capacity as our research in 2011 showed that additional runway capacity is not needed to accommodate the passenger demand growth possible within the UK's climate change obligations (see our report here http://www.aef.org.uk/uploads/WWF_AEF_airport_capacity_report_FINAL_July_2011_1.pdf).

Meeting climate change commitments

Sir Howard Davies said that the Commission was alive to the climate problem but the optimum solution should deliver the connections that the UK economy

demands as well as achieving CO₂ emissions targets. However, as we outlined in our recent blog on Huffington post UK

(http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/james-lees/heathrow-third-runway_b_4108663.html), building a new runway would prevent the UK from meeting its emissions targets.

The Committee on Climate Change (which advises the Government) has said that the number of passengers going through UK airports can increase by up to 60% and still allow the UK to meet its climate targets. But this scenario is based on the assumption of the industry making technological improvements and other sectors dramatically reducing their use of fossil fuels. A new runway would reduce the control over aviation's emissions and increase the challenge of tackling them.

Demand and capacity

Two arguments against runway expansion that Sir Howard considered were steadily declining demand forecasts and that there is sufficient existing capacity

to accommodate the sector's growth. On declining demand forecasts, as the graph on the right shows, successive forecasts by the Department for Transport (DfT) have been downgraded. Yet current DfT forecasts are still far higher than what is permitted within our national climate targets. This means that a new runway without capacity limits elsewhere would compromise our national climate target.

Local environmental impacts

Sir Howard Davies only acknowledged local environmental impacts, such as noise, as being important for the Commission in the final decision making process. Evidence that AEF provided on noise emphasised that any proposal must be judged by how it actively tackles the noise problem, not by how it compares with others on noise impacts.

The Commission's interim report to Government is due in December with a shortlist of options.

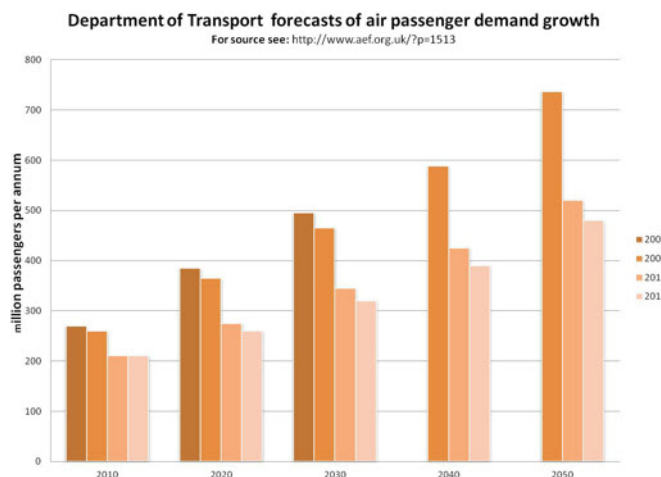
ICAO Assembly 2013

Progress towards a global market-based measure to limit CO₂, but Resolution snubs European ambition for early action



Image Credit: Tim Johnson/AEF

AEF, working as part of the International Coalition for Sustainable Aviation (ICSA), has been integral to the UN International Civil Aviation Organisation's (ICAO) environmental work programme over the past three years which culminated in the recent Assembly in Montreal. The focus of the recent Assembly was whether it was possible to reach an agreement on a global market-based measure (MBM). AEF and ICSA's contribution to this debate stressed the scientific evidence showing the climate benefits from taking early action and consequently the urgency to reach a



Department for Transport passenger growth forecasts from 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013 for unconstrained demand. Latest data available: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/223839/aviation-forecasts.pdf

AEF have written a letter with seven other environmental NGOs to tell Sir Howard Davies that a "no new runway" option is the only option in line with the UK national climate commitments. This is available here: <http://www.aef.org.uk/?p=1651>.

decision to implement the measure by 2016 (rather than ICAO's goal of 2020).

The focal point of the discussion was a draft Resolution which reflected the EU and industry position to undertake work to finalise a global MBM ahead of a decision in 2016. The draft included guidance to states on how they could implement national or regional MBMs on all carriers operating within their own airspace, and a clause exempting routes between developing countries with less than 1% of global activity.

The EU had already "stopped the clock" on compliance with the EU ETS for flights with their destination or origin outside the EU. The region had signalled that it would be willing to permanently amend the scope of its scheme to its member states' airspace, which would allow all parties to build consensus on a global MBM.

But in a confrontational exchange of views and counter proposals, which were forced to a vote, many developing countries favoured adding mutual agreement to an exemption threshold. This urged

states to refrain from implementing any MBM without first seeking the agreement of the country where the carrier was registered. In practice, obtaining agreements from every country with airlines flying to Europe amounts to an indefinite delay, and the EU rightly lodged a reservation.

The EU has since published a proposal based on airspace in an attempt to preserve the system's environmental integrity (although over 60% of the original emissions coverage will be lost). In doing so,

the Commission is relying on a much stronger foundation, the Chicago Convention. The Chicago Convention is the cornerstone of international civil aviation policy and it provides that states have sovereignty over their airspace, which creates a legal basis for action beyond the non-binding Assembly Resolution.

Meanwhile the text on a global MBM decision in 2016 was adopted and ICAO requires a robust and transparent process to deliver the work on time.

Airports

Consultative Committees: Department for Transport updates guidance

The Department for Transport (DfT) announced over the summer that it would review its guidance for Airport Consultative Committees with a new version available in early 2014. All airports are required by law to provide adequate facilities for consultation and larger airports are required to have Consultative Committees. The DfT's guidelines exist to assist those running and participating in Airport Consultative Committees and they were last updated in 2003.

The DfT is looking to review: the role of the committee, the balance of membership, how effectively committees engage with local communities, and how well environmental issues are dealt with. AEF will feed into the process when the DfT launches a "soft" consultation in early December and James from AEF is leading this work. He recently attended several committees in the London area he will soon send out his ideas to our members to ask for comments.

If you live near an airport or take part in your local consultative committee you may be able to answer some of these questions: Is the Consultative Committee accessible for local communities? Is there a route through which you can voice your views to the Committee? How seriously does the Committee take environmental concerns? How is the membership of the Committee balanced between local communities and industry? If you have an opinion on these issues, contact the office or email James on [james \[at\] aef \[.\] org \[.\] uk](mailto:james@aeff.org.uk).

Noise

Aircraft noise linked to higher rates of heart disease and stroke near Heathrow



Image Credit: Airportwatch/HACAN

A new study (available at: http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/newsandeventspggrp/imperialcollege/newssummary/news_8-10-2013-16-59-51) by the Imperial College London and Kings College London has found that risks of hospital admissions and deaths from stroke and heart disease are higher in areas with high levels of aircraft noise. The study found that the risks were 10 to 20% greater in areas with the highest level of noise compared to areas with the lowest, suggesting that aircraft noise is a contributing factor. The research compared day and night time noise levels from 2001 (from the Civil Aviation Authority) with hospital admissions and mortality rates from 2001-2005. While the correlation exists, the study

found that being of South Asian origin contributed to the higher likelihood of strokes and heart disease in areas with the highest aircraft noise.

The findings of the study add to the growing evidence of health related impacts related to aircraft noise. The

research also poses a challenge to Sir Howard Davies of how he will be able to justify a new runway when all expansion proposals will affect local residents. For more information go to our web story: <http://www.aef.org.uk/?p=1641>.

Economics

European Union State Aid to Aviation

AEF recently took part in a conference in Brussels on aviation subsidies. This followed the European Commission's proposals intended to reduce the amount of public money that goes to airports and airlines. In practice, small airports would continue to receive large subsidies which could make their way to low-fares airlines.

A report by Brussels-based NGO Transport & Environment

[<http://www.transportenvironment.org/news/proposal-reducing-aid-aviation-leaves-distortions>], estimates that under the proposals, Europe's airlines would continue to receive around **€3 billion a year in direct subsidies**. States would continue to disproportionately subsidise smaller regional airports, whose airlines are almost exclusively low-fares carriers.

The subsidies received by the aviation industry are complemented by tax exemptions, which Dutch consultancy CE Delft recently estimated at **€30-42 billion every year**. The figure for the UK alone is around **£10 billion annually**. The CE Delft report is available here:

http://www.aef.org.uk/uploads/VAT_and_fuel_tax_report_CE_Delft.pdf.

AEF's response highlights that both tax breaks and subsidies promote more air traffic, generating more noise, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. We believe that there are limited social, economic or environmental justifications for these financial benefits being offered to airports or airlines. The response is available on our website

[http://www.aef.org.uk/uploads/State_aid_response.doc].

What's coming up?

Key dates and events

November

- DfT Night Noise Consultation: second consultation to be opened - **Monday 11th (provisional date)**
- The AEF AGM - **Thursday 14th**

December

- DfT draft review of Airport Consultative Committee guidelines for soft consultation - **early December**
- Airports Commission to publish interim report on short to medium term options and shortlist of long term options - **mid-December**

What's new?

Recent publications

Joint NGO letter to Sir Howard Davies on climate change Available here:

http://www.aef.org.uk/uploads/Joint_NGO_response_to_the_Airports_Commission_s_emerging_thinking_on_airport_capacity_in_the_UK.pdf

AEF's response to the Airport's Commission on noise (available at:

<http://www.aef.org.uk/?p=1624>)

Plane Truth by Rose Bridger.

A book about aviation's impact on people and the environment. Available here:

<http://bit.ly/16Q6bw8>.

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