

HEATHROW AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Annual Seminar held on 7th December 2011 at the Heathrow Academy

PRESENT:

Sam Jones, Chairman	-	HACC
Philip Carlisle, HACC Adviser	-	HACC
Carole Havercroft, Secretary	-	HACC
Cllr. Dominic Gilham	-	LB Hillingdon
Cllr. Gemma Stoickley	-	LB Richmond upon Thames
Cllr. Mohinder Gill (Deputy)	-	LB Hounslow
Cllr. David Rowlands	-	Bucks County Council
Cllr. Moreton Moore	-	Runnymede BC
Cllr. Balvinder Bains	-	Slough BC
Cllr. Marian Rough	-	Spelthorne BC
Cllr. Spencer Taylor	-	Spelthorne BC
Cllr. Ian Lake	-	Surrey CC
Cllr. Leslie McDonnell	-	LB Wandsworth
Virginia Godfrey	-	HACAN/Clearskies
Murad Qureshi	-	London Assembly
Susan Parsons	-	ABTA
Rob Gibson	-	LAANC
John Gurney	-	TUC
Iain Hope	-	LCCI
Andy Hull	-	Independent
Keith Harlow	-	Independent
Ian Ramsay	-	Independent

HEATHROW AIRPORT LIMITED

Cheryl Monk	-	BAA Head of Community Relations & Policy
Rachael Henry	-	BAA Strategic Communications Manager
Jane Dawes	-	BAA Operational Noise & Air Quality Manager

PRESENTERS

Normand Boivin	-	BAA Chief Operating Officer
John Stewart	-	Chairman, HACAN/Clearskies
Graham Jones	-	Programme Director, TfL Surface Transport Games Team

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Apologies for absence were received from the following:-

1. Ruben Sicking (BAA), Nigel Milton (BAA), Dave Whittington (BAA), Cllr. Mohammed Kausar (LB Ealing), Cllr. Mohammed Khursheed (LB Hillingdon), Cllr. Ruth Cadbury (LB Hounslow), Cllr. Barbara Reid (LB Hounslow), Cllr. Martin Elengorn (LB Richmond on Thames), Cllr. John Lenton & Cllr. Malcolm Beer (RB Windsor & Maidenhead), Richard Taylor (Independent), Brian Yates (Consumers' Association), Frank Wingate (Future Heathrow), Mark Gardiner (IATA), Tim May (DfT), Margaret Majumdar (EANAG).
2. The Chairman opened the Seminar and thanked BAA Heathrow for providing the Christmas Luncheon for the Committee and Carole Havercroft, for making all of the arrangements. This was followed by a welcome to the Speakers who addressed the Committee through presentation and discussion on topical issues.
3. The Secretary had circulated with the programme agenda business item documentation 'For Information Only' which was noted.

Presentations:

- *Speaker** Mr. Normand Boivin, Chief Operating Officer, BAA Heathrow
- *Speaker** Mr. John Stewart, Chairman, HACAN/Clearskies
- *Speaker** Mr. Graham Jones, Programme Director, TfL Surface Transport Games Team
'Road measures put in place across West London/Heathrow during the Olympic Games 2012'

*** The Presentations/Handouts given by the Speakers are enclosed for reference.**

The Chairman thanked each of the presenters for taking the time to come and speak at the Seminar, which had generated interest from the members.

Due to time constraints, the BAA presentations originally scheduled to be made at the Seminar by Nick Cole on the 'Paralympics 2012' and Kathryn Leahy on 'Terminal 3 - Today and Tomorrow' were carried forward to the 25th January 2012 HACC meeting.

- *Speaker** Mr. Normand Boivin, Chief Operating Officer, BAA Heathrow.

1. Mr. Boivin outlined his career history in Canada, where he was formerly based. His most recent post was Operations Director for Aeroports de Montreal and he has thirty years experience of the aviation industry, starting his career as an air traffic controller for Transporta Canada. Normand has held several positions in the Canadian airport management sector, including Vice-President Operations of Montreal's two international airports, Facilities Development Director at Montreal Dorval Airport and General Manager at Quebec City Airport.

Mr. Boivin said that one of the reasons why he had relocated to Heathrow this year was due to the snow event of last December at Heathrow Airport.

As members would know, Colin Matthews had requested the Begg Inquiry to be set up on the snow event. Normand explained that his boss at the time, Mr. Jim Cherry, had been invited to sit on the Panel as CEO from Montreal Airport.

For different reasons, he was the only active airport management executive who was sitting on the Panel. Others were retired people from the aviation industry. As Mr. Cherry could not attend all the meetings, he asked Normand to attend on his behalf as if the subject of snow was to be looked into, he was thought to be the best person to cover the operational side.

Snow fell in Montreal for 70-80 days of the year. When it did not snow, the wind blew the snow which had already fallen, back onto the runways and snow removal was required again. Montreal was good at removing snow because they are out doing this every single day.

Mr. Boivin said that he had wanted to take up his position at BAA Heathrow as early as possible in the season and commenced on 29th August 2011. He wished to sit down with the snow team to listen to the plan that had already been built up prior to his arrival. It was now much more structured with sophisticated equipment available. More staff had been trained over the summer to act as 'Reservists' in the terminals during times of crisis.

On the evening of Friday 3rd December 2011, Ruben Sicking, BAA Airside Manager undertook a trial exercise on the airfield. Everybody who was connected with snow was drafted in to participate. This was a great success and the management were confident that at the next snow event, they would be prepared.

At Heathrow, unlike many other airports, during the day, there was no flexibility of moving traffic around. The very good aspect of Montreal Airport was there was some flexibility, as there was not the level of aircraft traffic that London had, which made it easier. There was added space in between.

To remove snow from the runway, depending on how fast it was falling, could take between 20-35 minutes. Obviously, this would cause disruption to the schedule and add delays to the aircraft, as flights cannot land on the runway whilst this operation was being carried out. The idea was not to have absolutely no disruption this winter, but to have as little disruption as possible and to keep the air traffic moving. BAA were now in a much better place with their snow procedure than last December.

Another good improvement was the Command and Control aspect and co-ordination of activities at the airport for the welfare of the passengers in times of crisis.

This was put into practice on the day of the UK Border Agency strike held on Wednesday 30th November 2011, which was different to the first held last June 2011, in that 90% of their staff went on strike.

In early November, BAA evaluated the information they had received from the UK Border Agency on the numbers of staff that might be available and realised that in some terminals this could result in passengers experiencing an 8-10 hour delay before going through passport control.

Accordingly, BAA put their welfare plan into place and deployed their 'Reservist' staff into the terminals to assist the passengers with welfare requirements, directions and advice, which worked very well.

Also, following discussions with all the airlines, a joint agreement was reached that they would fly into Heathrow with a 40% reduction of their load factor of passengers on aircraft. Some people might say that BAA had over-reacted to the situation and airlines could have flown with more passengers.

However, this was a joint effort and a decision on everybody's part involved in the debate, whether it was the UKBA, BA, BAA and stakeholders, not knowing the possible outcome of that day, which turned out to be very successful.

Looking ahead, three aspects to focus on were, firstly, operational excellence, secondly, improve the passenger satisfaction for pre-boarding security screening and the efficiency of the officers at Security, and thirdly, the Olympics to be held in July and August 2012, which would also have a major impact on London and Heathrow. A very detailed, comprehensive plan is currently being worked upon. This would need to be put into action so that the operations team in the terminal buildings at the airport integrated their part to ensure it is a success.

Again, improving the passenger experience in the terminal buildings is also vital. Security is part of the experience, but also part of the efficiency and how operations were dealt with.

Compared to other cities outside the UK, London did not have enough transfer passengers at the airport. Frankfurt Airport had 50%-55% of its arriving passengers as transfers. Connections were as important to the carriers to make money. People arriving in London also needed to be better served at the UK Border as well. With regard to the airlines, as the number of passengers was by far greater than the number of carriers, passengers seemed to be the No. 1 customers. However, the airlines were also the customers of BAA and if the airlines felt they were customers of the airport, they performed better.

In order to provide good passenger service, it was necessary to ensure that the employees providing that service were well trained.

Mr. Boivin stated that in the future, Heathrow Airport had many challenges.

BAA were very pleased to hear that the Government recognised the fact that a successful hub airport in the UK was needed. The country was serving a global market and Heathrow was still one of the biggest airports in the world. It was still the No. 1 international airport, as, even though some other airports served more passengers, it was not thought that any other airport had as many international destinations. Therefore, Heathrow was certainly an airport that needed to be helped to combat European competition.

At present, one of the challenges being faced was where a hub airport would be sited whether in Heathrow or London. There were some projects currently being debated on Heathrow and the Thames Estuary. Such projects would take many years to finalise.

However, it was clear that if a decision was made to build a new airport outside of Heathrow, if anyone in London thought this would resolve the noise issue, this would not be the case. Wherever an airport might be built, it would take at least 25 years, the cost of the surrounding estate would dramatically increase and the numbers of employees that worked at that airport (in the case of Heathrow 60,000 people), who lived close by would relocate their homes to live near to the airport. An example of this was the relocation of Denver Airport which was moved 23 miles away.

Following the presentation members asked questions/responded.

2. Iain Hope praised Mr. Boivin and his BAA team during the recent UKBA strike. He said that excellent communications were evident, which were particularly important to the business community. This was one of the main points which had been raised on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce a year ago as, during the time of the snow, business people did not know whether they could travel to the airport to proceed on their journey. On this occasion, warnings were given that it was at the discretion of passengers to make their own personal decision and take the risk.

Iain said that he was one of the victims of the disastrous relocation of Denver Airport some years ago. It was a ridiculous situation. Not only was it necessary to incur cab fares to trek out to the airport, but worse was the amount of time lost, which was nearly half-a-day to reach its location and be processed.

With regard to a replacement airport, it was agreed that all options in the long-term should be looked at, insofar as airport capacity is concerned, probably in the South-East or elsewhere in the UK.

However, the point not liked is the question that, before any new hub airport could be built, is the twenty year gap, which would be crippling to the UK economy. Action should be taken to at least bridge that gap. This must be kept in mind.

Iain referred to the problem experienced at the airport during the recent Sunday fog. Heathrow had pioneered the blind landing areas, although it was understood that there is a certain amount of final visibility before touchdown. However, he asked if thought had been given to the airlines of developing nations who still lacked the sophistication that other major airlines had.

Normand Boivin responded that BAA had still not established and answered certain questions as to what happened on that specific foggy Sunday. It was correct to say that Heathrow had the capacity to land an aircraft at approximately 50 ft. visibility before touching the ground. There were issues experienced on that day, although for three days after that, fog was also seen at the airport and no problems were experienced.

Mr. Boivin said, that by the time of the next HACC meeting, he would be in a better position to answer this question.

ACTION:
NORMAND
BOIVIN

3. John Gurney commented that the British Airways aircraft did cater for landing in fog on the runway, but many foreign carriers did not have that capability on their base as fog was not an issue in their country. Therefore, quite often, landing at Heathrow in severe fog was a problem.
4. Virginia Godfrey asked what proportion of passengers transferred from one foreign airline to another foreign airline when travelling through Heathrow, or likewise from one British Airways flight to another British Airways flight.

Normand Boivin responded that British Airways carried the most transfer passengers, but he had no information to hand on the precise proportion.

5. Keith Harlow stated that Mr. Boivin had spoken little of BAA as ‘a business’, who were spending large sums of money on snow equipment and the re-construction of Terminal 2 and Terminal 4, and presumably could be able to demonstrate a return on those investments. He also asked how the timeframe was seen further out, and if the Government would become keener in relocating or building a new hub airport in the South-East.

Mr. Boivin replied that since Ferrovial bought their investment share of BAA Heathrow (June 2006), alas, no money had been returned to the investors. It was hoped this would be possible next year.

6. Cllr. Bains stated that on the day of the UKBA strike, the airport worked very well. There were more staff available in ‘purple’ to assist the passengers, whereas at the time of the snow last December, there was poor communication from the airport and the airlines, with the result that the passengers who had spent much money on their tickets were unsure what to do. It was hoped that if the snow should return this winter, that the new standard of communication would be kept up.

***Speaker**

Mr. John Stewart, Chairman, HACAN/Clearskies

1. Mr. Stewart outlined the current work of HACAN/Clearskies.

He said that one of the features for HACAN this year was how closely they had worked with BAA, probably more closely than any other previous year in its existence or BAA’s history.

A number of concrete points were worked on which were brought together in a report which was jointly produced and sent to the Department for Transport as part of their responses to the Scoping Document.

It was believed that Theresa Villiers MP when she spoke with both BAA and HACAN, was very pleased to receive the joint response, from people who had been, on many issues in the past, on different sides of the fence.

Issues which were key to the report where BAA and HACAN were agreed and it was hoped to persuade Government to adopt them were as follows:-

The first point related to work conducted by Ian Flindell, Noise Consultant on how to explain to those who might choose to live near a flight path, how noisy this could be.

Over the years, people had learnt what decibels and contours were, although previously residents had found it difficult to understand a 57 dBA contour. The work carried out tried to simplify that, using images and colour coding and had tried to get away as far as possible from the technical aspects, whilst still being very clear to people, particularly those who may wish to move into the area and learn how many aeroplanes would be flying overhead.

The second point related to metrics. HACAN had been critical in the past of the 57 Leq contour and it was known that some of the local authorities shared that view. It was accepted that it would remain as used in Europe and for historical purposes. However, BAA had agreed to produce annual contours based on 55 Lden. This was the metric required to be used by the EU Member States when drawing up their Noise Action Plans. In HACAN's view, this was to be a more accurate assessment of the number of people living under the flight paths. It would be used as a complimentary indicator to Leq. BAA would also look at a simpler method for those living under the flight path to know how many aeroplanes would be flying overhead on an average day and how noisy each of these would be. BAA would present that evidence and information alongside the Leq.

The third point related to the take-off routes and the Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs). As members would be aware, the NPRs had been in place for many years, almost as long as the existence of the airport and gave people certainty as to where the routes were.

However, over the past few years, increasingly, under the instruction of the Department for Transport it claimed that BAA and Air Traffic Control had been required to control aeroplanes toward the centre line. As a result, people living under that centre line were now experiencing virtually all aircraft that were taking off, which they were not expecting.

It was not suggested to bring noise to new areas, but perhaps spread the noise more, as in the past, within the NPR. BAA, British Airways and NATS would initiate a three-month trial, within one of the NPRs to see how it might work. HACAN were very supportive of this.

HACAN Briefings were circulated to the Committee members entitled 'No Longer Just a West London Problem' and 'Heathrow – No Economic Case For Expansion'.

The next point that was looked at was the consequences over the last fifteen years of aircraft preparing to land lining up in areas further away from Heathrow.

In 1995/1996, the recommended joining point was moved 2-3 miles further East for aeroplanes landing, so that they did not join so much at their final point over Barnes in West London as they used to. This had meant that there was a 'box' area between Vauxhall and Peckham where the aeroplanes were all joining their final approach path.

That area has had a significant increase in the number of aeroplanes over the last 10-15 years. HACAN had tried to explore with BAA and NATS the possibility of giving people in that area a similar sort of alternation as experienced by the residents in West London.

However, it was recognised by all parties that this was somewhat more difficult to do than the current experiment of the take-off routes on the NPR, and therefore at present, there was no practical plan for an experiment in that area. However, as far as HACAN was concerned, it was felt that they had gained official recognition that a new area, estimated to be in the region of ¼ million people, was affected by aircraft noise in a way not previously experienced.

The final point agreed on was that BAA and NATS would, when looking at future changes, try to involve representative residents' groups and local authorities at as early a stage as possible.

It was felt that if the residents' groups had been involved fifteen years ago when that change was made with regard to moving the approach path further back, they might have been able to make constructive suggestions to mitigate the effects on those areas.

It was hoped that these five key points which had been jointly agreed and signed off between HACAN, BAA, British Airways and NATS and submitted to the Government would be considered.

The forthcoming year would be important. The consultation on Aviation Policy should be published in March 2012. There would also be a consultation on Night Flights due at the same time.

HACAN had stated for a considerable time, as had many of the local authorities, that a ban on night flights before 06.00 hrs. should be introduced and a progressive reduction between 06.00 hrs. – 07.00 hrs.

It was thought that the economics of night flights should be assessed and tackled. The justification given for night flights is that they were good for the economy. HACAN commissioned independent consultants based in the Netherlands to assess the economic impact of night flights before 06.00 hrs.

Their report found that they challenged further the overall economic benefits of the night flights before 06.00 hrs. which actually did outweigh the overall economic cost of the night flights. The cost came from the impact of people being woken up, as a result of which, their health suffered and they were less productive at work.

Their tentative assessment found that those figures were probably higher because of the large number of people in London who live under the night flight path. The cost of these night flights was probably higher than the economic benefits that these brought in.

The Government were discussing the construction of a hub airport in the Thames Estuary. Within HACAN and West London as a whole, the feelings were mixed. For some residents who were disturbed by noise from Heathrow, naturally, they would support this suggestion.

Equally, in West London, many would be opposed to this suggestion because of the job situation. 76,000 people were employed directly by Heathrow with more than a further 200,000 people employed indirectly.

There might be an argument that over the years, West London had become too dependent on one industry. However, it would be a brave Government that would shut down Heathrow Airport.

HACAN did not believe that an extra airport was needed, as there was no place for two hub airports in London. All of the studies showed that even in the South-East there would be no market for this.

Heathrow's runways were at full capacity but not the airport itself, as there was still much spare capacity for extra passengers. Heathrow could take millions more passengers in its terminals.

For the economy in London and the South-East, it would seem the critical aspect was not how many aeroplanes were flying into Heathrow, but how many passengers travelled to the airport primarily to conduct business.

HACAN had previously conducted a study in 2008, which looked at the question of how important transfer passengers were to Heathrow. Clearly, they had some importance. London as a whole had gained from Heathrow being a hub airport with a significant number of transfer passengers. However, the report found that London and Heathrow was much less dependent on its success on transfer passengers than the other key European airports, particularly Amsterdam. This is due to the fact that London as a whole and the South-East had so much to offer business, that passengers were already travelling to this destination, in a way that they would not travel to Amsterdam.

It was the view that new runways in the South-East were not needed. Instead, the airlines should be incentivised to bring in larger aeroplanes to London with more passengers, particularly from the developing economies of Asia, Africa and South America and ease out, possibly through a pricing or slot policy, some of the short-haul flights travelling to Europe. Although some of these carry hub passengers, many are leisure passengers travelling out of this country and whom are much less important to the economy.

Following the presentation members asked questions/responded.

2. Murad Qureshi stated that, with regard to the Thames Estuary airport proposal as being a threat to Heathrow, he was not convinced, as airport workers or passengers would not wish to travel to that part of town. He thought that Heathrow would expand over the course of time, but that investment needs to be made in surface access connections to attract additional passengers in West London into the airport, e.g. Airtrack and Crossrail.

Heathrow needed to improve its links with other regional airports, e.g. Luton and Stansted. There was spare capacity in terms of slots which Heathrow as a hub would allow the connectivity to be made through other airports.

Next year would be critical to the Thames Estuary proposal.

John Stewart responded that he agreed the surface access aspect should be highlighted of more passengers to enter Heathrow. This was critical for the local authorities. It was thought that, with the correct fiscal policy, it might be that some long-haul flights were concentrated at Heathrow, with some of the short-haul leisure flights being based at another London airport. It was not necessary to retain the percentage of short-haul flights in order to remain as a viable hub airport.

3. Susan Parsons (ABTA) representing the travel agents and tour operators in liaison with the airlines stated that she agreed with the points made, which were interesting to hear and that surface transport was important.

As a person herself living in West London who flew many times, Heathrow was important and she had chosen like other people to live in the vicinity. Many people were dependent on the airport for their jobs. If there was to be a second large hub airport, there would be major problems, such as in Prestwick and Shannon which were 'white elephant' airports. Heathrow would have to pay the price.

Unfortunately, the UK was beginning to lose out on much important major investment whether it was business or incoming tourism. Why was it thought that six times as many Chinese people travelled to France to take flights. It was because it was easier to reach, had more international airport capacity and was cheaper, but, obviously, the airport taxes were higher. Amsterdam Airport had seven runways, but they did not need to use all of them at once, but spread them around. The comment made on trying to change the NPRs to spread out the noise made a good deal of sense.

4. John Gurney pointed out that British Airways did expand slots at Gatwick Airport as another option, but unfortunately this had failed.
5. Ian Ramsay commented that as a former Air Traffic Controller, he did not understand one statement made and asked for clarification on the other.

Firstly, it had been stated that controllers were taking aircraft late on departure on the centre point. He asked if this was Government policy or Standard Instrument Departure (SID) which was international law, which meant that Controllers cannot take aircraft off the centre point.

Secondly, the arrivals noise had increased on the Instrument Landing System (ILS) between 2-3 miles. This should have been dispersed.

John Stewart confirmed to the first point, that this was the intention of Government policy. To the second point, for some people the noise profile had been reduced, but previously it was dispersed and now it was concentrated. The noise levels and numbers had increased in a small area, more than if it was reduced over a wider area.

Previously, a few aeroplanes would fly over to a whole different set of alignments and now they were concentrated on one particular alignment. It was this concentration that had become a problem.

Over the years, aeroplanes departed at a three-mile width of the NPR. The Government had increasingly tried to get rid of the centre line of that NPR.

***Speaker** Mr. Graham Jones, Programme Director TfL Surface Transport Games Team
‘Road measures put in place across West London/Heathrow during the Olympic Games 2012’

1. Mr. Jones outlined the road measures that would be put in place across West London and Heathrow during the Olympic Games 2012 as (*enclosed*).

Following the presentation members asked questions/responded.

2. Iain Hope stated that the problem for the London Chamber of Commerce was alerting small and medium-sized businesses. They had sent all their members a prior warning of the importance of pre-ordering. The larger groups were accustomed to the logistics to deal with such problems, but it was far more difficult for the myriad of smaller businesses who were not even in the loop, but would be affected by this. It would be of benefit if maps could be circulated and further suggestions received.

If LCCI Officers had not yet been invited to visit the Control Rooms in South London, this would be appreciated, together with any extra information that could be given.

Although the opening of the Olympics is some considerable time away, it was better to get people moving now, rather than later.

Graham Jones responded that detailed planning had been undertaken and a visit to see the operation and receive a presentation would be by invitation.

In terms of the small and medium sized businesses and pre-ordering, there were the same shared concerns. DHL and Sainsbury’s were self-sufficient and had the resources with which to do that. However, with regard to the smaller businesses, it was a concern that no matter how many letter-drops were carried out to pre-warn, how much notice was actually taken of these. Therefore, it was the intention to visit companies directly to make them aware.

2. Rob Gibson asked if heat maps for congestion had been transferred to air quality maps.

Graham Jones confirmed that now the broad level of detail had been collated by TfL on the transport hub, they were only awaiting further information on the Tube network. Once that had been received, a more detailed analysis would be undertaken which would identify the locations that maps need to be targeted.

3. Cllr. Stockley asked what steps had been done to assist tourists.

Graham Jones said that a spectator journey planner had been produced. There would also be many people on the streets wearing tabards to provide information.

4. Cllr. Gilham stated that he had recently attended a London Transport Seminar. The detailed maps showing ORNs in the presentation were confusing, as they gave the impression that the roads were closed. He asked, therefore, if the maps would be re-printed.

Graham Jones replied that the TfL website contained layers of detailed maps. They had been put into a simplified format, but if they were altered too much, it was possible to lose vital information that should be relayed.

The consultation map distributed was specifically around the Traffic Regulation Orders which had to be applied for. However, if the maps were confusing they would need to be simplified.

5. Cllr. Taylor said that it had been stated there would be an increase in the flow of green traffic lights. He asked if this meant that pedestrian green lights would be less.

Graham Jones replied that in order to give more green lights to keep the flow of traffic moving, it would be necessary to implement more red lights for pedestrians. Some pedestrian crossings might be removed entirely, but only if there was an alternative within a three-minute walk.

4519 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

1. Minutes of the HACC meeting held on 28th September 2011 were agreed as an accurate record.

4520 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. There were no further items to discuss and the Chairman closed the Seminar at 4.30 p.m.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:-
WEDNESDAY 25th JANUARY 2012**

DATES OF 2012 MEETINGS:

**WEDNESDAY 25th JANUARY 2012
WEDNESDAY 28th MARCH 2012
WEDNESDAY 23rd MAY 2012
WEDNESDAY 25th JULY 2012
WEDNESDAY 26th SEPTEMBER 2012
WEDNESDAY 5th DECEMBER 2012 (SEMINAR)**