



Report by the Technical Adviser

Agenda Item:	Reference: HACC. 544
Date : January 19 2009	
Wake Turbulence from A.380 aircraft	

1. Public concerns about damage being caused to properties in the vicinity of Heathrow Airport seems to have died down over the last year or two, possibly because of prompt action taken under the BAA insurance scheme to compensate property owners and to undertake repairs.
2. As a result of the availability of the scheme for a number of years, many roofs in the susceptible areas are now in a much better condition to withstand aircraft vortices.
3. There has remained speculation until recently about the implications of the introduction of the new very large aircraft, the A.380, which is increasingly being introduced into service at Heathrow Airport.
4. Some extensive tests have been undertaken on A.380 aircraft for several years now of the wake vortices generated from this aircraft, by the manufacturers, governmental and international aviation organisations. Historically, wake vortex damage has occurred largely to the north east of the airport because the prevailing wind is from the south west. This tends to push the vortices outside of the airport into the North East direction although it is limited in the distance over which this happens.
5. A recent technical publication from the CAA deals with the results and conclusions of these tests and studies which is rather complex and difficult to understand for laymen but a recent article in "Flight International" provides an interpretation of the results and a copy is appended to this report for the information of Members.
6. This question has other implications for Heathrow because the standard separation (the distance) between an A.380 and other, smaller aircraft following it has had to be increased by two miles which has an impact in a rather small reduction in the number of aircraft which can be handled by ATC in an hour.

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Air Quality at Heathrow	

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1. Amongst the current concerns about development as well as current operations at Heathrow is that relating to air quality and pollution which receives regular reporting in the press. Unfortunately, the comments made seldom recognise that not all of the air pollution occurring in the vicinity of Heathrow is generated by activity at the airport but that it is substantially contributed to by the presence of road traffic on the M.4, M.25, A.4 Bath Road and the Great South West Road.
2. The Government has committed the United Kingdom to meeting the European Union ceilings for performance against the targets set out in compliance with The National Emissions Ceiling Directive which gives the UK until 2010 to comply.
3. As this is a matter of concern to HACC members in view of decisions announced by Government on 15 January to authorise developments at the airport, the Secretariat has endeavoured to secure an expert presentation on the subject for the meeting of HACC on 28 January. Air quality studies are currently underway by Omega, an organisation embedded in the Manchester Metropolitan University, but will not be completed until next March when they will be happy to present their findings to the Committee. Omega is run by Roger Gardner, who formerly advised the Department for Transport on such matters and who has presented to the HACC on several occasions in that capacity.
- 4.. Governmental responsibility for air quality matters now rests with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) which has published a report of the 2007 results taken from the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory and a copy of the summary of this is attached which may be helpful in questioning Omega at the March meeting of the Committee.
5. Members will be pleased to note that, nationally, there have been significant falls in the levels of pollutants measured and, in particular that from nitrogen oxides, a concern as far as aircraft emissions are concerned. There was a 7 per cent decrease in emissions of nitrogen oxides from 1.60 million tonnes in 2006 to 1.49 million tonnes in 2007.

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Date : January 20 2009	
Airport Airside Passes- Criminal Record Checks- Foreign Nationals	

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1. As Members will be aware, in particular those who hold airside security passes, there are some quite stringent checks made upon the personal background and bona fides of those applying for such passes and this is being extended by the potential need for those holding such passes to also obtain a National Identity Card.
2. Concern has been expressed by the Manchester Airport Consultative Committee in correspondence with the Department for Transport about the fact that for many foreign workers, there is very little information available about them when these checks are made and, as a result, foreign workers are in a better position than are citizens of the United Kingdom as well as creating a potential security problem.
3. This has been touched upon in discussion at the HACC and was the subject of concern at the annual meeting of the Chairmen of Airport Consultative Committees which supported the concerns of the Manchester Committee about a significant gap in security clearances at airports.
4. The matter was taken up by the secretariat of the meeting of Chairmen and a reply, dated 9 December 2008, was received from the Transport Security and Contingencies Division of DfT , a copy of which is attached to this report.
5. This reply recorded several reasons why it was difficult to improve these checks and suggested that the improvements being experienced in electronic communication could be expected to improve the situation, given time. No specific proposals to improve the quality of these checks was made.
6. A copy of the covering letter to the reply is attached at the appendix. There was also a number of related documents with the reply which clarify some of the contents of this letter which can be made available to those Members with a particular interest in the matter.