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| UKACCS – SUPPORT SERVICE |
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What this paper is about

A brief report on the work of the support service during the year ended 31st March 2008 including:

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Points for Discussion

There are none - the paper seeks only to bring members up to date on the work of the support service

Points for Possible Action

None

News Service

1. This service, which is available to all member Committees, aims to keep members in touch with matters of interest to consultative committees and to help officers of Committees keep abreast of happenings in the industry both locally and nationally and so help to ensure consultative committees operate in context.
2. The gathering of information for this service involves the constant monitoring of specialist news sources, most of them on the Internet, and regular contact with the EC, DfT and other similar bodies. Some help is provided by the e-mail news services of other bodies to which the service subscribes.
3. Most news is distributed by e-mail although there is postal back-up for those without the necessary facilities or who for other reasons need hard copies. Where possible the material is targeted at those Committees with a particular interest; for example, purely local items are normally sent only to the consultative committee for the airport concerned while BAA Corporate items are sent only to the committees at the BAA airports. One Committee receives only a list of general interest items distributed in the previous month – they can then select only the items of particular interest to them.
4. During 2007/08 a total of 4110 items were distributed, an average of 343 items per month or 11 items per day. Of this number 720 (an average of 60 per month) were items of general interest and the remainder of local significance only. These numbers represent a considerable increase (more than double) when compared to year before. This reflects partly ordinary growth in the number of sources of information which are trawled for information but it is also true that over the past year aviation has been much more in the news than previously.
5. In March this year at the suggestion of a member of the Working Group we circulated information in which we clarified the source of those of our news items from *News @ UK Airports* and the individual items all now carry a disclaimer indicating that the text is drawn from an external source and that any views expressed are not necessarily those of UKACCs or its Support Staff.

Websites

6. This work is in two parts:
 - (a) **The UKACCS website**
7. This is the collective website of the Liaison Group with pages including:
 - background information about consultative committees (including the legislation and guidelines),
 - the latest information on current issues at both UK and EU levels
 - contact information for individual committees in the Group
 - details of the Annual Meetings (including copies of the papers discussed) and
 - links to related websites
8. This site is regularly reviewed and updated as necessary, drawing mostly on the information culled from the *News Service*. Since it was established in August 2003 the site has attracted 7,577 visitors and at current rates there are 150 visits per month. Since the site was launched there have been 11,999 page views and there are 210 page views per month at current rates. These usage figures are reasonably high for a site of its kind. Visitors to the site are mostly from the UK but there are visitors also from across the world including Europe the US and even the Far East. In some instances the source of a visit is known and from this data we know that many visitors reach the site via Yahoo, Google, the CAA, the DFT and the websites of individual consultative committees.
9. Occasionally the site attracts enquiries on particular issues. So far as possible these are dealt with by the Secretariat or, if not, they are referred on. One such recent enquiry

concerned the failure of the operator of an airfield designated under s.35 of the 1982 Act to establish a consultative committee.

10. Committees are reminded that the "Issues" pages of this site give an up-to-date picture of topics of current interest and may therefore save work in preparing papers for individual committees.

(b) Websites for individual committees

11. Within the framework of the main UKACCs site individual sites have been provided for the following committees:
 - London Gatwick at www.ukaccs.info/gatwick - this site can also be accessed via its own URL www.gatcom.org.uk
 - Edinburgh at www.ukaccs.info/edinburgh
 - Liverpool John Lennon at www.ukaccs.info/liverpool - this site can also be accessed via its own URL www.ljlacc.org.uk
 - Stansted at www.ukaccs.info/stansted - this site can also be accessed via its own URL at www.stacc.info
 - Birmingham at www.ukaccs.info/bham
 - Manchester at www.ukaccs.info/manchester
12. There is no charge for the design and maintenance of these sites, the cost of which is included in the subscription for the support service. Committees do, however, meet the extra cost where it opts for its own URL. Set-up includes exchanging links with local authorities and other local bodies. No new sites have been set up during the year.
13. The work involves liaison with the Secretary of the Committees in question in processing and loading committee agenda papers and minutes and otherwise in keeping the sites up-to-date - the service makes such changes about 5-6 times every month and in some instances the work is quite time consuming. Site statistics are sent to the Committee Secretary once a week.
14. The Committees at London Heathrow, London City, London Luton and Robin Hood Doncaster Sheffield have websites of their own provided and maintained under separate arrangements. The site at London Luton has been reviewed and changes can be expected in the arrangements which have operated hitherto.

Liaison with the Department for Transport

15. It is important to keep in touch with those of the Department's officials responsible for aviation policy. In this connection we are fortunate to have Frank Evans as our main point of contact. He ensures ease of access to the right people in the Department and other agencies and generally helps the service and the Secretariat in its efforts to provide a good service to the Liaison Group. It is the normal practice to meet Frank at the Department at least once a year. The last meeting was early in 2008 when much of the discussion focussed on this Annual Meeting.

Annual Meetings

16. The service assists Conference Secretariat in making the arrangements for the Annual Liaison meeting not least in the preparation of many of the papers for the consideration of members at the meeting – a very considerable undertaking which usually involves detailed research and consultation with the EU, DfT, Defra and other bodies.
17. This year the Service has also managed the applications to attend the Annual Meeting, hotel lists etc. The process has been largely automated through the use of a database from which required reports can be abstracted without difficulty. The system has worked well in practice and can be used in future years.

Consultations and Information Exchange

18. If required the service acts as a centre for consultation on matters of common interest and also for the exchange of information where, for example, the officers of Committees

need the help and advice of other Committees. During 2007/8 the service performed in this way on a number of occasions, e.g. in relation to the European Emissions Trading Scheme, weapons seizures, immigration queues, regional air services, ANASE, ANMAC etc.

Working Group

19. The service also assists the Conference Secretariat in making the arrangements for meetings of the Working Group which has the following members:

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| John Adshead (Chairman) | London City |
| John Godfrey | London Gatwick |
| Michael Goodwin | Leeds Bradford |
| Pat Hayden | Inverness |
| Michael Flynn | Liverpool |
| Margaret Thornton | Bristol |
| Tom Wright | Edinburgh |
| Maurice Hudson | Heathrow |

20. It was not necessary for the Group to meet during 2007/08 although particular members have been consulted on a number of matters during the year. The outlook is busy and it seems very likely that it will be necessary to call a meeting or meetings in 2008/09. In particular the Working Group will be convened to undertake the planned review of the Conference arrangements, including the composition of the Working Group, for consideration at next year's Annual Meeting.

Responding to Consultations

21. The service keeps watch for consultations on national and European issues and ensures that individual committees are informed of them in a timely manner.
22. The service also stands ready to represent the Liaison Group at symposia or briefings on particular issues or on Working Groups to which the Liaison Group has been invited to send a representative. On issues where it might be helpful the service will make arrangements for the membership to be consulted on a collective response, calling on the Working Group if there are any particular points to be resolved.
23. This year there have been no instances where a collective response might have been particularly helpful but further national policy/legislation consultations are on the horizon which might well merit such a response.

Stuart Innes
May 2008