

UKACCS – SUPPORT SERVICE

What this paper is about

A brief report on the work of the support service during the year ended 31st March 2009 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 news services of individual airports, the EC, DfT and other similar bodies. The increasing number of bodies using RSS for their web-based news services is a great help in permitting easy trawls for up-to-date the information and the service this year invested in software to make the scanning of RSS feeds even easier. 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 2008/09 a total of 4200 items were distributed, an average of 350 items per month or 12 items per day. This represents an increase of just over 2% when compared with the 2007/08. Of the 2008/09 total 1107 (an average of 92 per month) were items of general interest (an increase of 54% over the previous year) and the remainder of local significance only.
5. Since March 2008 we have included in the news e-mails as to the source of those of our the information and 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 8,810 visitors and over the last year there has been an average of 120 visits per month. Since the site was launched there have been 13,693 page views and over the past year there have been 181 page views per month on average. 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 Google, AUC and the websites of individual consultative committees.

9. Committees are reminded that the “Issues” and “Euro-round-up” 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**
10. 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
11. 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.
12. 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.
13. 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 have been implemented

Liaison with the Department for Transport

14. 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 2009 when much of the discussion focussed on matters to be discussed at this Annual Meeting.

Annual Meetings

15. 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.
16. Once again this year the Service has managed the applications to attend the Annual Meeting, hotel lists etc. As previously reported this process has been largely automated through the use of a database from which required reports can be abstracted without difficulty. The system works well in practice and can be used on an ongoing basis.

Consultations and Information Exchange

17. 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 2008/9 the service performed in this way on a number of occasions, e.g. in relation to:

- Public participation in ACC meetings
- Cost of airport policing in London
- People trafficking – places for posters
- Airport security – charging for plastic bags
- How Chairmen are appointed
- The provision of administration and advice and who pays for it
- Passenger service sub-committees of groups
- Complaints handling

Working Group

18. The service also assists the Conference Secretariat in making the arrangements for meetings of the Working Group.
19. The Group met at London Gatwick on 12th January 2009 and the minutes of the meeting were subsequently circulated to all members
20. The outlook is busy and it seems very likely that it will be necessary to call a meeting or meetings in 2009/10.

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. This year we attended a seminar on *Noise Action Plans* arranged by Defra.
23. 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. This year, after consultation with members, we put in a response on the question of who should be consulted on National Policy Statements

Stuart Innes
May 2009