

GATWICK AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Consultative Committee held on 23rd October, 2003.

Present:

Mr. P.W. Bryant (Chairman)

Mr. G. Blundell-Pound	-	International Air Carriers Association
Mr. R.A. Jones (Substitute)	-	Burstow Parish Council
Mr. S. Buck	-	ABTA
Mr. D. Dewdney	-	West Sussex County Council
Dr. P. Ellis	-	BATA
Mr. P. Feltham	-	CADIA
Mrs. K. Hammond	-	Surrey County Council
Mr. C. Hersey	-	Mid Sussex District Council
Mrs. E. Kitchen	-	Horsham District Council
Mr. G. Larcombe	-	Horley and District Chamber of Commerce
Mr. N. Maltby	-	Mole Valley District Council
Mr. J. McCall	-	Environmental and Amenity Groups
Mrs. M. Myland	-	Tandridge District Council
Mr. G. Pixley	-	Passenger Representative
Mrs. D. Ross-Tomlin	-	Reigate and Banstead Borough Council
Mrs. E. Sampson	-	Surrey County Council
Mrs. H. Sewill	-	Charlwood Parish Council
Mr. A. Skudder	-	Crawley Borough Council
Mr. R. Thomas	-	East Sussex County Council
Mr. B. Weston (Substitute)	-	Horley Town Council
Mr. J. Woodward-Nutt	-	Consumers' Association

Also present:

Mr. R. Cato	-	Chairman and Managing Director, BAA Gatwick
Mr. T. Lockwood	-	Director of Planning and Environment, BAA Gatwick
Mr. P. Grindrod	-	Department for Transport
Mr. P. Welch	-	Deputy Honorary Secretary
Mrs. P. Street	-	Assistant Honorary Secretary

Apologies for absence were received from:

Mr. J. Brock, Mr. B. Humphreys, Mr. B. Kendall, Mr. C. Lloyd, Mr. J. Macdonald and Lt. Col. Pemberton.

MINUTES

34. Resolved - That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th July, 2003 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

General Purposes Sub-Committee

35. Resolved - That the draft minutes of the General Purposes Sub-Committee held on 2nd October, 2003 be received and noted (copy attached to the signed minutes).

The Future Development of Air Transport in the UK

36. Reference was made to the Government's consultation and members' attention was drawn to the publication of the ninth report of the House of Commons Select Committee on Environmental Audit covering Aviation. A copy of the conclusions and recommendations of the Select Committee would be circulated to members for information.

AIRPORT COMMENTARY

37. The Committee received the Managing Director's commentary on activity at the airport since the date of the last meeting (copy attached to the signed minutes). Mr. Cato informed members of changes to his management team. Mr. Paul Griffiths had been appointed Deputy Managing Director and Planning and Development Director with effect from 12 January 2004 to replace Mr. Paul Barlow. He also informed the Committee that Miss Charlotte Barrett from Community Affairs was leaving the company at the end of November. The Committee expressed its thanks to Charlotte for her hard work and commitment over the past few years and wished her well in her travels.

38. Mr. Cato reported on the traffic figures for August and that Gatwick had recorded an overall rise of 1.95% in traffic compared to August 2002. The traffic figures for September were however disappointing and declined by about 4% as a result of a drop in late summer holiday passengers and North American traffic. This disappointing trend was continuing into October. The IATA Scheduling Conference was to be held in November and it was hoped that Gatwick could attract some new airlines and services.

39. Members noted that under the new service quality rebate scheme, introduced by the CAA as part of the regulatory regime, BAA Gatwick had made rebates of £41,000 to airlines in July and £40,000 in August. The rebates made were in respect of issues with the transit systems, travelators, escalators, lifts and security queuing. BAA Gatwick was working hard to tackle the causes behind the faults and issues.

40. Reference was made to the Post Office's decision to close its Gatwick branch on a permanent basis on 19th November, 2003. The Committee expressed its disappointment that despite offers by BAA Gatwick to work with the Post Office to help reduce its operating costs, the decision to close the branch was still to go ahead. The Committee hoped that the possibility of exploring an alternative franchise in one of the terminals in the future could still be pursued, especially as the nearest branch in Horley was frequently undermanned at peak hours and did not offer a full range of services. Mr. Pixley also stressed that the Post Office was not just a facility but also a public utility and Post Office services should therefore be available in both terminals. He hoped that an appropriate franchise could be introduced as soon as possible.

41. Members noted that BAA Gatwick was to submit a planning application to convert Rolls Farm on the land to the east of the railway into an environment centre for use by the local community and schools. This project was being pursued as part of the community strategy, and landscape and ecology commitments in the Sustainable Development Strategy. Members were interested to know more about this project and asked BAA Gatwick to provide an update at a future meeting.

42. Mrs. Sewill reported that she had attended, on behalf of the Chairman, BAA plc's second aviation and climate change seminar on 13th October. She welcomed the initiative by BAA plc in addressing this important issue. She particularly welcomed Mr. Clasper's, BAA's Chief Executive, recognition that the aviation industry had an impact on global warming and that emissions trading could be an effective way for aviation to pay its costs. It was agreed that a copy of all the presentations given at the seminar would be circulated to members of the Committee.

43. The Committee was pleased to note that since the first section of Fastway between Gatwick and Crawley was opened on 1st September, the service had been well patronised almost doubling the number of journeys made on the previous Gatwick Direct service. A full report on the impact of the new scheme would be made to a future meeting of the Committee.

PASSENGER SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE

44. Mr. Pixley presented his report of the last meeting of the Passenger Services Sub-Committee held on 2nd September, 2003 (copy attached to the signed minutes). He informed the Committee that BAA Plc had introduced, on a trial basis, the new style feedback card. The feedback card had been revised following input from the Passenger Services Sub-Committee but the version on trial was still considered to be too complex and not user friendly. A copy of the new feedback card was circulated at the meeting and the Committee endorsed the views of the Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee would be kept informed of the results of the trial and would be involved in any re-design of the card following the trial.

45. The Sub-Committee remained concerned that the interim solution for the South Terminals Domestic Baggage Reclaim was still not in place and Mr. Pixley urged Mr. Cato to ensure that the temporary solution was progressed as quickly as possible.

46. As regards redevelopment of Pier 3 (the satellite) which involved the replacement of the transit link to the satellite with moving walkways, Mr. Pixley emphasised that the Sub-Committee had growing concerns over the increase in the length of walking distance passengers would have to endure not only on this pier, but also in relation to other future developments. He was already in discussion with BAA Gatwick's Head of Development regarding this as it was felt that BAA's planning guidelines in respect of walking distances needed to be reviewed.

GATWICK AIRPORT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND LEGAL AGREEMENT
MONITORING REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 2003

47. The Committee considered a report by the Honorary Secretary summarising the outcome of the verification process of the Monitoring Report (copy attached to the signed minutes). The Chairman congratulated all those involved in the preparation of the Monitoring Report which was a thorough and accurate document tracking the progress made by BAA Gatwick in the delivery of its legal obligations and commitments contained in the Sustainable Development Strategy. The Committee was encouraged by the way in which BAA Gatwick was taking forward its commitments and the implementation of various projects. It was however noted that the independent consultants had highlighted six of the audited commitments as requiring attention to improve the achievement of the commitment. The Committee was particularly disappointed by the lack of progress on some of the surface access commitments. Mr. Lockwood advised that BAA Gatwick had learned lessons from the outcome of the process and had already turned its attention to those areas where improvements on progress needed to be made.

48. Resolved - That

- (1) the outcome of the monitoring process be noted and BAA Gatwick, West Sussex County Council and Crawley Borough Council be urged to take forward the measures recommended by Casella Stanger;
- (2) West Sussex County Council and Crawley Borough Council be asked to keep the Consultative Committee informed of the outcome of their discussions with BAA Gatwick on the identified areas of concern set out in paragraph 4.2 of the report; and
- (3) the General Purposes Sub-Committee reviews the progress made on Commitments TS8, TS20, TS23, TS27, AQ4, AQ8, AN2 and GN7 when items are being selected for independent verification next year.

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE GROUND RUN PEN

49. Mr. Lockwood informed the Committee that an alternative site for the ground run pen, to the west of the control tower, had been identified to use in the short to medium term. An environmental assessment for the alternative site was currently being prepared and a second planning application would be submitted shortly. BAA Gatwick would however also pursue its original planning application since in the longer term, it was likely that the ground run pen would need to be re-sited into the north west zone as set out in the Sustainable Development Strategy.

50. Mr. Lockwood also informed the Committee that if planning permission for the alternative site was granted, it was anticipated that the period required for the actual construction of the pen would be around six months. Members welcomed the progress which had been made in identifying the alternative site.

BAA GATWICK'S SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2002/03

51. BAA Gatwick circulated at the meeting a copy of its 2002/03 Sustainability Report. Members noted that for the first time the Sustainability Report incorporated the report of the Flight Evaluation Unit (FEU). Mrs. Sewill who had previously urged BAA Gatwick to present the information in the one document particularly welcomed the incorporation of the FEU information in the Report. Mr. Lockwood invited comments from members on the publication and advised that a comment form had been included at the back of the Report.

THE AERODROMES (NOISE RESTRICTIONS) (RULES AND PROCEDURES) REGULATIONS 2003

52. The Committee considered a report by the Honorary Secretary summarising the requirements of the Aerodromes (Noise Restrictions) (Rules and Procedures) Regulations 2003 (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members noted the ability of the competent authority (airport operator/DfT) to introduce restrictions on the operation of certain aircraft and to manage the withdrawal of the noisier Chapter 3 aircraft. This did not however affect the existing means to tackle noise such as departure noise limits. The Committee hoped that BAA Gatwick would be proactive in its approach to the new regulations and would initially discourage new services from using the noisier chapter 3 aircraft. The Chairman reported that BAA plc. had yet to decide on how to implement the regulations at the affected airports across the Group and a meeting had been arranged early in the New Year with the various airports' management to discuss the way forward. A report would be made to a future meeting of the Committee.

53. Resolved - That the Honorary Secretary discuss with BAA Gatwick how the Directive is to be applied in practice at Gatwick and report back to the Consultative Committee in due course.

REDHILL AERODROME LIMITED: RESPONSE TO THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF AIR TRANSPORT CONSULTATION

54. The Committee considered a report by the Honorary Secretary giving details of suggested development plans submitted to the Government by Redhill Aerodrome Limited (copy attached to the signed minutes). The Chairman advised that the report had been prepared at short notice at the request of the General Purposes Sub-Committee and was aware that not all views of the local authorities had been included. Mrs. Myland (Tandridge District Council) advised that Tandridge had written to the Department for Transport urging the Government to dismiss the Aerodrome's submission and to maintain its previously held views on its expansion as outlined in the consultation. The District Council had stated that the proposal would be in conflict with both national and local planning policies because of its impact on the countryside and Green Belt, its impact on the landscape and its visual impact.

55. Mrs Sampson (Surrey County Council) added that the County Council remained strongly opposed to the plans submitted by Redhill Aerodrome Limited and had made its views known to the Department for Transport in its consultation response. The proposals

would be contrary to the Surrey Structure Plan which resists any intensification of flying or related activities at Redhill.

56. Mr. Blundell-Pound (International Air Carriers Association) advised that the industry wished to operate from Gatwick and did not support the Redhill proposal.

57. Resolved - That the Honorary Secretary write to the Secretary of State for Transport setting out the concerns of the Consultative Committee as set out in the report.

FLIGHT EVALUATION UNIT COMMENTARY

58. The Committee considered the commentary by the Flight Evaluation Unit on the work of the Unit, headline statistics and the key points arising from the Noise and Track Monitoring Group's (NATMAG) meeting on 10th September, 2003 (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members commented that over recent years the noise climate at Gatwick had improved and track keeping was more accurate. Members congratulated BAA Gatwick on its achievements to date.

59. The Committee noted that there had one night noise infringement since the last meeting, and that this was the first infringement since February, 2003.

60. Members also noted that there had been an increase in the number of complaints about low flying aircraft and that the NATMAG had asked for further analysis to be undertaken on this matter. NATMAG was also asked to examine why one or two aircraft consistently arrived earlier than their flight arrival time.

CRAWLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL DIRECTOR FOR ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING'S REPORT

61. The Committee considered a report from Crawley Borough Council's Director for Environment and Housing on planning applications determined in respect of Gatwick Airport since the date of the last meeting (copy attached to the signed minutes).

ANNUAL MEETING OF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND SECRETARIES

62. The Committee received and noted the minutes of the Annual Meeting of Consultative Committee Chairmen and Secretaries held in Birmingham in July (copy attached to the signed minutes). Members noted with interest the proposal by the Government to revise the guidelines for airport consultative committees. Members were anxious that the revised guidelines were not too prescriptive but should promote good practice. Mr. Grindrod advised that the Government hoped to issue the new guidelines around the same time as the publication of the Aviation White Paper.

63. Reference was also made to the Code of Practice dealing with access to air travel by persons with reduced mobility (PRMs). Mr. Pixley advised that Airports Council International (ACI) Europe was calling on the European Commission to bring forward legislation to outlaw discriminatory practices against PRMs such as carriers charging an

additional fee for special assistance. The Committee welcomed the principle of introducing legislation to tackle this issue.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2004/05

64. The Committee noted the calendar of meetings for 2004/05 as set out below:

Consultative Committee

Thursday 22nd April, 2004 - 2.00 p.m.

Thursday 22nd July, 2004 (all day with Tour)

Thursday 21st October, 2004 - 2.00 p.m.

Thursday 3rd February 2005 - 2.00 p.m.

General Purposes Sub-Committee

Thursday 25th March, 2004 - 10.00 a.m.

Thursday 1st July, 2004 - 10.00 a.m.

Thursday 30th September, 2004 - 10.30 a.m.

Thursday 13th January 2005 - 10.30 a.m.

Passenger Services Sub-Committee

Thursday 26th February 2004 - 2.00 p.m.

Thursday 3rd June 2004 - 2.00 p.m.

Thursday 2nd September 2004 - 2.00 p.m.

Thursday 9th December 2004 - 2.00 p.m.

65. Members also noted that BAA Gatwick had issued the calendar of meetings for NATMAG and the Ground Noise Committee for 2004 as set out below:

Thursday 4th March, 2004.

Friday 11th June, 2004.

Friday 10th September 2004.

Monday 13th December, 2004.

NATMAG meetings would commence at 10.00 a.m. and the Ground Noise Committee meetings would commence at 2.00 p.m. on the above dates.

DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE AND ITS SUB-COMMITTEES

66. The Committee noted the dates of the next meetings of the Consultative Committee as follows:-

Passenger Services Sub-Committee - Thursday 4th December, 2003 at 2.00 p.m.

General Purposes Sub-Committee - Thursday, 8th January, 2004 at 10.00 a.m.

Consultative Committee - Thursday, 5th February, 2004 at 2.00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN