

## **GATCOM**

**23 JULY 2013**

### **GATCOM STEERING GROUP – MATTERS CONSIDERED**

#### **REPORT BY CHAIRMAN**

This paper summarises the matters considered by the GATCOM Steering Group at its meeting on 27 June 2013.

#### **1. LOCAL AIR QUALITY MONITORING – ANNUAL REPORT 2012**

1.1 Reigate and Banstead Borough Council reported on the results of the 2012 air pollution monitoring undertaken on and in the vicinity of Gatwick Airport. Mr. Hibbs, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council reported that there had been no breach in the annual air quality average standard for nitrogen dioxide or the air quality standards for other pollutants under the local authority air quality management regime. Members will be pleased to learn that the trend analysis of the nitrogen dioxide concentrations at properties most at risk of breaching the air quality objective shows a continued downward trend.

1.2 In respect of ozone, although the airport is not responsible for local ozone pollution, ozone is important in the formation of nitrogen dioxide which is the main pollutant of concern around Gatwick. Ozone concentrations in the vicinity of the airport did not meet the UK air quality standard for the seventh consecutive year but it should be noted that the lack of ozone helps to contain nitrogen dioxide levels at the airport.

1.3 On airport (on the airfield) air quality levels are also monitored and members will be pleased to note that the pollutants measured met the relevant air quality standards with nitrogen dioxide concentrations showing a continued downward trend with concentrations in 2012 the lowest to date.

1.4 The Steering Group expressed its appreciation and thanks to Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, particularly to Mr Hibbs, for the work undertaken in monitoring air quality around the airport and for the clear and informative way the data is presented.

1.5 A copy of the [report](#) is available on the GATCOM website [www.gatcom.org.uk](http://www.gatcom.org.uk) . Reigate and Banstead Borough Council also publish its monitoring reports on London Air's website: <http://www.londonair.org.uk/london/asp/lahome.asp> .

#### **2. RAILWAYS**

##### **Thameslink Franchise**

2.1 GAL gave an update on its discussions with the DfT and train operating companies in respect of trying to secure the best quality rolling stock for the Gatwick Express and other rail services to and from Gatwick. GAL welcomed the continued support from stakeholders in the campaign to preserve and improve the Gatwick Express service.

2.2 The DfT is in its final stage of preparing the draft Invitation to Tender (ITT) which will be circulated to prospective bidders for comment prior to the final ITT being issued in the Autumn. GAL was working with Henry Smith MP to urge the DfT to share and enable other parties to comment on the draft ITT to ensure that the interests of air passengers, airport staff and the needs of local communities around Gatwick are taken into account in the final ITT document. The Steering Group expressed its concern that the DfT was not intending to provide an opportunity for others to comment on the draft ITT. Members felt that it was essential that as the new franchise was for a longer length of time, GAL and other key stakeholders were given a final opportunity to influence the development of the tender for Thameslink services. It was also important that there was joined up thinking between the rail and air divisions at DfT to ensure that aviation policies and objectives were captured as part of the franchise process.

2.3 The Steering Group agreed that the Chairman should write to the Secretary of State asking that the draft ITT be shared with others. It was also agreed that the Secretariat should write to all the prospective bidders to remind them of GATCOM's aspirations for the Thameslink franchise.

## **Network Rail - Long term planning process: London and South East Market Study**

2.4 Network Rail has published for consultation the London and South East Market Study. This is a high level study with many aspects that are to be welcomed and supported. It is one of four consultation documents produced as part of Network Rail's long term planning process and together they set out how passenger and freight demand is expected to change in each of these markets over the next 30 years.

2.5 The Steering Group considered a suggested draft response to the London and South East Market Study which took into account the comments that had been received from members. On behalf of GATCOM, the Steering Group agreed a form of response which also reflected the previous views of the Committee in respect of the need to improve rail connectivity and the need to enhance and maintain frequent, efficient and high quality rail services to and from the airport recognising the important role Gatwick plays as a regional transport hub. A copy of the response is appended to this report.

### **3. FUTURE ECONOMIC REGULATION OF GATWICK**

#### **GAL's proposals and framework of contracts and commitments**

3.1 GAL advised that on 25 June it had submitted on to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) an improved offer on a new deal for the airport to replace the current economic regulatory regime based on a framework of bilateral contracts and commitments that will help create the conditions in which Gatwick and other airports in the South East can compete on service quality and price to the benefit of passengers and the airline community. GAL continues to work with the CAA to ensure that its commitments are legally binding and that the interests of passengers are safeguarded.

3.2 GAL has lowered the price commitment from RPI + 4% to RPI + 1.5% over a seven year period. This equates to an increase in the per passenger fee from £8.80 in 2013/14 to a per passenger fee of £9.76 in 2020/21. In respect of the Capital Investment Programme, GAL has given a commitment to continue to fully consult with airlines on capital investment, and also to substantial capital investment continuing. GAL has also proposed more passenger-focused targets to ensure passengers continue to enjoy high service standards throughout the airport. The Steering Group noted that the airline community has worked together and formed a common view on a number of areas. The airlines are of the view that the new economic regulation licence would offer a form of protection to airlines and passengers as well as a right of appeal for airlines.

#### **CAA Consultation – Economic Regulation at Gatwick from April 2014: Initial Proposals**

3.3 The Steering Group considered a suggested form of response to the CAA's consultation (a copy of the [Secretariat's report](#) is available on GATCOM's website at [www.gatcom.org.uk](http://www.gatcom.org.uk) via a link from this paper). The Steering Group confirmed GATCOM's previous view that the current price cap regulation is inflexible and costly and that a lighter touch, more flexible regulatory regime was needed for a period of time beyond 2014. The Steering Group also supported the CAA's view that a commitments and limited licensing framework could be the preferred form of regulation for Gatwick going forward. A number of minor amendments to the wording of the suggested draft response were agreed. [GATCOM's response](#) to the consultation was submitted to the CAA on 1 July and is available on GATCOM's website.

3.4 In respect of the proposals for the future service quality rebate (SQR) scheme, GAL offered to share the latest thinking on proposed service performance targets with GATCOM's Passenger Advisory Group.

### **4. CAA CONSULTATION - BETTER INFORMATION ABOUT UK AVIATION: THE CAA'S NEW PUBLICATION DUTIES**

4.1 The Steering Group gave initial consideration to the CAA's consultation on its proposed Statement of Policy in respect of its new information publication duties. Overall, the new powers are generally welcomed provided the publication of information added value and helped to improve passenger choice and experience. There is some concern however about how, where and by whom the CAA would require the information to be published and the costs involved.

4.2 The five priority areas where the CAA would focus its duties have been noted but caution was expressed by airlines representatives about the suggestion of a single star rating combining measures on punctuality, long delays, cancellations and mishandled baggage as this was a complex area with

differing business models across airlines. It is important therefore that the publication of information recognises that there are many and varied factors which can affect flight reliability such as aircraft technical issues, weather and industrial action.

4.3 The publication of information about carbon emissions and the impact of flying, including ways in which the CAA could develop a means of conveying the information to passengers, were discussed. Members acknowledged that the reporting of carbon emissions was a complex area but commented that there were already systems in place for carbon emissions reporting. It was also emphasised that there was a need to avoid a regime that affected the UK's ability to compete on a global stage and that the UK was not seen as a less desirable place for carriers to operate from.

4.4 It was agreed that the points raised by the Steering Group would be incorporated in the proposed GATCOM response which would be circulated to all members for comment prior to submission to the CAA.

## **5. THE CAPACITY DEBATE**

5.1 GAL updated the Group on its work in respect of responding to the Airports Commission and the consideration of options for a second runway at Gatwick. It was confirmed that GAL's vision for future capacity and connectivity was a constellation of London airports of a similar size rather than one key hub which it believes has advantages for both passengers and airports competition.

5.2 GAL highlighted changes to its work programme since the last meeting of GATCOM. The Airports Commission had published its sifting criteria and GAL has had to adjust its work programme to ensure that the elements that needed to be considered and included in any submission were taken into account. GAL also needed to ensure that its work considered all possible options for the future so as to avoid the possibility of a legal challenge. GAL's work therefore includes consideration of a whole range of options, a number to the south of the current runway – close parallel, long and short runway options as well as a runway to the north of the airport. It was emphasised however that the advantages of an additional runway at Gatwick were much greater for a southern runway than a runway to the north of the airport. GAL emphasised that no decisions had yet been made by the company on which options would be included in its submission to the Airports Commission. GAL also confirmed that its submission would include assumptions on the improvements to local infrastructure that would be needed to support the development such as surface access.

5.3 The Steering Group was anxious to ensure that fears about potential property blight were not exacerbated and it was important therefore that GAL indicated its preferred option to the Airports Commission. Members also asked whether GAL would as part of its submission include information about the impact on the economy of the region should it be decided that a hub airport was the favoured option to meet the UK's future demand for capacity and connectivity. GAL confirmed that it had already raised initial concerns but that no specific work had yet been undertaken on the economic impact or the affect that the creation of a mega hub would have on Gatwick and the region.

5.4 GAL will issue a vision document early in July to provide interested parties and stakeholders with an early insight to GAL's work and what is likely to be included in its submission to the Airports Commission on 19 July.

## **6. REVIEW OF RESIDENTIAL NOISE INSULATION SCHEME**

6.1 GAL outlined its work on reviewing the residential noise insulation scheme and its initial thoughts on the development of a new, innovative, more generous scheme. Consideration was being given to using a different noise contour with an area of eligibility based on one clear boundary (without splitting streets) which would also include areas under the centre line of flight paths that currently fall outside the noise contour. An additional 700 properties could potentially benefit under the new scheme. The scheme would include an offer towards double glazing with ventilation units for the whole property as well as loft insulation.

6.2 GAL would prepare a map showing the proposed boundary for the scheme which will be circulated to all GATCOM members for consideration and feedback in the near future. The airline representatives asked that specific consultation be undertaken with the airline community as there were concerns about the additional cost of the scheme which would ultimately be met by the airlines/passengers through higher airport charges.

## **7. AIRCRAFT OVERFLIGHT AND NOISE**

### **P-RNAV Implementation Update**

7.1 GAL advised that a decision on full implementation is imminent but that actual implementation would not begin until November/December due to time it will take to then update the flight operation manuals to make P-RNAV flight planable.

### **Night Time Respite**

7.2 GAL presented the outcome of the consultation with GATCOM and NATMAG members and other interested parties on the proposal to conduct a trial to provide respite to some communities during the night period. The main concern raised by respondents was the need to ensure that over flight was not directed to other areas where it would result in the noise climate/disturbance suffered deteriorating particularly for those living in less densely populated areas. GAL confirmed that the intention was to trial a procedure that avoided the over flight of populated areas but that would not be at the expense of those living in more rural communities. It was also emphasised that aircraft would still be directed to fly within the current flight paths. GAL also confirmed that the proposed trial would not impact on flight schedules or result in delays for arriving aircraft.

7.3 GAL is planning to conduct the trial starting in September for a period of 90 days (nights). The Steering Group asked how GAL would assess the results of the trial as there was a need to establish the number of people that would be affected both positively and negatively. GAL is working with NATS and will use the new noise and track monitoring system to track and monitor flights. GAL also advised that in the absence of data and guidance on the cause of annoyance from noise it will be reliant on feedback from communities overflown and noise complaints from the affected areas. GAL will therefore engage with communities before and after the trial. Members suggested that one measure could be the number of nights where areas were flight free. The Steering Group welcomed GAL's transparency in planning and conducting the trial but questioned whether providing information about when and where respite would take place could skew the results of the trial if people were aware of changes in flight patterns.

### **Community Noise Disturbance Issues**

7.4 GAL provided an update on the issues relating to the use of the Seaford 08 departure route in the vicinity of East Grinstead. The Steering Group was also advised about a frequent complainant from Smallfield concerning the alleged over flight of a property. GAL has investigated the matter, involving the local GATCOM member and GATCOM's lead member for noise and evidence, including video evidence, has shown that no aircraft overflew the property for the duration of CCTV monitoring of the site.

## **8. LIAISON GROUP OF UK AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES (UKACCS) – ANNUAL MEETING 2013**

8.1 The Steering Group noted the key points and outcomes of UKACCs Annual Meeting which was attended by the Chairman and Secretariat on 5/6 June 2013. The [summary of the key points](#) and outcomes is available on the UKACCs website at [www.ukaccs/info](http://www.ukaccs/info).

8.2 Next year's UKACCs Annual Meeting is to be hosted by GAL on 11/12 June 2014.

## **9. DFT REVIEW OF GUIDELINES FOR AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES**

9.1 A [copy of the DfT's paper](#) on the review of the DfT's guidelines for airport consultative committees (ACCs) that was circulated at the UKACCs Annual Meeting was considered (copy available on GATCOM's website at [www.gatcom.org.uk](http://www.gatcom.org.uk)). The DfT is to undertake a survey of ACCs during the summer about their work and practices and will seek views on how the guidance can best support the running of effective committees. ACCs' views will help the DfT to develop the draft revised guidelines for consultation with interested parties in the Autumn. The DfT hopes to publish the updated guidance by the end of 2013/beginning of 2014.

9.2 The Steering Group welcomed the DfT's aim to keep the guidance flexible, proportionate and non-prescriptive and that the guidance should be a collection of principles and good practice. It was hoped that some of GATCOM's effective working practices could be included in the reviewed guidance.

9.3 It was also highlighted that there was a need for some guidance on the role of ACCs in the process of considering airport expansion plans, particularly in respect of the Airports Commission's

work, so as to ensure that mutual respect of the differing and opposing views between interests represented on committees is maintained enabling them to continue to operate effectively. The Steering Group also highlighted that effectiveness of ACCs was dependent on the right level of expertise of its members, a well-informed membership and adequate resources for expert advice and secretariat services. The DfT noted these important points.

## **10. AIR NAVIGATION GUIDANCE TO THE CAA - CONSULTATION**

10.1 The DfT has published a consultation on a proposed new version of the environmental guidance given by the Secretary of State to the CAA when exercising its air navigation functions. The proposed new guidance has two key objectives. The first is to provide the Civil Aviation Authority with additional clarity on the Government's environmental objectives relating to air navigation in the UK, including the need to improve the efficiency of the UK's airspace network. The second is a reaffirmation of the need to consult local communities near airports when airspace changes are being considered in the vicinity of these airports. The consultation period closes on 17 September 2013.

10.2 **It is recommended** that views be sought from members and GATCOM's draft response be agreed with the GATCOM Steering Group via email.

**John Godfrey**  
**CHAIRMAN**

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If calling ask for  
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16th July, 2013

Dear Sir/Madam,

## **LONDON AND SOUTH EAST MARKET STUDY**

Thank you for providing GATCOM with the opportunity to comment on the consultation draft London and South East Market Study.

GATCOM (the Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee) is the statutory advisory body for Gatwick Airport and comprises representatives from local authorities, the aviation industry, passengers, business, environmental interests and other users of the airport. We provide a forum for informed discussion leading to the provision of advice to the Government, Gatwick Airport Ltd and other organisations on a range of matters concerning the operation and future development of Gatwick.

As an international gateway with around 34 million passengers annually, Gatwick is London's best connected airport by rail. The airport rail station has around 900 trains arriving and departing each day and serves over 13 million rail users annually; making it one of the busiest rail stations in the UK. The scale of demand for surface access to and from the airport is growing. Over 10 million journeys are made by people who work on the airport campus every year. There are also a significant number of journeys made by suppliers and service providers.

Improving surface access is an integral part of the sustainable growth of the airport. Effective, efficient and resilient surface access to the airport benefits not just passengers but also the regional economy, local communities and helps to manage the airport's overall environmental impact. The contribution the airport makes to the national and regional economy cannot be underestimated and it is important therefore that Network Rail ensures that its long term planning process supports the aims of the Government's command paper on rail which encourages improving those journeys that matter most for economic growth in the UK including links to international airports. It is vital that Gatwick's growth plans are supported by the rail network thereby helping to maintain and grow the UK's international competitiveness and the contribution the airport makes to the economy of London and the South East.

Rail is the largest single mode of passenger access to and from Gatwick and there is strong evidence that this demand will continue to grow in the future. However, there is limited capacity on the London to Brighton main line which prevents additional services being introduced to support demand on the part of air passengers. This is a major barrier to the effective provision of rail services to a major airport. Capacity constraints on this busy main line has also meant that service development providing links to regional centres to the east and west of Gatwick has been hindered.

GATCOM welcomes the new approach by Network Rail in the long term planning of the rail network and the fact that good rail connectivity to airports is viewed as important in supporting economic

growth, productivity and social mobility. GATCOM also welcomes the fact that Gatwick Airport Limited's Airport Surface Access Strategy 'Access Gatwick' and its Rail Strategy have been considered as part of the study.

As a top priority, GATCOM would like to see Network Rail build into its long term planning process a balanced plan for growth with an industry enhancement plan for the Brighton Main Line and holistic capacity planning exploring options for new east-west rail connections to Gatwick. In addition to this there is a need for sufficient capacity for air passengers to board trains with their luggage, in the peak. This means:

- addressing the problems of overcrowding on peak Gatwick Express trains from Brighton and securing replacement, higher quality Gatwick Express rolling stock within franchise agreements to improve the passenger experience
- using extra capacity on other services to efficiently cater for peak commuter and air passenger growth
- developing an investment plan proposal that will mitigate key constraints, including London Victoria and East Croydon to provide capacity for future growth, enabling a significant timetable change to cater for growth in air passenger and commuter numbers
- studying the business case for new and improved rail services to Kent and the Thames Valley.

We have considered your Market Study's assumptions and aspirations and offer the following comments for your consideration:

### **Overview of the Study**

Whilst the London and South East Market Study is a high level study, GATCOM believes there is a need for Network Rail to acknowledge the way in which demand for, and construction of, aviation infrastructure will shape future use of rail networks. The importance of this cannot be overlooked in any assessment of future demand in the South East of England. GATCOM therefore suggests that potential demand created by a range of different infrastructure scenarios, as well as air passenger behaviours, should be considered to help deliver strategic goals. In particular, it needs to be recognised that Gatwick Airport supports a high proportion of point-to-point journeys. This results in a higher demand for surface transport than other airport business models.

GATCOM is concerned that the Study predominately examines services into London. We acknowledge that capacity into London remains a challenge for the future but there is a need to look at alternative scenarios such as strengthening services between regional centres in the South East of England. The principles that have been applied in the Regional Urban Passenger Market Study we believe should be adopted for those regional centres in the South East outside of London. With regard to the Long Distance Market Study, GATCOM notes that no other destinations other than London are considered in the analysis (although the document states this is covered by the London and South East Study). However we feel that it would be useful to have this level of analysis for long distance journeys to other locations in the South East other than London.

### **Long term demand scenarios**

The Government's air passenger demand forecasts are currently being examined by the Airports Commission as is the manner in which future demand could be supported. Until the outcome of the Commission's work is known and the future Government has decided how and when it adopts the Commission's recommendations, GATCOM believes that Network Rail's assumption that in future the UK air transport market will be focused on one single dominant 'hub airport' is premature. It is possible that in future London could continue to evolve into a 'constellation' of similar sized airports instead. We suggest therefore that Network Rail also considers this kind of development in the long term scenario modelling.

GATCOM is surprised that Crossrail 2 does not seem to feature in the study. Whilst it is accepted that it is not one of Network Rail's committed schemes, it has been the subject of consultation and discussion and as such needs to be included in demand projections going forward particularly the potential linkages to the Thameslink Programme.

### **Long term outputs aspirations for 2043**

GATCOM particularly welcomes the conditional output of improved access to international gateways. Network Rail's recognition of the need for new and improved rail services at major airports and of the need for fast, convenient and reliable access should be considered a priority. We hope that direct access will also be a key consideration.



GATCOM notes that one of the objectives of undertaking the study is for Network Rail to gain a better understanding about how plans for the railway impact on the economy and make sure that strategic change, such as the implementation of the Crossrail 1 and Thameslink programmes and the development of High Speed 2, can be effectively considered in rail industry plan. GATCOM hopes that a link from High Speed 2 via Old Oak Common interchange with the West London Line will be included in the plan as this would enable greater connectivity between Gatwick and regional centres in the North of England. In particular, we note the fact that the demand projections for 2043 with and without High Speed 2 (pages 42 and 43 of the document refer) do not appear to assume an impact from potential interchange with the West London Line at Old Oak Common.

GATCOM has noted the conclusions in respect of minimum service levels. As currently outlined, we believe there is a risk that they will not deliver the key strategic goals set out at the beginning of the Study. Airports such as Gatwick with a higher proportion of point to point air trips generate higher rail demand eg. Gatwick 13 million rail passengers per annum serving 32 million non-transferring air passengers per annum, Heathrow 6 million rail passengers serving 42 million non-transferring air passengers per annum, Stansted 4 million rail passengers serving 16 million non-transferring air passengers per annum. The proposed categorisation of a minimum 4 services an hour to travel to London is significantly below the number of services that currently exist between Gatwick and London. Any degradation would be counterproductive to the strategic goals of meeting capacity and reducing road congestion.

### **Improved passenger satisfaction**

The importance given to improving passengers' travel experiences is most welcome, particularly as this is currently a key area of concern to GATCOM and is addressed in our top priority above. We agree that the industry needs to continue to seek to improve station environments such as the removal of ticketing gates at Gatwick, the quality and appropriateness of rolling stock, the availability of information to passengers and train punctuality. The quality of rolling stock needs to take account of the future mix of passengers using rail services to and from Gatwick. For example, in recent years Gatwick has seen an increase in the number of PRM passengers and this growth is set to continue. There is also a need to address other specific requirements of air passengers e.g. provision of adequate luggage facilities on board trains. In recent years there has been a degradation of the premium Gatwick Express service including the use of less accessible rolling stock for passengers with large amounts of luggage and PRM facilities and GATCOM, the airport operator and other interested parties are urging the current train operating company, as well as potential bidders for the new franchise, to address. GATCOM is therefore encouraged by the importance given in the Market Study to improving passenger satisfaction levels in these areas.

We trust our comments can be taken into account.

Yours faithfully,



Paula Street  
Assistant Secretary