

Minutes of the 211th EACC meeting held on Monday 11th February 2025
at the Novotel at Hermiston Gait – Edinburgh

Present Robert Carr (Chair)
 Janice Hogarth (Secretary)
 Gordon Dewar (CEO Edinburgh Airport)
 Gordon Robertson (Communications Director EAL)
 Greg Maxwell (Head of External Media and Corporate Affairs)
 Adam Cumming Edinburgh Airport Amenities Group
 Cllr Dave Dempsey Fife Council
 Stephen Robb Fife Chamber of Commerce
 Donald Spencer The Consumers Association
 Cllr Kevin Lang City of Edinburgh Council
 John Howison Cramond & Barnton Community Council
 Jimmy Martin ABTA
 Clare Johnston Passenger PRM Representative
 Cllr Tony Boyle West Lothian Council
 David Dunphy Frequent Flyer Representative
 Ken McNab SPAA
 Kate Watt Ratho & District Community Council
 Blake Cushnie Edinburgh Airport Noise Advisory Board
 Agnes Rothney Kirkliston Council
 Rachael Murphy Sestran

Apologies_ Cllr Carol Hamilton Scottish Borders Council
 Carrie Binnie Unite
 Cllr Colin Cassidy Midlothian Council
 Cllr John McMillan East Lothian Council
 Caroline Flynn Police Scotland
 Kate Nowakowska Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce (ECOC)

1. Welcome

Robert Carr welcomed all members attending the meeting as well as the three observers.

2. The minutes of the previous meeting

The draft Minutes of the Meeting on 4th August 2024 were approved noting that Kate Watt had been present at the meeting.

3. Other matters arising from the Minutes

Robert Carr reviewed the items requiring actions from the last meeting.

Robert Carr thanked Greg Maxwell for the recent EACC visit around the airport which had been excellent looking at the new scanners in security, the baggage area and also the fire station.

The proposed presentation from Professor Duncan MacLennan had not yet been arranged and it was commented that much of his report would now be historical and there was a suggestion that Gordon Robertson might summarise the report at a future EACC meeting.

An update on customer experience from David Dunphy and Donald Spencer had been forwarded to Gordon Robertson who will address items raised later in the agenda.

The item raised previously regarding the figures in relation to arrivals by walking/cycling will be covered in the CEO Report.

Gordon Robertson was still working on a replacement for Sandy Leggett. A presentation on the control tower and its functions was suggested for a future EACC meeting.

The access road was a standing item in the CEO Report

Greg Maxwell will provide a link regarding charters.

Action Point - Greg Maxwell to provide link for charters

The noise monitor at Dalgety Bay is now back in operation

The Noise Action Plan is a core item for today's agenda.

Action Point – Gordon Dewar to circulate details re Noise Action Plan

Clare Johnston is still to liaise with Gordon Dewar re the issue raised regarding taxis

4. Chief Executive's Report (EAL)

Traffic figures

Gordon Dewar spoke about the ongoing strong performance of the Airport with a total of 15.8 million passengers passing through the airport in 2024 which was a record and ahead of the market average.

Gordon Dewar said that it was great to see Emirates back and flying to Dubai but offering onward worldwide connectivity, it was also great to see the new routes such as JetBlue to Boston and American to Philadelphia.

Gordon Dewar said that both Ryanair and EasyJet were introducing new routes and in many cases many airlines were using larger aircraft thus increasing capacity.

Gordon Dewar reported that there had been a decline in charters but added that the number of night flights had reduced over the winter (which was the norm).

Blake Cushnie added that an improvement in scheduling had also helped to get night flights back in check.

Capital Investment

Gordon Dewar commented that with increased long-haul flight and increased size of aircraft, there were different challenges and a higher demand for baggage and check in.

Gordon Dewar reported that the East Access Road had been given initial permission, and this had resulted in discussion with Crosswinds and West Town to get full planning permission approved. EAL is acting as an enabler and was very hopeful that the road would assist in creating investment in the West Edinburgh project.

Kevin Lang asked when full approval and completion was be expected and what the difference was between the new proposal and the one which had been rejected by the Council. Gordon Dewar stated that the new proposal was almost identical but should answer what is required by everyone. The details for the proposed road will be in the public domain.

There was discussion on the upcoming changes in Grangemouth for fuel delivery and Gordon Dewar advised that tank expansion is currently being carried out at the airport to increase the storage to cover the increased demands of additional flights. Gordon Dewar also commented on the hoped for production of Sustainable Aviation Fuel which in the long term could use somewhere such as Grangemouth as a source. A SAF plant would be very good but would be complex to achieve. Gordon Dewar said that the SAF demands of Edinburgh Airport and its future development were important viability factors.

Gordon Dewar continued by commenting on the Back British SAF Campaign at Westminster where both Labour and the Government were in agreement this (see Wirrall Report to follow)

There had been a recent UKACC update on the priorities for UK Government which will be distributed to EAAC members.

Community Investment

Gordon Robertson spoke of the new projects and how it was best to spend the money raised and where and who it should be distributed to.

He added that the Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity activities were doing extremely well but the two-year commitment to ECHC would soon be coming to an end. Discussions about an extension were ongoing.

Surface Access

Gordon Robertson advised that the level of public transportation had now risen to 42% which an excellent result. Kevin Lang complimented EAL on the result and that it was outperforming other airports who had public air links.

A new bus had been added from Aberdeen and the viability of a bus from Midlothian was being explored.

Noise

Gordon Robertson advised that a great deal of work had been carried out and added that the stats from the noise monitor at Dalgety Bay had been delayed but should be available in the next report in May.

The Noise Action Plan was still open for consultation but this would close on the 14th February. Robert Carr noted that the EACC does not itself adopt a policy on items such as this but members can make representation to the EACC secretariat for onward submission to EAL.

Route Development

Many airlines were extending their season to places such as New York and Boston, which was a new route.

Emirates had launched their services and were now using the brand new A350 on the route.

There were also increases in destinations from EasyJet. Delta will start their transatlantic flights in April. Turkish will go double daily in the summer. Hainan will be extending its service to China.

Passenger satisfaction

Journey preparation was high on the stats relating to customer satisfaction along with concerns regarding security. EAL confirmed that it was expected that the remaining new scanners would be in place for the peak season.

5. Noise Action Plan

Presentation from June McClung – setting the scene

June gave an explanation on what the Noise Action Plan meant and advised that it included road and rail as well. Scottish Government was bringing in consultants for strategic mapping and was looking at all aspects so maybe it will consider other areas for items such as loft insulation. They have previously looked at an estimated number of properties but perhaps a postcode finder will show up whether properties are eligible under the noise lab.

A question was asked about oversubscribing. June advised that this had been factored in over the lifespan of the initiative. There would also be a rolling review.

Frankfurt and Amsterdam were being used as benchmarks but road and rail were being looked at first and then it would open up and consultations would go live.

EANAB View

Blake Cushnie advised that EANAB had outlined a details response to the Noise Action Plan and appreciated the time and effort that EAL was putting into the plan and also appreciated the willingness to extend the review period to afford more time for detailed analysis.

The EANAB team had created a detailed response document to provide feedback to EAL which included the following points:

- The report is too long, unwieldy and hard to navigate. The technical detail is perhaps better in an appendix to aid with easier navigation of the key topics.
- It was hard to locate on the website.
- Some activities detailed in the plan are not specifically noise related.

- There is a lack of clear KPIs and goals by which success can be measured in the context of noise.

Presentation from John Howison on behalf of Cramond & Barnton Community Council

John Howison had previously circulated his paper to EACC member. He highlighted a number of items including the issue of noise contours and that 63 – 66 decibels should be 100% included in noise consideration and this would include Cramond and Newbridge.

He said that noise is measured in a logarithmic scale with 3dBA increase representing a doubling of the noise energy measured and around 10 dBA representing a doubling of the perceived noise level to the human ear. Hence the increase from 63 to 66 dBA is not a 5% increase in noise energy, but a 100% increase.

He also mentioned that the percentage of night flights to total flights at Edinburgh was 8.6% compared with a limit imposed through Designation of 1.3% at Heathrow with numerically more night flights at Edinburgh than Heathrow.

He said that plans should have objectives with proposed tested methods and the outcome reflecting how many households fall within these limits. He added that if there was a risk of shortfall that there should be the chance to amend. Consideration should be given regarding planning restrictions and operating procedures. There should be uniformity regarding what timings are referred to as night flights and to consider levies for these.

6. Air Space Change Update

Gordon Robertson commented that this was a complex subject where the airport was suffering from the CAA learning how to process information but he thought that the whole matter should be a great deal further on by the next meeting. The next consultation would therefore not now be until after the summer. (This had also resulted in the demands on the EACC subcommittee being put back as well)

7. EANAB Report

Blake thanked Adam Cumming as Vice Chairman of EANAB following Adam recently standing down from EANAB and he attributed to him much of the good relationship that had been established with the airport.

Blake reported that a good deal of work was now being carried out by EANAB.

Recent discussions at EANAB had included whether reduced thrust on take-off would be a viable possibility to reduce levels of noise and EAL are going to look at this by perhaps instructing an external consultant to assess and report on the implications. This was a good example of the partnership relationship that now existed between EANAB and EAL

Blake talked about the fact that June McClung and Diane talk to the community but added that there is a lot of other work that goes on and added that more engagement would be good.

Obviously, a lot of time was currently being taken up with the Noise Action Plan and Air Space Change programmes.

8. UKACCs Update

Robert Carr reported on the AGM of UKACCs held in November in Leeds where Colin Flack was reappointed as the Chair.

There were presentations from CAA on protecting passengers and enabling the future of aviation alongside sustainable growth with the progress on Air Space Change.

Huw Jones from the DfT had given a presentation on the UK Government priorities for transport (including rail, bus, infrastructure and better integration of these). With regard to aviation their focus was on safety, skills and accessibility. Accessibility was high on the agenda and an Aviation Accessibility Task and Finish Group will be spearheaded by Baroness Grey-Thompson, (a current member of the House of Lords and retired Paralympian), who will work with industry and consumers to create better protections for disabled passengers when flying.

Janice Hogarth as secretary continues to send out Bulletins from UKACCs and government consultations and all similar relevant information are forwarded to EACC members.

9. Report on CAA Community Information and Feedback Forum

Adam Cumming had attended this on behalf of EACC and said that the meeting on the 18th November had been an exploratory meeting looking at what is being done now and to look at ways of connecting more directly to communities on the work that the CAA is doing.

++ See attached slides++

10. Review of Rolling Action Plan

This had already been covered at the beginning of the meeting

11. AOCB

Ken McNab commented that there should have been more consideration of EAL being a transatlantic hub as in his opinion Scotland deserves better.

Janice Hogarth advised the meeting that she was working on the Annual Report and should have it ready for the next meeting

There was no other business, and the meeting closed at 12.20 with the next meeting scheduled to take place on Monday 5th May at 10.30 at the Novotel.