

EDINBURGH AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE.

Minutes of the 203rd EACC meeting held on Monday 6th February 2023
at the Doubletree by Hilton – Edinburgh Airport

Present

Robert Carr (Chair)
Janice Hogarth (Secretary)
Greg Maxwell (Head of Corporate Affairs EAL)
Jonny Macneal (Head of Aviation EAL)
Robert Fairnie (Digital Content Editor EAL)
Kate Watt Ratho & District Community Council
Kate Nowakowska Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce (ECOC)
John Howison Cramond & Barnton Community Council
Jimmy Martin ABTA
Ken McNab SPAA
Pamela Hull Kirkliston Community Council
Cllr Carol Hamilton Scottish Borders Council
Cllr Colin Cassidy Midlothian Council
Cllr Tom Conn West Lothian Council
Cllr Dave Dempsey Fife Council
Lindsay Cole Edinburgh Airport Noise Advisory Board
Cllr Kevin Lang City of Edinburgh Council
Donald Spencer The Consumers Association
Carrie Binnie Unite
Anna Herriman Sestran

Apologies

Gordon Dewar (Chief Executive EAL)
Gordon Robertson (Communications Director EAL)
Adam Cumming Edinburgh Airport Amenities Group
Derek McWhinnie Police Services Scotland
David Dunphy Frequent Flyer Representative
Sandy Leggett Air Traffic Services
Clare Johnston Passenger PRM Representative
Cllr John McMillan East Lothian Council
Ken Richards Fife Chamber of Commerce

1. Welcome

Robert advised that Gordon Dewar was unable to attend today as he was in Budapest and also Gordon Robertson had been unwell and was not yet fit enough to attend this meeting but Jonny Macneal was attending as Head of Aviation at EAL along with Greg Maxwell.

Robert Carr then continued his opening comments by welcoming everyone else including some 2 observers to the meeting. Robert also welcomed Carrie Binnie from Unite to her first meeting as she had now replaced Sandy Smart who had retired.

Robert advised that the next meeting date in May would change due to the Coronation and would now be held on the **1st May** at the Doubletree by Hilton at the Airport.

2. The minutes of the previous meeting

The draft minutes of the Meeting on 7th November 2022 were approved

3. Other matters arising from the Minutes

Robert reviewed the items requiring actions from the last meeting.

The CAA report on accessibility had now been published showing that EAL had performed very well receiving very good comments in the audit. This proved that the investment had been worth it and investment was continuing with a new tracking option being developed.

Progress with EANAB and the Review was ongoing as per the report from Lindsay Cole already circulated.

Robert suggested that EAL should prepare a presentation on their Greater Good policy to establish what successes had been achieved thus far.

The tender for the taxis had been completed and the committee were advised that they were very close to an appointment which would hopefully be announced later in the week.

The question of the Passenger APP for wheelchairs was raised and is still being considered.

It was agreed that the presentation from Derek McWhinnie from Police Scotland should be put forward to the May meeting.

4. Chief Executive's Report (EAL)

Traffic figures

Jonny Macneal advised that the total number of passengers for 2022 had reached 11.26 million which was an increase of 76% on the previous year. International traffic was now sitting at 89% of its previous levels and domestic at 58%. Domestic traffic was still down due to the loss of Flybe but also reduction in flights to the Heathrow and Gatwick hubs.

Jonny Macneal continued with advising that the levels of aircraft movements in October 2022 had not quite reached the levels of October 2021. Robert Carr asked if Greig Maxwell could produce figures which showed the comparison of 2019 v 2022 which would give a better view for these comparisons.

Kevin Lang asked about the recovery of inbound traffic which Jonny Macneal reported was doing better than expected especially the transatlantic traffic which had also been helped by the Golf Open back in the summer but was retaining a strong demand throughout the year. He added that there were still some gaps in direct flights and some routes such as Emirates had not returned due to a fleet constraint.

He added that cargo figures were down mainly due to Royal Mail movements which had been affected by the strikes.

With regard to the day and night movements these were still in line with projected levels. It was

noted that there had been an increase in night flights but that this was mainly due to off schedule arrivals where delays by airlines such as Jet2 and Ryanair had tipped them into the night flight zone instead of the evening zone. Although this means that the airline has to pay an increase in charges, it was worth noting that this has a knock-on effect on handling resources at the airport as well.

A question was asked about the money for these charges which would go into the Community Fund and how much this had raised. **Action : EAL to report back**

Capital Investment

The current spend for 2023 will increase to £41 million which, in line with the UK Government, will include the development of new scanners. This is a long-term project which will see the whole of the first-floor area be totally redeveloped to accommodate these changes. This will increase the capacity for the summer and will involve increases in staffing levels.

The pick-up and drop off area is being totally revamped with temporary drop off area currently being used. The project is due for completion by June 2023 and will see 4 x lanes being used with car registration recognition in use.

The low carbon energy projects are progressing well but the delivery of solar wind farm has been delayed until the end of the year. The heat network at the end of the runway is now underway as well as the installation of a number of EV car charging points in both the short term and long-term car parks.

Community Investment

The Community fund continued to distribute money to a number of deserving organisations which involved £100,000 being distributed in 2022 and this included items such as solar panels for football clubs.

Aaron McKean had been appointed as Sustainability Manager and he would report to Jessica Briggs. His job would be to expand on the 'trusted neighbour' aspect of the Greater Good policy of EAL with him visiting schools and universities to try to attract people to consider a career in aviation. A scholarship scheme was being discussed and it was acknowledged that more apprenticeships were needed for STEM learning to reach pre covid levels. There was also a move to endorse the Work 180 scheme to try and expand the number of females working in aviation.

Robert Carr suggested that a presentation on this subject should be considered for the May Meeting.

Surface Access

The pick up and drop off area as previously mentioned is being revamped and due for completion by June 2023. The increase in use of public transport was heading in a positive direction with the current market share of just over 38% at the end of last year and there were now more buses being available including the introduction of a new route to Oban.

Unfortunately, there is still a shortage of taxi drivers and Kevin Lang asked about whether there would be a further problem with taxis when the Low Emission Zone restriction for older vehicles would be introduced in June 2025.

Kevin Lang asked for the next report to show the % of passengers travelling to the airport in rolling statistics with the share of car v taxi v bus both on an inbound and outbound perspective.

Greg Maxwell agreed to address this and suggested a redesign and change of format for the CEO report and Robert Carr asked for any ideas on what the committee would like to see in the report to be forwarded to Janice Hogarth.

Noise

The number of noise complaints were down with most complaints being attributed to a few individuals and a comment was made about noise being about the contours.

Passenger satisfaction

Passenger complaints were generally down with less problems now with the baggage hall.

Staffing levels had been increased within the customer support team and again the benefits were being seen of this being in house. Social media was now being overseen by the customer support team and the satisfaction pads around the terminal were being updated to I Pads with a scan to comment rather than a touch screen process.

Route Development

As passenger traffic returned in 2022 with pent up demand, Jonny advised that there had been capacity issue at all the main hubs such as Amsterdam, Frankfurt, New York (JFK) and Heathrow and there was still a shortage of crew and trained pilots combined with not enough aircraft. There was an ongoing need to train up adequate staff at airports and crew in the air.

Many airports were still struggling such as Munich who had already admitted that they were not ready for the upcoming summer traffic and did not have enough faith in the airport infrastructure.

Jonny continued with comments about the higher price of fuel which was resulting in increased air fares and this combined with the current levels of rises in the cost of living could be a problem though early figures were showing a good uptake in holidays.

EAL had added more sunshine destinations to its portfolio as these currently seemed to be selling better than city breaks.

Ryanair - had increased their fleet in Edinburgh to 11 aircraft.

Easyjet - seemed to be concentrating on growing their Domestic flying and added an aircraft based in Edinburgh.

Qatar – had now moved to 10 flights a week

Transatlantic flights were doing very well

Delta – were growing with their new direct Atlanta flight

Westjet – would be flying to Calgary

Virgin Atlantic – would continue their summer Orlando service

Emerald Airways were now picking up the Flybe flights to Belfast

British Airways were increasing their Heathrow flying which was now approaching 2019 levels but were still not planning to fly to Gatwick.

American Airlines were still not flying from Edinburgh due to lack of available aircraft combined with lack of trained crew.

Lindsay Cole commented that London City Airport was a good option for connection even on to Heathrow given the new Elizabeth line.

5. Sustainability Presentation by Andy Jefferson

Andy Jefferson gave an excellent presentation as per the attached slides and he talked about the fact that the future demand for aviation would increase by 70% but that although the focus was on noise and carbon reduction; fleet renewal by airlines would mean quieter aircraft and more fuel efficiencies coming into play with less carbon emissions.

Testing of Hybrid Electric & Hydrogen powered aircraft on 50-seater Dash 8 aircraft was being carried out which would suit short distance Highlands and Islands routes and Airbus were looking at an A380 which could use hydrogen fuel combustion (no batteries) engines for flying by 2050 and beyond

The UK Aviation leaders had come together to be the first body to commit to net zero emissions by 2025 and Andy Jefferson gave an update on progress so far including the launch of the Jet Zero Council in July 2020 with promised to create 5 plants in the UK producing Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF). This would require a great deal of capital to set up the refineries and the target had been set for the production of 10% SAF by 2030.

Carbon engineering meant that storage could use disused storage tanks where the carbon could be stored for many years and this was probably more effective than carbon offsetting and it would create lots of job opportunities. Carbon removal and offsetting and carbon credits were currently fairly chaotic at the moment.

The next topic covered was the current Air Space Change Programme and the urgent need to update the flightpaths which would create further fuel efficiencies.

Lindsay Cole commented on the fact that reductions in emission could come not just from less noisy engines but asked about air frames and Andy Jefferson responded that this would help, as well as the possibility of placing the engines above the wings.

Anna Herriman commented that apart from reviewing hydrogen, sustainable fuels etc that surely this should be looked at in conjunction with other forms of transport to create fully integrated thinking.

A new report with updated charts will be produced in April.

6. Update on roads access

Greg Maxwell advised that . had been no further progress on the planning application.

7. PRM Update

Greg Maxwell advised that EA had dealt with 92,500 PRM Passengers this year and that the in-sourced staffing had been really successful with 50 more staff at peak times. As the staff were in-sourced, it meant that EAL were in control of the situation and there were now no more zero hours contracts with 140 new staff.

It was noted that there were often additional needs required for passengers with difficulties such as autism or behavioural issues and there will be a new servicing room created at Gate 7.

The accessibility forum will resume in March with a new Chair who is a CEO of Spinal Injuries Scotland and it is hoped that Clare Johnston will be continuing on that forum

8. UKACC Update

Robert advised the committee that Heathrow ACC had been refreshed to create a new forum.

Updates from UKACC continue to be circulated to the Committee.

9. Quarterly Report from EANAB Report and EANRP review after mediation

Lindsay Cole had submitted a report prior to the meeting and advised the meeting that the appointment of a new Chair had been delayed but applications had been received and this would be resolved for the next meeting.

Lindsay Cole added that issues relating to noise should be considered further when planning new housing developments and that these should have an influence by considering not just noise but also the health effects. He added that changes in the level of decibels both day and night should be considered and extended in the noise contour mapping by EAL

Anna Herriman commented that the appointment of the Freeport in the Forth would have an effect on freight and also that it would affect the airport as well.

10. Review of Rolling Action Plan

Air Space Change – Robert Carr asked for an update on this and Greg will forward details by email to EACC

11. AOCB

There was a question on any delays resulting from runway repairs coming up but Greg Maxwell advised that patching was ongoing but this was unlikely to result in any delays.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 1230.

Responses to questions asked at the meeting

- There had been a suggestion that Gordon Dewar would be at a meeting in Cramond on 27 February but it would appear that it was agreed the airport would be there, not Gordon Dewar personally. Gordon is in the US on business so the airport will be represented by Gordon Robertson and Aaron McKeen. John Howison/Adam asked if this could be publicised on Facebook and his would now be actioned.
- Dave Dempsey asked about an ACP timeline and milestones – Greg advised that this is publicly accessible and can be viewed here: <https://airspacechange.caa.co.uk/PublicProposalArea?pID=163>
- Lindsay Cole asked about noise surcharge and the breakdown of where that goes and Greg Promised to look into if that is obtainable but advised that there may be commercial sensitivities to this.
- Group agreed we should look at the potential to refresh the report so we will continue to progress that work. Robert suggested 21 days for the group to provide feedback on what it might want to see – this has to work for both airport and EACC, would like to manage

expectations as there is a possibility some people use to progress their own issues/hobby horses.

- Kevin Lang asked if we can provide surface transport figures as a rolling percentage rather than presentation of raw statistics. This can be looked at as part of the report refresh.
- 2019 figures as a comparison – Greg has asked Robert Fairnie to look at providing an appendix to draw comparisons.
- Carrie Binnie asked about how changes to security legislation, and introduction of new technology, could impact jobs. Greg provided an explanation on how recruitment of security staff works and it was unlikely that any change would impact on employment status of staff. That is the case.
- PRM app suggestion from Clare Johnston – Greg advised that this would need to be an industry wide change and not something specific to Edinburgh Airport. This has been discussed with PRM colleagues and they agreed in principle it sounded good and they would raise this as there is doubt that it is feasible for the airport itself to do this on its own.
- Robert asked that we provide the group with any information on internship and scholarship opportunities at the airport as and when they arise.