

## **AIRPORTS COMMISSION**

### **COMMISSION OPERATING PROTOCOL**

#### **Commission Membership**

1. The Airports Commission is chaired by Sir Howard Davies and includes five other members:
  - Sir John Armitt
  - Professor Ricky Burdett
  - Vivienne Cox
  - Professor Dame Julia King
  - Geoff Muirhead CBE

#### **Remit of the Commission**

2. The remit of the Airports Commission was published in a Written Ministerial Statement on 7 September 2012. Its overarching objective is to identify and recommend to Government options for maintaining the UK's status as an international hub for aviation.
3. In carrying out its work, the Commission should consider all factors relevant to a thorough assessment of relevant options, including environmental, economic and social costs and benefits, and, where necessary, operational, commercial and technical viability.
4. The Commission will take a UK-wide perspective, taking appropriate account of the national, regional and local implications of any proposals.

#### **Commission Working Practices**

5. Formal Commission meetings will normally take place once a month.
6. Alongside its formal meetings, the Commission intends to develop and undertake a programme of visits to inform and strengthen its understanding of operational, environmental, economic and other issues of relevance to its remit.
7. The Commission intends to engage openly with interested parties and members of the public, providing opportunities to submit evidence and proposals and to set out views relevant to its work.
8. The Commission will also engage with local and devolved government as well as the Opposition in seeking to build consensus in support of its approach and recommendations.
9. The Commission will ensure that it gives consideration to all relevant proposals. It will be most effective, however, where it is able to draw upon and consider well-developed and robust submissions.

## **Evidence Gathering**

10. The Commission will seek evidence and proposals relevant to its remit through three key channels:

- A guidance document, to be published no later than January 2013, for those intending to make proposals for meeting the UK's international connectivity needs, setting out how and when submissions can be made and the factors that the Commission will wish to take into account in considering them. These could comprise proposals for making best use of existing airport capacity, for new capacity, or for other approaches, and could include short-, medium- and long-term options.
- A series of working papers on thematic issues relevant to the Committee's remit. It is intended that these will summarise the current evidence base and will provide an opportunity for interested parties to make their views known to the Commission and submit additional evidence for consideration. The first of these working papers will focus on aviation demand forecasting and will be published in January 2013. Future working papers are expected to cover issues including (but not restricted to) the economic benefits of aviation, the climate change impacts of aviation, aviation industry operating models, the local environmental effects of aviation including noise and air quality, and aviation technology development.
- Public evidence sessions at which the Commission will take evidence from invited expert witnesses on key issues, informed by the Commission's working papers and evidence provided in response. These hearings will usually be chaired by Sir Howard Davies and reports of each session will be published on the Commission website.

## **External Advisory Panel**

11. The Commission intends to appoint an External Advisory Panel, which will include key experts in relevant areas – including economic, environmental, operational and technical issues – relevant to the Committee's work.
12. The Panel will hold quarterly meetings, and members of the Panel may also be requested on an ad hoc basis to provide papers, presentations or other advice to the Committee on topics of relevance to its work.
13. The External Advisory Panel will be independently chaired and its meetings will be attended by Sir Howard Davies, together with other members of the Commission as appropriate.

## **Policy Context**

14. The overarching policy context within which the Commission's recommendations should be made will be set by the Aviation Policy Framework. This document will set out the Government's broad objectives in relation to the economic and environmental effects of aviation. A draft Framework was subject to public consultation ending on 31 October 2012, and the final Framework is expected to be published in March 2013.
15. In assessing the evidence and determining its recommendations, the Commission will seek to give appropriate consideration to Government and industry's wider aviation policy development processes, including the current Operational Freedoms trial at Heathrow Airport and planned consultations on the night flights regime and on revisions to the UK's Air Navigation Guidance.

## **Commission Publications**

16. To fulfil its remit, the Commission will produce an interim report by the end of 2013 and a final report by the summer of 2015.
17. The interim report will set out
  - its assessment of the evidence on the nature, scale and timing of the steps needed to maintain the UK's global hub status; and
  - its recommendation(s) for immediate actions to improve the use of existing runway capacity in the next five years – consistent with credible long term options.
18. In support of this, and within the context set by the finalised Aviation Policy Framework, it is intended that the interim report will set out the Commission's recommendations to Government regarding the criteria that should underpin its overall objectives for aviation connectivity and the factors that should be taken into account in assessing any options for meeting those objectives.
19. On the basis of those recommendations, the interim report will also set out its views as to which of the potential options for maintaining the UK's global hub status merit further detailed development work. It will also explain how the Commission proposes that development and assessment process should be taken forward.
20. The final report will set out:
  - its assessment of the options for meeting the UK's international connectivity needs, including their economic, social and environmental impact;

- its recommendation(s) for the optimum approach to meeting any need; and
- its recommendation(s) for ensuring that the need is met as expeditiously as practicable within the required timescale; and

21. Alongside its final report, the Commission will also publish materials to support the Government in preparing a National Policy Statement to accelerate the resolution of any future planning application(s). Any decisions about national policy will ultimately be for the Government to take, following the appropriate processes.