

# GACC NEWSLETTER

**Number 132**  
**January 2022**

Dear Members

Firstly, happy new year to you all - 2022 is going to be another challenging year!!

## **Consultation not fit for purpose**

As we begin 2022, a new report has just been published which provides further evidence that Gatwick's DCO consultation process isn't fit for purpose. The New Economics Foundation (NEF), who GACC previously commissioned to analyse and challenge the economic benefits claimed by Gatwick in their original DCO consultation, have just published a follow up report detailing the carbon costs associated with UK airport expansion. The NEF report, which can be found [here](#), clearly highlights that the data Gatwick presented to the public as part of their consultation process, used out-of-date carbon values and, as a direct result, dramatically understated the cost of cleaning up the emissions associated with the airport's proposed expansion.

The earlier NEF report for GACC identified that Gatwick's consultation also omitted both the non-CO<sub>2</sub> effects of air travel and the climate impacts of arriving flights. Government guidance requires all these costs to be monetized and taken into account in project appraisals.

NEF's analysis shows that if government guidance had been followed accurately and correct carbon emission values had been used, the overall net present cost of cleaning up the climate impacts arising from Gatwick's proposed expansion would be at least £13bn, rising to £25bn with arriving flights fully accounted for. The figure disclosed in Gatwick's consultation was £2bn.

GACC has already escalated these very serious shortcomings to the airport's consultative committee, GATCOM and will also be engaging directly with local Councils and MPs to highlight that Gatwick's consultation was highly misleading, is not fit for purpose and should now be withdrawn.

## **Noise Management Board**

It has been a busy period for the NMB with two meetings having taken place during January. The first was a briefing in relation to the NMB's Workplan study to determine the impacts that would accrue from a change to the current minimum final approach joining point at night. Unfortunately, the study results presented so far, fail to provide the impact data needed to allow anyone to form a full view of the advantages and disadvantages of any change. We will be pressing for additional work to be done.

The second was a meeting of the NMB Community Forum (NCF) at which useful presentations were received on Continuous Climb Operations (CCO) and the progress and effectiveness of the recently introduced Airline Performance Table. Together with other community noise groups, GACC had been expecting to follow up on a number of open issues, including our call for a reduction in night flights. However, due to poor time management and the Chair's absolute refusal to extend the meeting, we were refused the opportunity to fully discuss these important items. Not surprisingly, we are becoming increasingly frustrated at the ineffectiveness of the NCF.

## Airspace Modernisation

As we've previously highlighted, one of the most significant and impactful projects currently underway is the Airspace Modernisation programme, sometimes referred to as FASI(S). At a local level, a number of the Noise Management Board's workplan initiatives, including the impact of different final approach join points, the definition of Fair and Equitable Distribution of arriving aircraft together with the benefits of Continuous Climb Operations for departing aircraft are all being progressed to help inform the wider project. At this stage, our expectation is that Gatwick will publish a list of all potential arrival and departure route options in the next few weeks. This will be our first opportunity to review and comment upon the route options being considered. We will look to share these options along with our analysis as soon as they are available.

We also continue to work at a national level with regard to the Airspace Modernisation programme. We are engaging directly with the Department for Transport and the CAA to address the regulatory and policy shortcomings which, in our view, clearly favour the outcomes industry is seeking (greater capacity, lower costs) at the expense of achieving the outcomes communities are looking for (primarily reduced noise and emissions). Attached [here](#) is a short paper where we set out our concerns with the aviation modernisation programme together with the points we are making in all relevant government forums.

## Gatwick Operations

During the final quarter of 2021, air traffic movements at Gatwick were still 70% less than those seen in 2019. However, as we move into the busier Easter and summer periods, and with travel restrictions continuing to be eased, it is anticipated that traffic volumes will increase significantly, although it is still expected to be 2024-2025 before traffic fully returns to 2019 levels. A number of new airlines are reported to be commencing operations at Gatwick during 2022. However, the majority will be taking up slots surrendered by airlines, such as Norwegian, who have chosen to substantially downsize their Gatwick operation.

Finally, we would also highlight the government's recent decision to remove the dispensation on slot use at UK airports, including Gatwick. This will mean airlines need to operate more flights. We would anticipate that average passenger load factors will be substantially lower than we've seen historically, and, as a result, carbon emissions per passenger will rise.

## Ghost flights

In that connection you might have seen in the news that airlines across Europe have been flying planes empty in order to keep their landing slots. These "ghost" flights waste resources and are a needless source of emissions. Fellow campaigners Flight Free UK have created a petition asking the Government to reform slot rules so ghost flights no longer happen. If you'd like to sign it, the petition is here: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/605749>

## Joining GACC: please spread the word

Please encourage your friends, family and neighbours to join GACC and help protect the interests of communities around the airport and under flight paths. Information on how to join is on our website here: <http://www.gacc.org.uk/contact-us.php>.

## GACC contact details

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