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London Stansted Airport, investing in the future

It's now been a few months since I joined the team at Stansted, and having spent some time in the business, particularly over the last couple of months, I wanted to say thank you for the welcome you've given me and for the hard work and professionalism that I've witnessed across the whole business. As an airport, we've set ourselves some ambitious growth plans and so I wanted to write and give an update on progress we're making.

This year, passengers using Stansted will be offered a greater choice than ever before as destinations such as New York, Toronto, Boston, Washington and Dubai will be added to an already unrivalled list of European destinations. Factor in the 150-world class onward routes provided by Emirates through Dubai and you'll quickly see that Stansted is poised to play an even more significant role in meeting our region's need for global flight connections.

When MAG acquired Stansted in 2013, it would be fair to say the airport had lots of untapped potential. Since then we have invested over £150m in refurbishing the terminal to improve the passenger experience; we now welcome nearly 10 million more passengers every year; there are twice as many airlines to choose from; and we've worked to improve the colleague experience by providing a stable structure, a better offering on our rosters and investing in training and development opportunities.

Almost exactly five years later and having brought a new ambition to the airport, we have real momentum and are expecting continued strong growth in passenger numbers as well as exciting plans afoot to improve the airport experience through the Transformation Programme.

This is why last week, I was delighted to tell you that we had submitted a planning application to our local authority, Uttlesford District Council, to allow us to plan and cater for future growth.

Over the past nine months we've consulted widely with colleagues, the local community and passengers. The feedback we received has been instrumental in shaping our final proposals to retain both the current approved limits on the number of flights we can handle each year and the size of the airport's noise footprint.

As you may know the airport is currently only allowed to serve 35 million passengers a year (mppa) due to a Council planning condition and we expect to reach this in the early 2020s. So, a big part of this application is about seeking to raise this restriction and enabling the airport to handle up to 43mppa and in doing so, providing local residents with commitments as to how we will manage our growth responsibly over the next ten years.

Making best use of our runway and serving up 43mppa will unlock lots of opportunities at the airport, including 5,000 new jobs and doubling our annual contribution to the local economy to £2bn. It will also significantly strengthen our discussions with airlines and provide them with the confidence to grow at Stansted. This will hopefully mean more of what we have been able to announce recently — exciting new airlines flying to exciting new destinations all over the world.

Now the planning application has been submitted, it is important we build a strong coalition of support for our plans, from residents, business partners but most importantly from everybody who works at the airport. We know that a small minority of people do not want the airport to grow or be successful. They will make their voice heard so it's even more important that great people like you who work at Stansted and make the airport what it is, ensure your voice is heard too.

It is quick and easy to register your support for the application and will take two minutes. All you need to do is log onto www.ourstansted.com and complete the registration form. This will then send a letter automatically to the Council outlining why you support the plans for the airport.

This planning application marks another significant chapter in our recent, exciting history, and I hope we can continue to count on your support.

Yours sincerely,

KEN O'TOOLE
Chief Executive Officer