

Annual Review 2012



January 2012

- * Following sustained pressure from SSE and local parish councils, BAA's Chief Executive finally agrees that BAA will sell back "the entirety of its property portfolio" around Stansted
- * National Air Traffic Service (NATS) announces that it will carry out another airspace review, having abandoned its earlier (2008) attempt to change flight paths and stacking areas in the face of fierce local opposition, including from SSE. Further details are still awaited.
- * BAA announces its 2011 traffic figures for Stansted showing a 3% year-on-year decline in passengers to 18.0 million. This compares to 23.8 million passengers handled in 2007.
- * The 2012 SSE Community Calendar completely sells out.

February 2012

- * The Competition Appeal Tribunal dismisses BAA's legal challenge to the ruling that it must sell Stansted, but just a few hours before the deadline BAA launches yet another appeal
- * SSE writes to selected MPs seeking their support for amendments to the Civil Aviation Bill to place an environmental duty upon the CAA, in its role as economic regulator of airports
- * SSE meets Shadow Transport Secretary Maria Eagle and Shadow Aviation Minister Jim Fitzpatrick to discuss the Civil Aviation Bill and other aviation policy matters.

March 2012

- * SSE's two proposed amendments to the Civil Aviation Bill are narrowly defeated at House of Commons Committee Stage and so SSE switches its lobbying efforts to the House of Lords
- * In his Budget speech the Chancellor says that the country must confront 'the lack of airport capacity in the south east' and he announces a postponement of the consultation on aviation policy, due to start in March, until 'later in the summer'.

April 2012

- * Responding to a CAA consultation, SSE calls for more action to tackle the environmental impacts of the aviation industry and says that fine words from the CAA will not be enough without measureable targets and timescales
- * To counter industry claims that higher rates of Air Passenger Duty are damaging the UK economy SSE highlights the latest official statistics showing a sharp decline in the number of overseas holidays by UK residents whilst the number of foreign visitors coming to the UK was virtually unchanged, giving a £7 billion improvement in the UK's tourism trade balance

May 2012

- * The Court of Appeal agrees to hear yet another appeal by BAA against the requirement that it must sell Stansted. It is clear however that BAA is running out of legal options.
- * SSE submits evidence to the All Party Parliamentary Aviation Group to assist with its inquiry into 'Maintaining the competitiveness of the UK in global aviation'.

June 2012

- * SSE briefs selected Peers ahead of the Civil Aviation Bill's Second Reading in the Lords, resulting in considerable support for the environmental amendments proposed by SSE
- * Civil Aviation Bill moves to House of Lords Committee and, again, there is wide support for SSE's environmental amendments. The Government indicates that it will respond positively.

July 2012

- * The Government publishes its long awaited draft Aviation Policy Framework. SSE will now formulate its response, which it must submit by the end of October
- * Unsurprisingly, the Court of Appeal dismisses BAA's latest legal challenge to the 2009 ruling by the Competition Commission that it must sell Stansted Airport
- * SSE responds to UDC Draft Local Plan, objecting to the proposal to break with longstanding policy and allow land within the airport site to be used for non-airport purposes.

Following discussions with UDC a revised proposal emerges which maintains the longstanding policy.

August 2012

- * In celebrating SSE's tenth birthday, Chairman Peter Sanders points out that once again the Government is reviewing the issue of airport capacity and that, if the threat of expanding Stansted re-emerges, SSE will resist it with as much determination as before
- * BAA abandons its long-running legal battle to retain its ownership of Stansted Airport and says that it will now invite offers from potential purchasers. SSE welcomes this announcement.
- * The All Party Parliamentary Aviation Group publishes its report, which refers directly to the evidence submitted by SSE on the economic and climate change impacts of aviation.

September 2012

- * The Government announces the setting up of the Airports Commission under Sir Howard Davies to examine whether additional airport capacity is required and if so where and when
- * SSE attends the Liberal Democrat Party and Labour Party conferences and plays an active role in discussions on aviation. The LibDems vote overwhelmingly to reject any new runways in the south east, supporting a motion from Cambridge MP Julian Huppert.
- * SSE's 2013 Community Calendar goes on sale across the region.

October 2012

- * Boris Johnson puts forward the option of developing Stansted as the UK's new hub airport with four runways, operating on a 24/7 basis. SSE dismisses his proposal as bonkers.
- * SSE attends the Tory Party conference using the opportunity to brief MPs, MEPs and other key political and media contacts, particularly in relation to the Airports Commission
- * A band of SSE supporters tidy up the SSE Wood at Broxted Hill, which remains a symbol of its resolve to prevent the development of a 'Super-Stansted'
- * SSE highlights figures just published by the CAA showing that Stansted Airport handled fewer business passengers in 2010 than for 10 years, demonstrating that the business community is not exactly crying out for a four-runway mega-hub airport at Stansted
- * SSE submits a comprehensive response to the Government's Draft Aviation Policy Framework

November 2012

- * SSE is invited to appear before the House of Commons Transport Committee in connection with its 'Aviation Inquiry', having submitted written evidence to the Committee in October
- * SSE is invited to the inaugural meeting of the Airports Commission and has an opportunity to discuss directly with Sir Howard Davies how his Commission intends to go about its work
- * The Government finally agrees that the CAA should have been given an environmental duty in its role as economic regulator and tables two amendments to the Civil Aviation Bill, almost exactly in line with the amendments that SSE had been proposing throughout the year.