

## Annual Review 2013



### January 2013

- \* By the first week of January the SSE Calendar has completely sold out.
- \* BAA announces its 2013 traffic figures for Stansted showing a 2.0% year-on-year increase in passengers to 17.8 million but this was still 6.0 million below its peak in 2007. The number of flights in 2013 was 131,300, slightly down on 2012 and 60,000 down on Stansted's 2007 peak.
- \* BAA announces that it has reached agreement to sell Stansted Airport to the Manchester Airports Group (MAG) for a price reported to be £1.5 billion.
- \* The Department for Transport (DfT) publishes new aviation forecasts for the UK to 2050 which signal a major slowdown in the rate of growth to 2% a year, compared to the historic average of 5%. Stansted is forecast to handle 26 million passengers in 2030 rising to 38 million in 2050, well within the capacity of its existing runway.

### February 2013

- \* The Airports Commission publishes its first guidance document setting out how it intends to go about its work, and it proposes a range of 'sift criteria' to help it determine the most suitable airport expansion options, in the event that it decides that more runway capacity is needed.
- \* SSE Chairman, Peter Sanders, writes to Airports Commission Chairman, Sir Howard Davies, expressing concern about one of the Commissioners, Geoff Muirhead, because of his close links with Stansted's new owners, MAG, having been its Chief Executive for 16 years.
- \* In a joint editorial in the British Medical Journal, SSE's Health Adviser, Professor Jangu Banatvala and a fellow academic give a stark warning about the health impacts of aviation arising from noise, pollution and the effect of aviation emissions on climate change.
- \* Airports Commission publishes discussion paper on Aviation Demand Forecasting.

### March 2013

- \* SSE responds to the Airport Commission's proposed sift criteria calling for landscape and cultural heritage factors to be given greater weight, and pressing for market demand and commercial viability to be included as key considerations from the outset.
- \* The Government publishes its long awaited Aviation Policy Framework. SSE brands this 'a hollow sham' because, after two years in the making, it contains no new policies for tackling the environmental impacts of aviation, particularly aircraft noise.
- \* SSE responds to the Airport Commission's Aviation Demand Forecasting paper pointing out a number of inconsistencies in the DfT forecasts and arguing that very little credibility could be attached to aviation forecasts beyond 2030 because there were so many uncertainties.
- \* Airports Commission publishes discussion paper on Aviation Connectivity and the Economy.
- \* SSE Chairman writes again to Sir Howard Davies regarding Geoff Muirhead's position on the Commission after it is learned that he continued to act as a highly paid ambassador for MAG until January 2013, i.e. even after he had been appointed to the Commission.
- \* Broxted quiz night raises over £1,300 for SSE funds.
- \* SSE responds to the Commission's Aviation Connectivity and the Economy discussion paper drawing a clear distinction between business and leisure travel and highlighting that less than 20% of UK aviation market is business travel, and less still at Stansted.

### April 2013

- \* Airports Commission publishes a discussion paper on Aviation and Climate Change.
- \* SSE responds to the DfT consultation on night flights calling for night flights at Stansted to be halved by 2019 and phased out completely in the longer term.

### **May 2013**

- \* Airports Commission publishes discussion paper on Airport Operational Models.
- \* House of Commons Transport Select Committee publishes its report on Aviation Strategy. SSE had submitted written evidence and had also - by invitation - given oral evidence to the Committee whose report concluded that there was no strong case for expanding Stansted. Instead, it favoured a third Heathrow runway and possibly a second Gatwick runway.
- \* SSE responds to the Commission's Aviation & Climate Change paper drawing attention in particular to the contradiction between accommodating unconstrained demand for aviation and meeting the UK's legally binding climate change targets.
- \* Airports Commission publishes its final sift criteria and details of the panel of experts who will assist the Commission in its examination of options.
- \* SSE Chairman writes again to Sir Howard Davies expressing mounting concern about the ongoing involvement of Geoff Muirhead as a key member of the Airports Commission.

### **June 2013**

- \* CAA launches a consultation on its new environmental duty. Having been instrumental in having a new environmental duty for the CAA included in the 2012 Civil Aviation Act, SSE asks for further discussions with the CAA and subsequently leads a delegation including its Heathrow and Gatwick counterparts to press the CAA to adopt a more pro-active approach.

### **July 2013**

- \* Airports Commission publishes discussion paper on Aviation Noise.
- \* SSE gives evidence at the Airports Commission's first public evidence session, the only local community group to be invited to do so.
- \* MAG submits proposals to the Airports Commission (i) for expanding Stansted to a two-runway airport and (ii) for expanding it to a four-runway hub, to replace Heathrow.
- \* SSE condemns MAG's proposals branding them "opportunistic, irresponsible and pointless".
- \* In view of the scale of MAG's expansion proposals for Stansted, SSE serves notice on the Secretary of State and the Airports Commission that if Geoff Muirhead is not removed from the Commission within fourteen days it will initiate legal proceedings to seek to force his removal.
- \* SSE responds to the Commission's Airport Operational Models paper highlighting the importance of regional airports and - again - calls for a less London-centric approach.

### **August 2013**

- \* Airports Commission publishes the full list of (over 50) proposals for new runways that it has received. Apart from MAG's proposals, London architects 'MAKE' have submitted plans for a four runway airport and London Mayor Boris Johnson has submitted proposals to develop Stansted into a five runway hub to replace Heathrow, which he has costed at £101 billion.
- \* Having received no response from either the Secretary of State or the Airports Commission regarding its call for the removal of Geoff Muirhead, SSE instructs barristers and solicitors to initiate a judicial review challenge against both the Secretary of State and the Commission.
- \* SSE campaign trailer receives a record number of visitors at the Countess of Warwick Show on August Bank Holiday weekend - just one of more than a dozen outings for the SSE trailer and its support team at local festivals, fêtes and shows in the course of the year.

### **September 2013**

- \* SSE makes a submission to the Airports Commission setting out its detailed response to MAG's proposals for up to three extra runways at Stansted.
- \* SSE responds to the Commission's Aviation Noise discussion paper highlighting the greater impact of aircraft noise on rural communities where background noise levels are very low.
- \* Secretary of State suddenly announces that, in view of MAG's proposals for extra runways at Stansted, and SSE's legal challenge, it has been decided - "by mutual consent" - that Geoff Muirhead will resign from the Commission with immediate effect.
- \* The 2014 SSE Community Calendar goes on sale across the region.
- \* SSE attends the Liberal Democrats and Labour Party conferences to brief key politicians and journalists and is given speaking engagements at a number of fringe meetings.

### **October 2013**

- \* SSE attends the Tory Party conference to brief MPs, MEPs and other key political and media contacts. SSE is again invited to speak at a number of fringe meetings.
- \* Airports Commission Chairman Sir Howard Davies sets out the Commission's Emerging Thinking. He reveals that the Commission has provisionally concluded that at least one extra runway will soon be needed in the South East, and he invites written comments.
- \* SSE submits its detailed response to the Airport Commission's Emerging Thinking.
- \* Notwithstanding Geoff Muirhead's resignation, SSE decides - on legal advice - to continue with its judicial review challenge, stemming from concerns that the former CEO of MAG was in a position to influence the Commission's work to favour expansion at Stansted.

### **November 2013**

- \* High Court announces that it will fast track SSE's judicial review challenge and hear the case on 22 November. As a result, the SSE core team spends much of the month working with barristers and solicitors putting together the detailed grounds for the legal challenge.
- \* London First, which represents many of the UK's leading businesses, echoes SSE's long-standing call for an independent noise ombudsman to help address the lack of trust and transparency between airports and local communities. Shortly afterwards, the Airports Commission follows suit by also recommending an independent 'Aviation Noise Authority'.
- \* High Court rules against SSE's judicial review challenge concluding that Geoff Muirhead's resignation fully addressed any concerns that we might have had.

### **December 2013**

- \* The SSE Community Calendar for 2014 proves to be a sell-out success.
- \* Airports Commission publishes its interim report and - much to our relief - Stansted is not on the short-list of options for a new runway in the period to 2030. In view of this outcome SSE decides not to seek to appeal the High Court's decision in its judicial review case.