

Press Release - 7 December 2009

SELECT COMMITTEE CHALLENGES WISDOM OF A SECOND STANSTED RUNWAY

A report published today [Monday 7 December] by the influential House of Commons Transport Committee concludes that the case for a second runway at Stansted Airport has not been made.

The 'Future of Aviation' inquiry report questions the need for a second runway at Stansted. Its conclusions are vindication of the economic arguments which have long been made by Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE), whose economics adviser gave evidence to the inquiry, and a rejection of the claims made by BAA and the present Government about the so-called economic benefits of expanding the airport.

This latest rejection of the case for a second Stansted runway is particularly welcome because the Transport Committee is dominated by Labour MPs who, up until now, have loyally supported the Government's pro-expansion aviation policy. Furthermore, it comes in a year when the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats have both unequivocally declared their opposition to a second Stansted runway, meaning that BAA and the Government are increasingly isolated on this issue.

Commenting on the news, SSE Campaign Director Carol Barbone said: "It should by now be clear to the Government and BAA that they are flogging a dead horse. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find anyone these days who still believes there is a logical case to be made for a second Stansted runway."

SSE also strongly welcomes the Committee's conclusions that the Government needs to revisit procedures for assessing the impacts of aircraft noise, compensation arrangements and the effective enforcement of noise regulations. News that the Committee is calling for a review of the adequacy of research into the effects of aircraft noise, particularly on human health, and for measures to improve air quality around major airports to be brought forward are also to be applauded.

There are however some disappointing aspects in the report, in particular, its failure to recognise that the expansion of air travel along the lines proposed by the Government's 2003 Air Transport White Paper cannot be reconciled with the objective of achieving an 80 per cent cut in the UK's carbon emissions by 2050. Hopes now rest on the landmark 'UK and Aviation' report to be published tomorrow [Tuesday 8 December] by the Committee on Climate Change. This is expected to say that aviation growth will need to be reined in if the UK's climate change targets are to be met.

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Transport Committee's 'Future of Aviation' report and accompanying press release will be available on the [Committee website](#) from 7 December. A pdf copy of the report is also available from SSE upon request.

The key references in the report to the points made above are paragraphs 43-53, 105-110 and Conclusions 7, 8, 11 and 12.

SSE submitted written evidence to the Committee in February 2009, oral evidence in June 2009 and supplementary written evidence at the Committee's request during July 2009.