

## **Civil Aviation Authority – Aviation Resilience workstreams summary**

**8 October 2014**

In April this year, the Transport Select Committee published its report on the disruption at Gatwick Airport in December 2013 (Putting passengers first: disruption at Gatwick, Christmas Eve 2013). The report rightly identified the serious nature of the issues at Gatwick and the significant impact they had on passengers, as well as highlighting a series of recommendations for the aviation industry, the regulator and the government to adopt to reduce the likelihood of future disruption and lessen its impact on the travelling public.

Aviation resilience has been a focus of the CAA for some time, and as capacity constraints have continued to bite across the south east, in particular, London airport resilience has become an important consideration as part of our objective to protect consumers.

During the past six months, the CAA has been focussed on analysing the TSC report as well as Gatwick's own study and the Department for Transport's wider sectoral resilience report, alongside our own consideration of the issues surrounding resilience in the sector.

Since April, the CAA has undertaken three broad workstreams focussed on managing disruption at airports, both within our statutory powers and acting beyond them where action can be taken to protect consumers.

The first builds on our inclusion of conditions related to resilience within both Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL) and Gatwick Airport Limited's (GAL) economic licences. This involved commissioning Steer Davies Gleave (SDG) to develop recommendations for airport resilience plans for HAL and GAL to adopt to meet their licence conditions, based on international best practice; the various reports on disruption in recent years; and input from key stakeholders during consultation. This work was completed earlier in the summer and provided to the airports. Building on this, SDG are currently reviewing the two airports' operational resilience plans (completed on 01 October 2014) to inform the CAA's assessment of the plans. SDG is due to report to us in early November on the work to date.

Alongside this work with the UK's two largest airports, the CAA has also begun a project with the Airport Operators Association and their members to develop best practice guidance on resilience at all UK airports with scheduled flights. The CAA does not have powers to regulate to enhance resilience at those airports without market power, but by working jointly with the AOA, we expect to be able to improve conditions for consumers without requiring statutory powers where the case for them is not clear. This guidance will draw on the lessons learned in our work with HAL and GAL, but recognising the different commercial, competitive and capacity considerations at other airports we do not propose a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, the best practice principles will set out the types of outcomes we believe airports ought to offer consumers (for instance developing dedicated passenger communications strategies for times of disruption).

As well as working closely with the UK's airports, which potentially have greater ability to engage passengers during disruption, the CAA has also engaged airlines, where the legal obligation to protect passengers during disruption lies. We are working with the 15 largest

airlines operating from the UK to enhance their compliance with their obligation to provide passengers with information about their rights during disruption. We expect all 15 to report to us on their level and method of compliance and we will produce an interim compliance report in November, with a final report expected in March.

The Transport Select Committee's recommendations have fed in to each of these pieces of work to ensure the final products reflect the outcomes we agree matter most for passengers relating to airport resilience to disruption.

As part of each of these pieces of work, we have also drawn in the Department for Transport's Transport Resilience Review, published in July this year, which emphasised the potential for better cross-modal collaboration to improve sectoral resilience. We have adopted this sensible approach in our guidance to industry, alongside placing heavy emphasis on the importance of effective collaboration between all parties operating at the airport.

We plan to provide the Select Committee with a more comprehensive update on these pieces of work before the end of November.