

News story: Government sets out vision for future of UK aviation

Shaping aviation to help boost economic growth, connectivity and skills will be at the centre of a new strategy to prepare the industry for the next 3 decades and beyond, the [government announced today](#) (21 July 2017).

The public are being asked to [have their say](#) on how this vital sector should respond to a range of technological, security, environmental and customer service challenges.

It also looks at how the government can support future growth in an industry which directly supports 240,000 jobs and contributes at least £22 billion to the UK economy each year.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling will today launch a public discussion to help shape and promote the future of the aviation industry both up to 2050 and beyond.

Airport bag check-ins in town centres and a 'luggage portering' service are among a series of innovative ideas the public is being asked for views on.

Other issues include possible new forms of compensation for noise or designing targets for noise reduction.

The government is also keen for views on how it should support and regulate emerging technologies around personal travel.

The document also discusses how we can make best use of existing capacity at all airports around the country.

The Secretary of State announced the strategy at the launch of a £1 billion programme to double the size of Manchester Airport's Terminal 2.

The project will create 1,500 jobs, allow for more international destinations, and grow passenger numbers from 27 million to 45 million a year.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

Aviation is central to our future prosperity as we leave the European Union. As a global, trading nation we want to build on the great industry we have today and create opportunities for people up and down the country

Our new aviation strategy will look beyond the new runway at Heathrow and sets out a comprehensive long-term plan for UK

aviation. It will support jobs and economic growth across the whole of the UK.

Our vision puts the passenger at the heart of what we do, but also recognises the need to address the impacts of aviation on communities and the environment.

Charlie Cornish, Chief Executive of Manchester Airports Group, said:

Today, work will begin at Manchester Airport on a £1 billion investment programme that will provide passengers and airlines with world-class airport facilities, and deliver a major boost to the UK's growth prospects and international competitiveness.

We welcome the Secretary of State's recognition of the important role that airports across the UK will play in driving economic growth, and commitment to looking at how airports like Manchester and London Stansted can make best use of their existing capacity.

The government is today setting out 6 important themes that it will consult on over the coming months:

1) Customer service. Which will look at:

- how to ensure the industry is accessible for all and caters for an ageing population and passengers with restricted mobility
- the consumer protection arrangements that should be in place when things go wrong
- how to deal with disruptive passengers

It also highlights new ways of working in other countries such as check-in facilities in town centres or luggage portering services, where bags are picked up from passengers before they reach the airport.

2) Safety and security. Which will look at the technology that could be introduced at UK airports to counter the threat from terrorism; what more could be done to raise security standards; and whether current safety standards are acceptable.

3) Global connectivity. Which will look at how the UK can improve our global connectivity for passengers and freight as we leave the EU; and how we can remove barriers to trade.

4) Competitive markets. Which will look at whether existing regulation produces the best outcome for consumers; how to encourage connectivity across UK nations and regions and how to stimulate competition to ensure the consumers have a wide choice of airports, airlines and destinations.

5) Supporting growth while tackling environmental impacts. Which will look at how to achieve the right balance between more flights and ensuring action is taken to tackle carbon emissions, noise and air quality.

6) Innovation, technology and skills. Which will look at which emerging technologies could significantly change the aviation market or bring benefits to passengers; and how the industry should address skills shortages and improve its diversity.

Dr Adam Marshall, Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce, said:

It is crucial that the government's future aviation strategy supports the continued growth and development of our airports, and frees them to make the best use of their capacity to link British businesses to markets all across the world.

Stronger airports help our cities and counties attract more investment and visitors, and connect our firms to trading opportunities overseas – so we must enable them to grow and change to meet the demands of the future.

Consultations on each of these areas will run throughout 2017 and 2018 and will be followed by the publication of the final aviation strategy by the end of 2018.