

Government News

8 May 2012 - [Defra pledges £2 million to support the air quality grant programme](#)

Eligibility for the grant will be limited to English local authorities with one or more Air Quality Management Areas for NO₂ or those authorities where the Government's national air quality assessment in 2010 identified a high level of NO₂ emissions in their area.

9 May 2012 - [Queen's Speech](#)

The Government has confirmed that High Speed Rail (HS2) will go ahead, despite its omission in the Queen's speech.

10 May 2012 - [Heathrow growth is finished, insists minister](#)

The Transport Secretary, Justine Greening, conclusively ruled out any prospect of increasing flights at Heathrow and would not consider the introduction of the "mixed-mode" technique to enable aircraft to land and take off from both Heathrow runways.

10 May 2012 - [Boris Johnson calls on Government to build a new London airport](#)

Boris Johnson has called on the Government to build a new airport in the Thames Estuary. He conceded that "the Government is yet to be persuaded" despite pre-election suggestions that Mr Cameron would offer his provisional support for the scheme.

11 May 2012 - [International Airlines Group chief Willie Walsh will not take part in aviation consultation](#)

Willie Walsh, the boss of International Airlines Group, has said he will not be engaging in the coalition's consultation on the future of Britain's airports because the government "has no idea what it is talking about".

Aviation All Party Group Event

The first of two oral evidence sessions for the Aviation All Party Group's inquiry into the competitiveness of UK aviation will be held at 1.00-3.30pm on Wednesday 16th May in Committee Room 17 in the House of Commons.

Non-governmental Organisation Press Releases

8 May 2012 - [Airport Operators Association - UK airports urge parliamentary inquiry to lobby for lower aviation taxes and better international connectivity](#)

The Airport Operators Association (AOA) has submitted its response to the Aviation All Party Parliamentary Group's inquiry into the competitiveness of the UK aviation sector.

10 May 2012 - [British Airline Pilots' Association \(BALPA\) gives tentative welcome to bmi Regional purchase](#)

The British Airline Pilots' Association (BALPA) has given a tentative welcome to the news that bmi Regional has been sold to a Scottish consortium, Sector Aviation Holdings.

House of Commons Statements

10 May 2012 - The future of RAF Northolt

Gareth Thomas MP, (Lab; Harrow West): I encourage the Leader of the House, as a former Transport Secretary, to seek the support of his successor for a debate on airport capacity in the south-east. I ask that in the context of speculation about the future of RAF Northolt, which is adjacent to my constituency and whose flight paths go across it. There has been much speculation about a substantial increase in business jet usage of RAF Northolt, about which many of my constituents are understandably concerned, so they would want to participate in the broader debate on that issue.

Sir George Young, (Leader of the House of Commons): If the hon. Gentleman is ingenious, he may be able to raise the issue when we deal with the remaining stages of the Civil Aviation Bill, when there will be a two-hour debate. Subject to what the occupant of the Chair decides, it may be possible to raise the issue of Northolt during that debate; I will certainly forewarn the Minister replying to it that she is likely to get this matter coming in to land.

SASIG 2012/13 Meeting Dates

Thursday 14 June 2012 The Aviation Minister, Theresa Villiers, shall be attending.

Friday 9 November 2012 and Friday 1 March 2013. Meetings are held between 11am and 1pm, at Local Government House, Smith Square, SW1P 3HZ, with lunch provided afterwards; [location map](#).