

SASIG Aviation Bulletin: August 2025

SASIG's Aviation news and policy bulletin aims to provide its members and associate members, with a comprehensive overview of what has been happening in Parliament and Whitehall as well as in the sector itself in the preceding month.

Monthly Highlights

- **1 August** - [Heathrow has revealed details of plan to expand and modernise the airport.](#)
- **4 August** - [Economists, academics and transport experts have written to Chancellor and Transport Secretary](#) to raise concerns over the government's airport expansion plans.
- **4 August** – [Exeter, Bournemouth and Norwich Airports sold in a £200m deal](#). Investment firm ICG agree deal with Rigby Group.
- **11 August** – CAA publishes the second edition of the [Airspace Modernisation Strategy \(AMS\) Part 3 Deployment Plan](#).
- **14 August** - [UK CAA unveils eVTOL safety research initiative](#). The 18-month study uses a systems thinking approach to assess the safety of eVTOL operations.
- **28 August** – CAA data: [UK aviation record highs: 81 million passengers in Q2 of 2025](#).

Potential Actions for LAs

- None this month

SASIG Activities

- Regular liaison meeting with DfT officials

Contents

The Aviation bulletin includes the subsidiary section, setting out in more detail the month's news and policy development:

Editorial

Monthly Aviation Highlights

Events, Meetings and Conferences

House of Commons Transport Questions

House of Lords Transport Questions

Parliamentary Questions

National and Regional Aviation News

Other Aviation Industry News

SASIG Library Additions

For local authorities in England and Wales who are not members of SASIG but would like access to the Bulletin, please contact us at the address below to inquire about Membership and being added to the circulation list.

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Editorial

Traditionally, August remains a relatively quiet month with Parliament away on its summer break so there are no Parliamentary Questions, Statements or Debates, but there is still a lot of news across the industry that is worth highlighting.

At the start of the month, Heathrow revealed details of its plan to expand and modernise the airport at a cost of £49bn. The government of course has 'in principle', and subject to four key conditions (CO2 emissions, noise, air quality and delivery of UK wide benefits), already backed plans for a third runway saying it would "*make Britain the world's best-connected place to do business*". However, the plans continue to face opposition from environmental groups, the Mayor of London, a significant group of MPs, and local authorities and communities with concerns about the environmental impacts the scheme would give rise to. Then on the 4 August, a group of economists, academics and transport experts wrote to the Chancellor and the Transport Secretary to raise concerns over the government's airport expansion plans saying that economic benefits were 'at best uncertain'.

In other news on the 4 August, it was announced that investment firm ICG had agreed a deal with Rigby Group to buy Exeter, Bournemouth and Norwich Airports for £200m. The trio of sites collectively serve just over 2 million passengers annually.

The CAA have also been busy themselves this month – on the 11 August they published the second edition of the Airspace Modernisation Strategy (AMS) Part 3 Deployment Plan which outlines the progress made over the past year and demonstrates their strategic vision extending beyond 2030. And on the 14 August, they unveiled an 18-month study highlighting new research aimed at ensuring the safe integration of electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft into UK airspace. Later in the month (28 August) CAA published data that showed that UK aviation had hit record highs with 81 million passengers in Q2 of 2025. This figure was up by a factor of 3% year-on-year, with other aspects, such as cargo tonnage and the number of on-time flights, rising by even greater proportions. This is without doubt, showing that aviation is making a strong recovery following the pandemic.

Finally, all-electric aviation moved a step closer this month as Bristow Norway AS, a subsidiary of Bristow Group Inc. flew BETA Technologies' all-electric ALIA CX300 aircraft at Stavanger Airport, marking the first operations of Norway's Test Arena for Zero and Low Emission Aviation. The flights, represent a step towards integrating and scaling Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) in Norway and surrounding regions with other countries, including the UK watching closely.

Chris Cain
Policy Director
SASIG

Events, Meetings and Conferences

SASIG Meetings

(To note: resulting from the impact of the pandemic, SASIG meetings are still mostly being held virtually. It is therefore advised to always check with the Secretariat first before making any travel arrangements).

2025

Chairman's Advisory Group meeting (CAG)

Thursday: 18 September 2025 (10:00-12:30)

(To note: for information purposes for CAG members only)

SASIG Members' meeting/workshop:

Wednesday: 15 October 2025 (online: 10:00-2:00pm)

External Conferences: (please note: some date changes may always be possible).

24-26 September 2025: [Routes World](#), Hong Kong

30 Sept-1 October 2025: [Advanced Air Mobility Expo](#): Excel, London

7-9 October 2025: [World Aviation Festival](#): Lisbon, Portugal

19-20 November 2025: [International Airport Summit](#), Berlin

17-20 May 2026: [Routes Europe](#), Rimini, Italy

20-24 July 2026: [Farnborough Air Show](#), Farnborough

Consultations Update: Recent and current:

Recent:

[EAC: Call for evidence: Airport Expansion v. Net Zero and Environmental Targets](#)

On 28 March the Environmental Audit Committee announced it was undertaking an inquiry on airport expansion and climate and nature targets. In this inquiry the Committee sought to:

- establish the climate and environmental targets which Ministers ought to ensure are met under its policy to support airport expansion;
- examine current projections for aviation demand, for aviation emissions and for the reduction of emissions and other negative environmental impacts, through technological developments and other means;
- ascertain what environmental and climate conditions the Government ought to establish for airport developments through the use of planning policy statements, and
- consider how Ministers should seek to maintain aviation's compliance with climate and environmental targets and what policy safeguards might be necessary to achieve this.

The call for evidence giving more information about this inquiry can be read [here](#) and was open until 24 April 2025.

Civil Aviation Regulatory Safety Framework

On 20 June 2025, the DfT launched a consultation to gather views from stakeholders on the [aviation safety regulatory framework](#) and potential options for reform. A wide range of stakeholders would be interested in the important issues presented in this document and the related consultation and the DfT welcomes responses from all stakeholders who are regulated under aviation safety legislation. They invited stakeholders to provide responses to the questions set out, share their views on potential future approaches to aviation safety regulation, and/or to provide views on any issue relevant to the effective operation of the UK's framework for aviation safety regulation.

[Stakeholders could access the consultation here.](#)

This consultation closed on 25 July 2025.

Ongoing:

There are none relevant to SASIG.

Parliamentary and Government News

Transport Questions: House of Commons:

The House rose on 22 July for the Summer Recess and will return on 1 September.

Transport Questions: House of Lords

The House rose on 24 July for the Summer Recess and will return on 1 September.

Parliamentary Questions:

There were no Parliamentary Questions this month.

National and Regional News

1st August - [Heathrow has revealed details of its plan to expand and modernise the airport](#) at a cost of £49bn. CEO said the work was 'urgent' and would be funded by private finance.

1st August - [At least three separate proposals for the expansion of Heathrow airport are being worked up](#) ahead of a government decision on the scheme this autumn.

1st August – [Read here](#) about expert scientists' comment on net zero implications of a proposed third runway at London Heathrow Airport.

1st August – Read the IATA comment on Heathrow development proposals [here](#).

2nd August - Manchester Airport Group (MAG) continues its investment programme after a successful year – see details [here](#).

2nd August - [Newcastle International Airport has backed Heathrow's £49 billion expansion plan](#) saying the 3rd runway blueprint represents “very positive news for the North East”.

3rd August - [Investment group ICG is closing in on a £200m deal to buy three of Britain's biggest regional airports](#) - Bournemouth, Exeter and Norwich.

3rd August – This article states: '[Why the Boss of British Airways' Owner Warns Heathrow Airport's 3rd Runway Could Be "Empty"](#)'.

3rd August – Council decision to invest in Newquay Airport hailed as 'fantastic' by some people but others not so much. More details are [here](#).

4th August - [Exeter, Bournemouth and Norwich Airports sold in a £200m deal](#). Investment firm ICG agree deal with Rigby Group.

4th August - [Economists, academics and transport experts have written to Chancellor and Transport Secretary](#) to raise concerns over the government's airport expansion plans.

4th August - [Don't ignore Air Freight in Heathrow expansion plans](#), says Logistics UK

4th August - [MAG has welcomed new government funding](#) awarded to developers working on the production of sustainable aviation fuels (SAF). The funding is provided by the DfT.

5th August – Bournemouth, Exeter and Norwich Airports operator RCA forms strategic partnership with ICG, after 12 years of growth with Rigby Group. Details are [here](#).

5th August - [Emirates increases daily London flights to 12 with additional Gatwick service](#).

5th August - [Heathrow Airport suffers a 'technical fault' causing Terminals 2 and 3 to close](#). Transport Secretary says it was caused by 'technical fault'.

5th August – This Observer article says: '[Heathrow's third runway has been a bugbear for decades. Not anymore](#)'.

6th August – [Consultancy has completed work on phase one of Leeds Bradford Airport's £100m terminal expansion](#) which saw the delivery of a new arrivals facility.

6th August - [Heathrow has seemingly secured four new operators for 2025/26](#) – Air Peace; Alaska Airlines, Indigo and Riyadh Air.

6th August - [Bournemouth Airport could be shut down next month](#) as almost 80 workers are voting on whether to strike over pay.

7th August - [London Gatwick's Northern Runway could help unlock £275m a year for the Sussex visitor economy](#), it's claimed.

7th August - [All three Northern Ireland airports](#) have confirmed that the high-tech scanners capable of screening up to 2 litres of liquids have been rolled out.

7th August - Government's Air Accidents Investigation Branch has started an investigation into an incident at Birmingham Airport which occurred yesterday. Details [here](#).

7th August – [easyJet and Bristol Airport celebrate 80 million passenger milestone](#).

8th August - [Cotswold Airport joins Airport Fire Officers Association enhancing airport safety](#). It's the only operational UK site to host both hydrogen fuel cell powered aircraft and battery electric powered VTOL aircraft.

8th August - Leeds Bradford Airport opens new arrivals hall as Phase 1 of £100M expansion completes – details [here](#).

9th August – Read article titled: '[How Heathrow's 3rd Runway Will Help Add To The UK's \\$160 Billion Aviation Industry](#)'.

10th August - [Emirates to reduce its Airbus A380 services to Gatwick during winter season](#). It will reduce its A380 flights from 3 per day to one daily service in February and March 2026.

10th August – Harmondsworth residents claim their village will be destroyed by Heathrow third runway. Read this story [here](#). Meanwhile the airport says it saw almost [no growth in passenger numbers last month because of capacity constraints](#).

11th August - [July sees more than 500,000 travel through East Midlands Airport](#). The airport celebrated its diamond anniversary last month.

11th August - CAA publishes the second edition of the [Airspace Modernisation Strategy \(AMS\) Part 3 Deployment Plan](#).

11th July - [London Stansted records busiest ever July](#). The airport welcomed more than 2.92m passengers during the month.

11th August - Revealed: [The top 10 foreign airlines dominating London Heathrow airport](#).

12th August - [Wizz Air hits 80 million passengers at London Luton](#).

12th August - [East Midlands](#) and also [Stansted Airport](#) celebrate International Youth Day.

13th August - [Aurrigo International announce signing of a £900,000 contract](#) to deploy autonomous transport solutions at Teesside Airport in the North East of England.

13th August - [Gatwick baggage screeners employed by ICTS will walk out](#) in pay dispute from August 22-26 – including bank holiday weekend – and August 29 to September 2.

13th August - [Birmingham Airport reports busiest July ever](#) with 1.45m passengers travelling through – it is 8% higher than July 2024.

14th August - [Gatwick's Northern Runway](#): Balancing Sussex's economic boost with environmental concerns. Meanwhile, successful summer operation as London Gatwick awaits critical decision on its plans for further growth. [Details here](#).

14th August - New aircraft separation system at London Heathrow has reduced delays and carbon emissions – details [here](#).

14th August - [Leeds Bradford Airport](#) has appointed Declan Maguire as its new aviation director. He previously held senior aviation development roles at Liverpool John Lennon Airport and Doncaster Sheffield Airport.

14th August - [Gatwick airport's outgoing boss said he is "optimistic" the airport's expansion plan will be approved](#) and claimed the benefits would last "for generations".

14th August - Teesside International Airport has unveiled a £1 million "global first" driverless passenger and baggage system – details are [here](#).

15th August – This article is titled: '[Gatwick Airport Shows Operational Strength, Improved On-Time Performance in H1 2025](#)'.

15th August - [easyJet Airbus A320s clip wings in Manchester](#) causing delays and damage.

15th August - Gatwick Airport's CE says expansion plans could be hit by the impact of forthcoming changes to business rates. Details on this can be read [here](#). Meanwhile, [Gatwick strikes by baggage screeners are suspended after new pay offer](#).

16th August - Ten suspicious fires have been reported in an area of heathland near Bournemouth Airport in the space of three weeks – details [here](#).

17th August - [This article](#) asks: 'How much of a Heathrow fare does a London taxi driver actually keep?'

18th August - [Freight boost for East Midlands Airport](#) as volumes surge by 20% thanks to arrival of new airlines.

18th August - [Gatwick has become world's first single-runway airport to implement Advanced Mixed Mode](#), a major new enhancement to Intelligent Approach, an aircraft separation tool developed by NATS and Leidos.

18th August - [Collision risk on roads close to Heathrow 240% above national average](#).

18th August - The [newly elected Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Paul Bristow, has backed London Stansted's plans](#) to raise its passenger cap from 43 to 51 million a year.

18th August - Work on the next round of industrial units at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone is now underway – details [here](#).

19th August - [Heathrow marks 7th consecutive month as Europe's most punctual airport](#).

19th August – [Heathrow has appointed McLaren Construction](#) for the redevelopment of its Eastern Business Park to build and construct a 9,481 sq m warehouse scheme.

19th August - [Bristol Airport announces that it is experiencing its busiest summer yet](#), with a record number of staff working across the airport this year.

19th August - [Ryanair has announced that it will be basing a third Boeing 737 MAX 8-200](#) at Newcastle Airport for winter 25/26.

20th August – This article claims: '[Heathrow performance is adding to UK's logistical woes](#)'.

20th August - [Leeds Bradford Airport has introduced eight fixed electrical ground power \(FEGP\) units](#) to improve environment in/around the airport estate. More on this [here](#).

21st August - [Plans have been submitted to expand Airport Business Park Southend](#) by a further circa.71,000 ft² to provide sustainable space for SMEs.

22nd August - Shutdown at Bournemouth Airport as workers to strike over pay – [see here](#).

22nd August – [This article](#) claims that UK's airport network could benefit from a more collaborative and integrated approach to sustainability.

23rd August - [British Airways London Heathrow to New York flights return to highest ever levels in over a decade](#). They will be operating nine daily frequencies.

24th August - [Air Cargo Community Advisory Body holds meeting](#) bringing together key stakeholders from airfreight/logistics sector to help shape future of cargo operations at Heathrow Airport.

24th August - [UK August Bank Holiday 2025: A Busy Weekend for Air Travel](#) says Cirium.

25th August - [British Airways will drop London Gatwick to Las Vegas flights altogether](#).

26th August - [East Midlands airport saw cargo volumes surge by 20% in July](#), with more than 103,000 tonnes handled between May and July - up by 17.4% year-on-year.

26th August - [Bristol Airport opens new transport interchange](#) with key changes for taxi drivers picking up and dropping off.

26th August - [Short-stay airport parking in Northern Ireland is 63% cheaper than in England](#).

27th August – [Luton-based Neville Special Projects](#) has secured new £11.6 million contract for the design and build refurbishment of Hangars 60, 127, and 9 at London Luton Airport.

27th August - Autonomous technology specialist Aurigo International has secured over £1m of grants to accelerate sustainable UK airport and transport innovations. Details are [here](#).

27th August – [ICTS baggage screeners at Gatwick Airport will now no longer be going on strike between 29 August and 2 September](#) due to the acceptance of a new pay deal.

27th August - [A reopened Doncaster Sheffield Airport will not operate passenger flights until 2028](#) if the £150m project gets the green light next month says South Yorkshire mayor.

28th August - CAA data: [UK aviation record highs: 81 million passengers in Q2 of 2025](#).

28th August - [Bournemouth Airport welcomes planning approval](#) for a major enhancement of passenger facilities that will include an extended terminal and new transport interchange.

28th August - [Exeter Airport has launched an interactive online tour](#) allowing users to navigate the airport, from car parking, check-in and security to departure lounges and gates.

29th August - [New airline and extra destinations announced for summer 2026 at East Midlands Airport](#). SunExpress will be flying to Antalya, Turkey through to October.

30th August - [The world's top 10 airports for long-haul flights in September](#) – Heathrow remains in the No. 1 position.

31st August - [Heathrow Airport 3rd runway planning costs increase to \\$1 billion](#) and the higher cost will likely be passed on to airlines and passengers.

Other Aviation Industry News

1st August - [Aer Lingus CEO calls for removal of Dublin Airport night-time noise restrictions](#) saying that “will have negative economic and employment impacts.”

1st August - [Airports across EU expected to phase out 100ml limit on liquids in hand baggage](#) as advanced screening systems capable of detecting liquid explosives come into wider use.

1st August - [Glasgow Airport strike action avoided with pay deal agreed for workers](#).

2nd August – [This article](#) talks about the Scottish airports’ standings in a recent survey where flights are rated the worst for cancellations and delays.

2nd August – This item claims to show: [‘How to avoid expensive airport ‘kiss and fly’ charges’](#).

4th August - [ICAO’s evolving framework on aviation security](#) – what airports must do now.

4th August - IATA has released the latest edition of the [World Air Transport Statistics \(WATS\)](#) with comprehensive statistical data for 2024. More details [here](#).

4th August - [Amazon promises quieter deliveries](#) with new drone trial in Darlington.

5th August - [European Commission opens a public consultation](#) on three pieces of legislation that cover airport services. The [consultation](#) is open until 28 October.

5th August - [EU liquid ban is coming to an end...](#) but not all airports are ready.

6th August - [Record passenger numbers through Cork and Dublin airports in July](#).

6th August - [Passenger traffic growth softens across European airports in first half of 2025](#).

ACI Europe report +4.5% year-on-year increase in passenger traffic across region’s airports.

7th August – [‘Cleared to Roll’: How Autonomous Taxiing and Smart Avionics Are Shaping Aircraft Values’](#).

8th August - [Software company Chooose has signed an agreement with the International Air Transport Association](#) to integrate IATA CO2 Connect emissions data into its platform.

8th August – [‘Infrastructure development: playing the long game’](#): This article looks at expansion at some of the overseas airports.

8th August – Read: [‘Rise in AI focuses need to balance personalisation with transparency’](#).

9th August - Businesses and multinationals say [the Kerry-Dublin route is absolutely critical](#).

9th August - [Blue Islands launches first-ever Jersey–Dublin Christmas flights](#). The direct flights will run on 23, 27, 30 December and 3 January.

10th August – This article is titled: [‘Why the Airbus A350 has such a quiet cruise’](#).

11th August - [CPK mega airport: Europe’s new hub eyes growth’](#). Poland’s CPK airport design cleared. It’s set to transform European travel rivalling Heathrow and even Dubai.

11th August – [This article](#) talks about growth in airport lounges, their increasing popularity with travellers and how they enhance the passenger experience and boost revenues.

12th August - [Edinburgh Airport vows improvements following complaints](#) over its supposedly drab interior and “unacceptable” delays at immigration controls.

12th August - [ACI Europe reports increasing traffic for small and regional airports](#).

12th August - [Airline to launch new route to historic island from Scotland](#). Jet2.com and Jet2holidays has introduced flights and holidays to Kos from Glasgow Airport.

12th August - [The Shannon Airport Group CEO, Mary Considine](#), is stepping down from the role to take up the new position of CEO of Irish Rail.

13th August - [Irish Tourism Industry Confederation calling for lifting of Dublin Airport passenger cap](#), increased Government spending and restoration of the 9% hospitality VAT rate in order to boost tourism in the country, which it said is at a "tipping point".

14th August - [Glasgow Prestwick Airport has reported a significant rise in job numbers](#) following recent growth in e-commerce industry activity.

14th August - [Wizz Air launches new routes connecting Scotland to Italy](#).

14th August - [DroneShield introduces counter-drone solution](#) for critical infrastructure such as airports.

14th August - [UK CAA unveils eVTOL safety research initiative](#). The 18-month study uses a systems thinking approach to assess the safety of eVTOL operations.

14th August - Chief executive of '15below' explains how AI can help low cost and regional airlines create efficiencies and more connected passenger journeys – see more [here](#).

15th August – This article is titled: [‘Is the Airbus A350 bigger than the A340?’](#)

15th August - Test arena launches in Norway with first flight of all-electric ALIA aircraft – see details on this [here](#).

15th August - Loganair news, interviews and updates on the airline – see [here](#).

15th August – Details on a webinar to: ‘Future-proof connectivity for today’s critical airport operations’ can be seen [here](#).

16th August - [Ryanair adds 600,000 seats to Irish winter schedule](#). Traffic at Dublin Airport could exceed 36 million passengers this year.

17th August – [Ethiopia’s mega airport - Bishoftu Int. Airport](#): groundwork to begin late 2025. BIA will be able to take 60 million passengers annually and handle 3.73 million tons of cargo.

18th August – This article is titled: [‘Digital ATC Tower Market Revolutionizing Air Traffic Management Systems’](#).

19th August – Read interesting article titled: [‘How helicopters bridge the last mile gap’](#).

19th August – Do airlines really fly empty 'ghost flights' just to hold slots? Find out [here](#).

19th August - [Donegal Airport](#) partners with Systems Interface to upgrade airfield systems.

20th August - [Work set to begin on £59 million transport project](#) that will link Paisley town centre with the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District Scotland and Glasgow Airport.

20th August - One of the UK’s first airside solar farms has officially been opened at Edinburgh Airport by Scotland’s Deputy First Minister, Kate Forbes – details [here](#).

21st August - Over 100 Edinburgh airport workers to strike next month after rejecting pay offer – [see here](#).

22nd August - [Shannon Airport Group shortlisted for national sustainability award](#).

22nd August - [August Bank Holiday Weekend to be the busiest in the UK](#), says Cirium.

23rd August – Plane buffs may be interested in this article: [‘Why Did McDonnell Douglas Build The DC-10 With 3 Engines?’](#)

24th August - Call to end UK airport drop-off fees for blue badge holders – read [here](#).

25th August - [Reimagining sustainability at Venice Airport](#) – from AI to hydrogen drones.

25th August - [Grangemouth tanker drivers consider strike](#) that could impact Scottish airports.

25th August - Smart Airports surge as airport management market expands – [read here](#).

26th August - [ICAO recognizes IBAC ground handling standard in safety plan](#).

27th August - [Ryanair freezes growth in Belgium for winter 2025](#), blaming rising taxes and high airport fees and also calls for EU aviation reform. Meanwhile, the airline will also [increase staff rewards for catching passengers with oversized cabin bags](#).

28th August – [Ryanair also plans to cut the number of flights to and from regional airports in Spain](#) in reaction to a fee increase by state-controlled airport operator Aena.

29th August – ‘Unlocking Hidden Airside Capacity’ – learn more [here](#).

29th August – Read article titled: ‘[The future of travel loyalty: How airports are becoming aspirational destinations](#)’.

30th August - [India may see skyscrapers near airports](#): Government is to study global models including London and will carry out study with the assistance of global aviation body ICAO.

31st August - [Up to 17h 30m](#): The UK's 10 longest nonstop passenger flights in September.

SASIG Library Additions

There were no Library additions this month.