

SASIG Aviation Bulletin: April 2024

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

- **4 April** - Airports granted extensions to install cutting-edge security technology.
- **11 April** - [Heathrow urges ministers to drop £10 fee for transit passengers](#). They say it's putting the country's airports at a "competitive disadvantage". They also call for stability for passengers during ongoing government slot consultation – see [here](#).
- **25 April** - [Government commits to targets](#) that will see around 1.2 million tonnes of SAF supplied a year to UK airlines.

Potential Actions for LAs

- Preparation of Night Noise Consultation Response

SASIG Activities

- Meetings planned with Government on Drones and Advanced Air Mobility policy
- Response to Night Noise Consultation

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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

Despite the Easter Recess at the beginning of the month, there was nevertheless significant policy activity relating to aviation in April, with three parliamentary statements, seven PQs and three major consultations ending or ongoing. Of these, the night noise consultation and the Government statements on SAF were the most important. In relation to the latter, the Government committed to around 1.2 million tonnes of SAF a year being supplied to UK airlines. It confirmed new targets to ensure 10% of all jet fuel in flights, taking off from the UK, comes from sustainable sources by 2030 through its sustainable aviation fuel mandate.

Looking at industry generated news, early in April, Heathrow urged the Government to ensure that minimal disruption is caused by their slot review consultation which concluded in February. The airport fears alterations to current arrangements could result in instability and missed opportunities for enhanced international connectivity. They also urged ministers to drop the current £10 fee for transit passengers saying that it's putting the country's airports at a "competitive disadvantage".

Working your way through the National and Other Aviation News sections, it is noteworthy that many UK airports have recorded busy periods over Easter in a sign that things are finally picking up post-pandemic. Even the CAA have recorded cautious optimism for the summer period. Indeed, some airports – most notably Leeds Bradford and East Midlands - are now actively progressing expansion and improvements projects. Some UK airports have now also been granted extensions to install cutting-edge security technology to help rid us of the dreaded 'liquids/laptops in hand-baggage' rule. The original deadline was June this year, but this has been delayed at some airports for up to a year.

Chris Cain
Policy Director
SASIG

Events, Meetings and Conferences

SASIG Meetings

(To note: due to the lingering impact from the pandemic, some of these meetings will still be held virtually. It is therefore advised to always check with the Secretariat first before making any travel arrangements).

SASIG Members' AGM: Thursday: 27 June 2024 (online)

SASIG Members' meeting: Wednesday: 23 October 2024 (online)

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

10 May 2024: [2nd Annual Flightpath to Net Zero: Sustainable Aviation Fuel](#): Montreal, Quebec, Canada

20-22 May: [Future Aviation Forum](#): Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
13-15 June 2024: [AeroExpo UK](#): Sywell Aerodrome, UK
2-4 July 2024: [LGA Conference and Exhibition 2024](#), Harrogate
22-26 July 2024: [Farnborough International Air Show](#): Farnborough Airport
8-10 October 2024: [World Aviation Festival](#): Amsterdam, Netherlands

Consultations Update: Recent and current:

Concluded:

20th February 2024: Consultation on the recognition of Atypical Air Environments

This consultation covered the CAA's proposed policy position on the recognition of atypical air environments for Unmanned Aircraft Operations. The consultation can be seen here:

[Atypical air environments – Proposed Policy - Civil Aviation Authority - Citizen Space \(caa.co.uk\)](https://caa.co.uk/atypical-air-environments-proposed-policy-civil-aviation-authority-citizen-space)

Responses were requested by 2 April 2024 – SASIG submitted its response in good time.

Ongoing:

22 February 2024: DfT consultation on the next night flight regime at the noise-designated airports (Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted).

This is for the night flight regime to commence in October 2025, when the current regime expires. The DfT also published updated guidance on night flight dispensations, with a view to help airports, airlines and other interested parties better understand the process. The updated guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/night-flight-dispensations>

The consultation is open until 22 May 2024 and details can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/night-flight-restrictions-heathrow-gatwick-and-stansted-airports-from-october-2025>

26 February 2024: Law Commission: Consultation on Aviation Autonomy

The Law Commission of England and Wales is seeking views on how best to regulate self-flying and remotely piloted aircraft for now and in the future. The consultation, its summary and access to documentation are [available here](#).

The consultation closes on 27 May 2024.

Parliamentary and Government News

25th April – The Secretary of State for Transport, Mark Harper gave a statement to the Commons about the Government's Sustainable Aviation Fuel Mandate. See the statement [here](#).

Also on this day, Lord Snape asked the Lords to take note of the case for a coherent plan to address the failings of the transport system. Aviation is discussed within this debate which can be seen [here](#).

30th April – The House discussed Heathrow Airport: Western rail link – see the Adjournment debate [here](#).

Transport Questions: House of Commons:

The House rose for the Easter Recess on 26 March and returned on 15 April.

There were no aviation-related questions in the House this month.

Transport Questions: House of Lords

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There were no aviation-related questions in the House this month.

Parliamentary Questions:

Q.1. Question (21083) asked by Julian Knight (Solihull) on 12 April 2024: “To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will make it his policy to remove the entitlement of EU passport holders to use fast-track passport gates at UK airports.”.

A. Tom Pursglove on 22 April 2024: “We keep e-passport gate (eGate) eligibility under review and operate our border controls in the interests of the UK, balancing border security with passenger flow. EU and EEA passport holders are currently eligible to use eGates to enter the UK and we have no plans to change this. This would be in contradiction with our stated ambition to digitise the border by increasing the use of automation and eGates by those currently eligible and investigating options to expand eligibility to further cohorts”.

Q.2. Question (22401) asked by Kenny MacAskill (East Lothian) on 17 April 2024: “To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department is taking steps to help support the development of (a) hydrotreating kerosene and (b) other cleaner aviation fuels”.

A. Anthony Browne on 22 April 2024: “In July 2022, Government confirmed that a SAF Mandate would be introduced in 2025 requiring at least 10% (around 1.5 billion litres) of jet fuel to be made from sustainable feedstocks by 2030. In the second SAF mandate consultation, it was proposed that increasing targets be set out in legislation from 2025-2040. The levels of these targets will be confirmed in a Government response to the consultation due to be published in Spring 2024.

The SAF mandate will support SAF produced using a range of feedstocks and technologies including biofuels from waste materials via the hydrotreated ester fatty acids process. Our £135m Advanced Fuels Fund is supporting 13 different SAF projects reach commercial scale in the UK. These cover a range of technologies to drive innovation and diversity of supply. Once operational, these projects are expected to collectively produce over 700 kilo tonnes of SAF and reduce CO2 emissions by 2.7 million each year.

In September 2023, the Government also committed to introduce a revenue certainty mechanism to support SAF production in the UK. The intention is that it will be industry funded. The mechanism will provide revenue certainty for SAF production, supporting investor confidence in UK SAF projects”.

Q.3. Question (22400) asked by Kenny MacAskill (East Lothian) on 17 April 2024: “To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his department has targets for the commercial use of sustainable aviation fuel”.

A. Anthony Browne on 22 April 2024: (See answer to Q. 2)

Q.4. Question (22317) asked by Gavin Newlands (Paisley & Renfrewshire North) on 17 April 2024: “To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to section 158 of the Energy Act 2023, what his department's timescale is for a public consultation on the options for designing and implementing a sustainable aviation fuel revenue certainty scheme”.

A. Anthony Browne on 22 April 2024: “The Government put forward a provision in the Energy Act that commits to publishing a consultation on the options for designing and implementing a revenue certainty scheme for sustainable aviation fuel within six months of the Act receiving Royal Assent, which happened on 26 October”.

Q.5. Question (23052) asked by Kenny MacAskill (East Lothian) on 22 April 2024: “To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 22 April 2024 to Question 22401 on Aviation: Fuel, if he will detail the sums allocated to each of the 13 SAF projects”.

A. Anthony Browne on 29 April 2024: See table below:

Company/Project	Project Location	Advanced Fuels Fund Award
Alfanar Energy Ltd (Lighthouse Green Fuels)	Teesside	Window 1: £11,001,000 Window 2: £8,664,000
Fulcrum BioEnergy Ltd (NorthPoint)	Ellesmere Port, Cheshire	£16,764,000
Lanzatech UK Ltd (DRAGON)	South Wales	£24,960,843
Velocys plc (Altalto)	Immingham, Lincolnshire	£27,000,000
Velocys plc (e-Alto)	TBC	£2,523,094
Abundia Biomass-to-Liquids (Jet – AB2L)	Teesside	£4,484,000
Arcadia e-Fuels (NABOO)	Teesside	£12,341,000
Carbon Neutral Fuels (ASAP-DAC)	TBC	£1,376,000
Esso Petroleum Company (Solent SAF)	Solent	£6,065,000
Nova Pangaea Technologies (Project Speedbird)	Wilton at Teesside	£9,063,015
OXCCU Tech (OXEFUEL BIOGENIC)	Sheffield’s Translational Energy Research Centre	£2,814,000
Willis Sustainable Fuels (Carbonshift PtL)	Teesside	Award: £4,721,000
Zero Petroleum (PMZ.2)	Orkney	£3,492,100

Q.6. Question (23603) asked by Claire Hanna (Belfast South) on 24 April 2024: “To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the number of commercial long haul (a) routes and (b) flights operating from airports in Northern Ireland”.

A. Anthony Browne on 30 April 2024: “Through their work to negotiate, update and enforce the UK’s extensive portfolio of bilateral and multilateral “Air Services Agreements” my officials seek to: Maximise business opportunities and ensure a level playing field for our airlines and airports; minimise administrative and cost burdens for industry; and remove barriers to operational and commercial flexibility.

This approach helps to deliver international connectivity, choice and value for money, benefitting businesses and consumers. The rights secured by my officials enable services to and from airports throughout the UK, but whether to exercise those rights is, of course, a commercial decision for airlines”.

Q.7. Question (23538) asked by Sarah Olney (Richmond Park) on 24 April 2024: “To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether it remains his department’s policy to support a third runway at Heathrow airport”.

A. Anthony Browne on 29 April 2024: “We support the expansion of UK aviation when it is consistent with our environmental obligations. Any application for an individual airport to expand would, of course, be considered on its merits, once an application has been received”.

National and Regional News

2nd April - Manchester Airport is expecting to handle more than 100,000 football fans this summer, jetting out to Germany for the 2024 UEFA European Championships – see [here](#).

2nd April - See [here](#) for details of the new London Gatwick taxiway helping to reduce delays and cut aircraft emissions.

2nd April - A Telegraph article titled: ‘What a Saudi-run Heathrow will mean for passengers’ can be read [here](#).

3rd April - [Metro Mayor pledges ‘trackless tram’ service for Liverpool airport](#).

4th April - [Heathrow, Gatwick and Manchester airports not ready to lift liquids limit](#). The original deadline was 1 June this year but could be delayed by a year.

5th April - Article titled: ‘Are wholesale UK airport slot allocation reform changes necessary?’ can be read [here](#).

5th April - [One Air begins B747 freighter operations at East Midlands Airport](#).

5th April - US private equity giant Carlyle is set to take control of Southend Airport after agreeing a deal to settle a debt with its current owner. Details [here](#).

6th April - Article titled: ‘London Southend Airport faces uncertainty amid financial reorganisation’ can be read [here](#).

6th April - [Virgin Atlantic and British Airways aircraft collide on the ramp at Heathrow](#).

6th April - Read: [‘Where Does British Airways Fly? The Carrier’s 5 Most Frequently-Served Routes From Heathrow’](#). Most frequently served routes are within the domestic market.

8th April - Article titled: ‘Future-proofing airport infrastructure for a changing climate’ can be read [here](#).

8th April - [TUI Airways to operate extra aircraft out of Exeter Airport from summer 2025](#).

8th April - Gatwick taxiway helps reduce delays and aircraft emissions – read article [here](#).

9th April - [UK cargo operator One Air begins operations from East Midlands airport](#). It had previously been operating its first aircraft (G-UNET) to Hong Kong from Heathrow.

9th April - [London Luton airport making headway on demolition of main car park](#). It is six months since the fire that destroyed it.

9th April - [Heathrow urges UK government to ensure minimal disruption](#) amid a slot usage review warning it could impact passenger choice and international connectivity.

10th April - [More than 500,000 passengers use Luton Airport Express train service](#). The service has grown by more than 50% since its new Luton DART shuttle service.

10th April - [New geospatial platform for London Gatwick](#). It will support multiple operational areas at the airport, including engineering and environmental services.

11th April - [Heathrow urges ministers to drop £10 fee for transit passengers](#). They say it’s putting the country’s airports at a “competitive disadvantage”. They also call for stability for passengers during ongoing government slot consultation – see [here](#).

11th April - [East Midlands Airport saw annual passenger numbers soar above 4m for first time since the pandemic, last month](#). Nearly 750,000 more people chose it than a year ago.

11th April - [A record-breaking March rounded off a very strong winter season at London Stansted](#) that resulted in the airport registering its busiest ever 12-month period.

11th April - [Ryanair add 3 summer routes to its Liverpool John Lennon Airport operations](#). It'll fly to Corfu, Lanzarote and Paphos, taking total routes from LJA to 32 during summer.

11th April - [Hydrogen refuelling trial carried out at Bristol Airport](#). The trial, led by easyJet and supported by several cross-industry partners, is first of its kind at a regional UK airport.

12th April - [Croydon Council and London Gatwick have signed an Economic Growth Charter](#) to help drive future economic growth, boost skills and create new jobs for residents.

12th April - [CAA press association study](#) reveals worst, and best, UK airports for flight delays.

12th April - [Airports operations supplier ABD Safegate is to expand its operations](#) having relocated its UK offices to Langley, close Heathrow airport.

13th April - [London City Airport has reported a 50% reduction in passenger queueing times](#) at security since it installed new CT scanners a year ago.

15th April - [Annual passenger numbers across MAG airports increase by 13%](#).

15th April - [Work begins on terminal regeneration project at Leeds Bradford Airport](#). It'll deliver 3-storey extension to existing terminal, alongside significant refurbishment of current facilities.

16th April - MAG announces passenger flow tech upgrade – details are [here](#).

16th April - [Jet2 announces it will use a blend of sustainable aviation fuel at Stansted in 2024](#). It will use SAF on departing flights from Bristol too - almost a year ahead of the UK's Government's SAF mandate which is due to be introduced from 2025.

18th April - [East Midlands Airport's 51-metre high ATC tower celebrates its 25th anniversary](#) (opened in 1999). It's become one of the area's most iconic and visible buildings.

21st April - Later this month, [Ryanair is set to start Manchester to Reggio Calabria services in southwest Italy](#).

22nd April - [Campaigners lodge greenwashing complaint over Luton Airport expansion advertising](#). Adverts have been reported to the UK Advertising Standards Authority.

22nd April - [Plane refuelling staff to walk out at Heathrow over cuts to T&Cs for new staff](#). This could affect services over the early May Bank Holiday.

22nd April - [East Midlands Airport's Aerozone and Academy officially opened in new premises](#). Provides insight into aviation industry for students, adult learners and job seekers.

23rd April - More details/update on the expansion of Bristol Airport, can be seen [here](#).

24th April - [MAG raise £300m in UK capital markets through new 18-year bond](#). Proceeds will support investment plans including completion of the Manchester Airport Transformation Programme by 2025 and plans to extend the terminal building at London Stansted Airport.

24th April - [Heathrow post a £189million pre-tax profit for the opening three months of 2024](#), compared to a £60million loss during the same period last year.

25th April - [Government commits to targets that will see around 1.2 million tonnes of SAF supplied a year to UK airlines](#) – claimed to be enough to circle the globe 3,000 times.

25th April - [Loganair pulls out of Teesside Airport as airline scraps Aberdeen route](#). These flights will cease from 10 May this year.

26th April - [Leeds Bradford Airport has marked start of construction work on new terminal regeneration with a groundbreaking ceremony](#). The £100m development will transform existing terminal building into a modern facility.

27th April - [Travellers warned of 'rogue meet and greet' parking firms operating at London Gatwick Airport.](#)

29th April - [Air cargo growth at East Midlands Airport could lead to more than 12,000 new jobs.](#) This is according to a new study.

29th April - [Power cut at London Stansted Airport causes disruption.](#) Power was restored as soon as possible though. Meanwhile, also at Stansted, Universal Aviation UK one of the oldest Universal Aviation FBO ground services network locations, [celebrated its 40th anniversary](#) this month.

29th April - Heathrow refuellers call off May bank holiday strike. Details [here](#).

30th April - [Jet2 boss hails 'phenomenal' response to Bournemouth launch.](#) It's been a month since Bournemouth was announced as its 12th UK base.

30th April - See [here](#) for how Leeds Bradford Airport goes about guaranteeing a smooth passenger experience.

30th April - [Cornwall Council is looking for a "private sector partner" to jointly run Cornwall Airport Newquay.](#) Council's cabinet is due to discuss potential investment partners.

Other Aviation Industry News

1st April - See article titled: '[Do You Have to Go Through Security Again For A Connecting Flight?](#)' (The answer varies based on the airport and type of transit).

2nd April - [Concept plans for third Terminal at Dublin Airport submitted.](#) These have been submitted to Fingal County Council.

3rd April - Pioneering simulations by NATS enable routine drone flights in UK. Details [here](#).

3rd April - [ACI Europe call for increase of Connecting Europe Facility budget to be dedicated to transport,](#) with a particular focus on airports and the broader air transport sector.

3rd April - Article titled: 'Make or break: 2024 will be the year airport technology is overhauled' can be read [here](#).

4th April - [Some UK airports granted extensions to install cutting-edge security technology.](#) The original deadline was June 2024 but the delay could last for up to a year.

4th April - Article titled: 'The Top Technological Advancements Driving the Aviation Industry' can be read [here](#). It looks at issues such as artificial intelligence to sustainable aviation fuel.

4th April - 2.9 million passengers used Dublin and Cork airports in March – see [here](#).

5th April - Article titled: 'Improving passengers' journey experiences, with airport automation' is [here](#).

5th April - [SITA new biometrics white paper, 'Face the Future'](#), highlights how surge in air travellers puts pressure on existing/new airports, national borders and airline resources.

6th April - Article titled: 'What Are The 5 Safest Private Jets to Operate?' is [here](#).

6th April - Article titled: '3 Airline Tech Innovations Set to Enhance Flight Operations & Passenger Experience' is [here](#).

7th April - Dublin Airport plan prioritises car park space over terminals. Details [here](#).

9th April - Article 'Talking social-conscious innovation with AGS Airports' can be seen [here](#).

9th April - Isle of Man Private Jet Centre set to be repositioned as regional sustainable aviation hub. See more details [here](#).

9th April - Read about how the business models of charter operators is influenced by changes in the market – see [here](#).

11th April - See [video tour](#) of Gatwick's South Terminal electric vehicle charging station.

12th April - [T-Systems has integrated management product from Frequentis into Dublin Airport's system](#) to aid information flow, resource management and passenger satisfaction.

12th April - Article titled: 'What are my rights if my flight is delayed or cancelled?' is [here](#).

12th April - Regional airports face changed market and existential challenges – more on that [here](#). See also more details [here](#).

15th April - Article titled: 'Dublin Airport Has a World To Connect And A Future To Protect' is [here](#).

16th April - See [here](#) article titled 'Exploring what is shaping the market for autonomous cargo drones'.

16th April - Read article titled: '[Employment in Aviation. What is the Situation?](#)' about how aviation is coping staff-wise since the pandemic.

17th April - [VINCI to acquire the majority shareholding in Edinburgh Airport](#). The transaction is expected to be completed this summer, following the receipt of regulatory approvals. And also see article: [Edinburgh Airport sale: what it means for passengers, Scottish flights](#).

18th April - CAPA report says a €2bn third terminal at Dublin Airport planned by the McEvaddy brothers would face significant obstacles. Details are [here](#) but [they don't agree](#).

18th April - [Record 39.2m passengers at Ireland's airports](#) last year.

18th April - Read: '[How electric charging infrastructure will power aviation's 'third age'](#)'.

19th April - Rail Delivery Group claims travelling by train can be up to 80% cheaper on similar routes than flying. See more on this story [here](#).

19th April - See article on [Airport construction companies and services](#).

20th April - [SNP-Greens ministers planning new Scottish air travel tax to cut emissions](#) after climate target ditched.

21st April - British Airways touches down in Dhabhi Zayed International Airport to launch new daily route to Abu Dhabi – see BA Press release [here](#).

22nd April - Article titled: 'How 'extra charges' mean budget airlines are costing more than BA' is [here](#).

23rd April - [CAA survey details cautious optimism for UK Summer air travel](#) in 2024. Further details are also [here](#).

24th April - [Shannon Airport on track to reach 2 million passengers this year](#).

24th April - [Boeing's sustainability head said SAFs are "high unlikely to reach price parity with Jet A fuel"](#) raising concerns as to how effectively aviation can reduce emissions.

24th April - [Aviation organisations will conduct an industry-wide rehearsal of major flight disruption in the wake of the August 2023 ATC meltdown](#). It will be held after the summer.

25th April - ACI Europe says many of Europe's smaller regional airports are struggling to recover air traffic and pay down pandemic-era debt. Details [here](#).

25th April - [Funding of over €5.6 million](#) has been announced for regional airports in Donegal, Kerry, and Mayo.

26th April - [Passengers at Aberdeen International Airport no longer need to remove laptops or liquids when passing through security](#). New-tech scanners have now been installed.

29th April - [Anger at over 1,000 ghost flights at Scottish airports](#). SNP under fire for ditching emissions targets intensifying pressure on Scottish Government to tackle emissions.

30th April - [IATA hoping to persuade European Commission and EU members to reconsider potential new rules](#) on monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) of non-CO2 emissions.

30th April - [Shannon Airport completes airbridge update programme](#). It'll allow passengers to board aircraft directly from airport building without exposure to the elements.

SASIG Library Additions

Meeting minutes from the 22 May 2023 meeting of the Aircraft Noise Monitoring Advisory Committee (ANMAC) can be seen in Industry Papers section of our website.