

Sector: Civil Aviation

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Industrial Profile

Employment

Aviation is a major UK industry carrying over 200 million passengers per annum and over 2.3 million tonnes of freight. The demand for air travel is continuing to grow. Despite stiff competition from Paris Charles De Gaul, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Madrid and now Dubai airports, last year Heathrow alone carried 1.34 million tonnes of cargo and 67,530,223 passengers followed by Gatwick with 34,172,489 passengers and 216,000 tonnes of air cargo and Stansted with over 22 million passengers and 237,000 tonnes of freight.



Brian Boyd
National Officer

The Government's aim is to develop a long-term framework that will maximise the beneficial aspects of aviation and minimise the negative ones especially now that aviation has been given a European wide emissions trading scheme. Air travel remains crucial to our economy with well over 200,000 jobs directly and some 700,000 jobs indirectly dependent on it. Heathrow alone contributed around £5 billion into the economy last year.

The growth in passengers travelling in the low cost –no frills – sector has been dramatic. 7 years ago just 7 million people flew on low cost airlines; this year we expect this to rise to almost 50 million. Although a third of the goods exported by value go by air, 95% of cargo by weight are still sent by sea.

Trade Unions

Amicus currently represents more than 18,000 members employed in the Civil Aviation Sector, split between Cabin Crew, Engineering, Maintenance and Ground Staff. As a result of the recent decision to merge with our T&G colleagues, we now have a tremendous opportunity to strengthen our influence , and provide the type of service required to face the challenges ahead in what is a rapidly expanding and competitive Sector.

Amicus currently has recognition agreements with Employers such as : British Airways, Virgin Atlantic, Bmi, Flybe, JAL, Monarch, My Travel, Thomas Cook, Qantas, Air New Zealand, Easyjet, SR Technics, Bmed, BAA, bmi Baby, Bmi Regional, Jet 2 , Astraeus, and First Choice. We have over 30 in total, and are fully committed to increasing this number but in doing so improving the service we provided to our existing members

Campaigns and Initiatives

Cabin Crew Licensing - As part of our work with the European Transport Workers Federation (ETF) we are actively supporting the introduction of a Pan- European license for Cabin Crew. Amicus believes that the skills held by many of our members are not fully recognised, and that to ensure the high standard of professionalism demonstrated daily by Cabin Crew is maintained, a licensing system should be introduced.

Holiday Pay Calculation - Amicus is currently undertaking an initiative to ensure that every Civil Aviation Employer is using the correct method as set out under the Working Time (civil aviation) Regs. 2004 to calculate Holiday pay entitlement. We have already secured agreement on this important matter with Bmi, Virgin Atlantic, Easyjet, Bmi baby and Regional, and are in discussions with Monarch My Travel, and Thomas Cook.

Future Heathrow - The necessity for a 3rd runway at Heathrow and the adoption of a more efficient use of the resources currently available is more important now than ever. Amicus is aware of the issues surrounding these initiatives, but is fully supportive of the strategic importance of a 3rd Runway and mixed mode operations.

Current Issues and Activities

There is a lack of capacity at our major airports to cope with demand. This requires major investment in **the expansion of airports** to cope with the demand to maintain the hub status currently enjoyed by London. Heathrow is currently running at 99.6% of capacity causing a major obstacle in the way of commerce and making other nations more attractive. If this hub status is lost then it is believed that a major resource to the British economy will go with it causing major job losses. Amicus is therefore campaigning along with other organisations to promote the expansion of Heathrow and our other major airports so that the hub status can be maintained.

Technology changes have continued to reduce the number of engineers in **aircraft maintenance** with a growing market in outsourcing globally. This is now leading to closures of facilities despite the expansion of the number of aircraft. The biggest problem is the developing countries of the Far East who are expanding their maintenance facilities.

Due to pressures being brought by airlines to minimise cost and turn around times, concerns are being raised over **the working environment of cabin crew**. Some airlines are now requiring staff to not only ensure the safe embarkation and disembarkation of passengers, but also to clean and restock aircraft in less than fifteen minutes. This can result in savings on cleaning staff requirements but can also result in cabin crew not being able to take a rest break at anytime during their shift. Had the cabin crew been on ground based duties, this practice would be a breach of the working time directive and health and safety legislation. However, current legislation does not cover the crew in this way once airborne. Amicus is therefore campaigning to close this loophole.

The environment is growing as a major concern for aviation in general with pressure being brought to bear on aircraft manufacturers to reduce emissions and sound pollution to make aircraft more environmentally friendly. This has resulted in some manufacturers offering to provide their own servicing packages to ensure that the new technology is maintained to a high standard which might not be found if the end of line customer outsourced.

The advent of proposed European aircraft **emissions trading** and the recently agreed **open skies** agreement has the possibility of creating a very unbalanced playing field as the US airlines fly inter Europe, yet are currently are contesting the legality of imposing any climate levy imposed on them.

It is difficult to see what **adaptations** can be brought in now without significant technological investment and deployment. The cost of aviation fuel is already a major incentive to the industry to reduce emissions as it is a by product of fuel cost reduction that the easily implemented methodologies have already been in place for some time. Focus now is on reducing stacking and routing delays. Every second that can be shaved from an aircraft route can save over a litre of fuel and as much as the equivalent of 2.67kg of carbon emissions.