

# AIRLINES, AIRPORTS, AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT

## NATIONAL SECTOR CONFERENCE REPORT 2004

TUESDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> JUNE

CROWN HOTEL, SCARBOROUGH

### DELEGATE LIST

<u>Del No</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Region No</u>	<u>Employer</u>
1	Sterne, John	Eastern	4	Brittania Airways
2	Chudley, Tony	South East	6	British Airways
3	Convery, Mike	South East	6	Hawker Pacific
4	Coward, Mark	South East	6	BAA
5	DeGraaf, Frank	South East	6	British Airways
6	Fromant, Bob	South East	6	British Airways
7	Gurney, John	South East	6	British Airways
8	Harris, Keith	South East	6	Globeground Heathrow
9	Hayhoe, Ken	South East	6	British Airways
10	Hayton, Mick	South East	6	British Airways
11	Maurice, Dave	South East	6	BAA
12	Moore, David	South East	6	British Airways
13	Newton, Alan	South East	6	British Airways
14	Phillips, Justin	South East	6	British Airways
15	Smith, Jeff	South East	6	British Airways
16	Tarrant, John	South East	6	BAA
17	Turvey, K	South East	6	British Airways
18	Fletcher, Russell	North West	9	Monarch
19	Roberts, Kim	North West	9	Monarch
20	Fulton, Andrew	Scotland	10	British Airways
21	Lane, Alex	Wales	12	British Airways
22	Sharland, Roy	Wales	12	British Airways

## **1. Apologies, Introductions and National Officer's Welcome**

The following apologies were received:

Delegate 7 – John Guerney

Micky Stewart (Amicus NEC member)

Tony McNulty MP

Norman Southwell (Amicus Regional Officer)

Gordon White, National Officer welcomed all delegates, conference Stewards, Dave Boden & Vince Passfield and Communication Officer, Ciaran Naidoo to the first Amicus National Sector Conference for the Airlines, Airports, Aircraft Maintenance and Support. He then introduced the members of the platform, Assistant General Secretary Paul Talbot, Research Officer Graham Cain. He then outlined the programme for the conference and highlighted the main domestic arrangements. This followed by him giving an account of Amicus' achievements since the merger and highlighted the progress of the merger talks with Unifi and the GPMU.

## **2. Election of Chair**

Nominations were sort, that resulted in Jeff Smith (delegate 15) being elected as the conference Chair.

## **3. National Report – Gordon White, National Officer**

A comprehensive report was given, the main points are summarised below.

### **United**

The trade union movement within aviation has seen much change over recent years, not least the coming together within the Amicus family of a number of unions who have widespread membership, influence and respect within civil aviation. Amicus now represent the majority of skilled and professional workers in the industry.

This is something that those of us who have been active trade unionists within aviation over the years welcome. We now have the opportunity to present the views and interest of our members in the industry in a more unified and coherent manner.

To make sure this happens we do need a democratic framework where the views of our aviation members can be effective in guiding the union. I am delighted to say that the leadership of our union are very supportive of us doing that.

## **What Do We Mean By Civil Air Transport (CAT)**

Civil Air Transport as an industry can be loosely defined as airports, airlines, airliner maintenance and servicing, passenger handling, care of freight and all support services associated with running an airport or airline.

### **A Major Industry**

Aviation is a major UK industry, carrying over 180 million passengers a year and over 2.1 million tonnes of freight. Demand for air travel is growing. The Government's aim is to develop a long-term framework that will maximise the beneficial aspects of aviation and minimise the negative ones. Air travel remains crucial to our growing economy. 200, 000 jobs depend on it directly, and some 600,000 depend on it indirectly.

The Government's White Paper, "The Future of Air Transport" published on 16 December 2003, sets out a strategic framework for the development of airport capacity in the UK over the next 30 years, against the wider context of the air transport sector.

The employers in this sector include: BAA, Britannia Airway, British Airways, British Midland, Easy Jet, First Choice, KLM, Monarch Airlines, My Travel, Thomas Cook, Virgin Atlantic, plus many more.

### **Changing Face of the Industry**

#### **Aircraft Maintenance**

Technology changes have and continue to drastically reduce the number of engineers in aircraft maintenance, for example 20 years ago British Airways employed in the region of 17,000 in maintenance, out of approximately 50,000 staff. Now BA has a similar number of staff but only 6,000 are employed in aircraft maintenance. This figure is likely to drop as new aircraft come on stream, as they require even less labour to maintain. Thus despite the expansion of the number of aircraft there is no consequent increase in the numbers needed to maintain them in fact there is a decline. An additional concern is that countries such as China and other eastern countries with low labour costs are enlarging maintenance facilities to attract business from other countries.

#### **Airports**

Airports around the country continue to expand capacity to meet ever increasing demand. In particular Manchester airport is investing heavily as are BAA airports, with massive investment in T5 at Heathrow, Stansted and Gatwick.

#### **Growth in Low Cost**

The growth in passengers travelling in the low cost - no frills - sector has been dramatic. 5 years ago just 7 million people flew on low cost airlines; this year we

expect the number to reach 47 million. A third of the goods we export by value go by air, and that figure is increasing. Indeed the amount of airfreight at United Kingdom airports has doubled since 1990.

### **Traditional Established Carriers**

Many of the established carriers are struggling to make enough profit to make a return on capital and replace assets. For example, BA have not purchased any new aircraft for 3 years, generally 5% of the fleet needs to be replaced every year, taking into account the average 20 years service per aircraft. There is also continued pressure on the “ground support” staff, as along with other methods of reducing costs the overall numbers of staff are being cut.

Cabin Crew numbers continues to grow. For example BA are recruiting an additional 1,000 this year that will give them a total of 17,000.

### **Growth of Aviation**

Employment in Civil Air Transport by the nature of the industry is spread across the UK and Ireland. Whilst there are large concentrations of employment in the south-east of England notably at Gatwick, Heathrow, Luton and Stansted, regional airports have also continued to develop.

Manchester Airport is now an important and growing centre of aviation with 4 large airlines having their Head Offices based there, MyTravel, Thomas Cook, First Choice and BA CitiExpress.

Airports in Scotland, the Midlands and other parts of the country are also expanding.

Following the merger of AEEU and MSF Amicus now represents a substantial and widespread membership across Civil Air Transport (CAT).

### **The Task for Amicus**

The challenge we face is how to service most effectively such widespread and diverse membership. The task is to provide a framework across the industry and within the union to ensure that our members and activists views are effectively heard and their commitment and abilities engaged to build the union and provide leadership and protection to workers across the industry.

We need to recognise that within Civil Air Transport while there is a shared identity in being members of Amicus and working in the same industry, there are also different interest groups such as Engineers, Cabin Crew, and Ground Support Staff. We should therefore have the involvement of active members on a national CAT Advisory Committee for the industry. We also need a National Advisory Committee for each interest group ie Cabin Crew, Ground Support Staff etc. These committees should meet every 3 months to give our members a voice and help shape policies within the industry.

The National Officer for CAT to be the secretary of the National Committee and nominated CAT Regional Officers dealing with each of the other groups to be secretaries of Engineers, Cabin Crew and Ground Staff respectively.

### **The Immediate Issues**

As a result of the changes following the formation of Amicus there are some immediate practical issues to deal with.

The administrative and officer support for those working in Civil Air Transport in the past came from three main areas, the regions (in particular the old South East Region of the AEEU), the FPA (AEEU) and the officers and structures of MSF.

As a result of structural changes within the Union the possibility of having a much more integrated and logical approach to providing administrative and officer support based on a national and regional structure is emerging. While the structure is in process of changing we still have to maintain the high level of service to our members and part of the change process within the wider union is that several officers who provided a service to members in Civil Air Transport have taken voluntary severance or early retirement and I now have responsibility as National Officer for CAT. This puts considerable strain on the remaining officers and makes it imperative that we keep up the pace of re-organisation.

A number of regions have begun to allocate civil aviation duties to officers in their region, in particular Manchester and Birmingham this obviously has to be done with everyone's co-operation.

### **Servicing**

Airlines and airport companies tend to be spread across the UK and Ireland in a way that takes no account of our union's regional boundaries. Whilst the regions are the key part of servicing members at present, if we are to unite workers within a company or an industry which may be spread across region boundaries we need to give thought to the best way to do this,

In the large airlines and other employers where we have agreements and the companies have workplaces across the UK and Ireland the negotiations could be conducted by a CAT Regional Officer with the support, if necessary, of the National Officer. Regional Officers with involvement in Civil Air Transport also need to be involved in representation and support.

### **Recruitment**

Recruitment and retention of members is inseparable from the effective organisation of employees at the workplace and can only be successful where our members feel that the union is their union and is accessible and responsive to them. I have found that the democratic involvement of our members within the union and the effective provision of support and services leads to constant renewal and growth of the union.

## **Success**

In aviation your union continues to be successful in making strong recognition agreements to extend the benefit of union organisation to other workers in the industry.

## **Amicus the Aviation Union**

The unremitting pressure on costs in the airlines puts constant pressure on our representatives and officers in defending our members interests. More than ever workers need a strong united democratic union to back them and Amicus is that union.

## **4. Organising and Recruitment Report**

Margaret Loake, Regional Organiser gave a presentation on the Amicus national organising team and the work they are undertaking. She began by explaining the importance of organising workplaces due to falling levels of membership. Her address then covered the following main points:

- Raising awareness in the workplace
- Communication with the members
- Resources available for recruitment and organising
- Retention of members

## **5. Guest Speaker**

### **Communications Report**

Ciaran Naidoo, Communication Officer gave a Presentation and explained how the communication and campaigns department support the work of the union and assist the Full Time Officers, Work Place Representatives, activist and members of Amicus.

Due to Ministerial duties Tony McNulty MP Minister of State, Department of Transport could not attend conference and sent his apologies.

John Hellyer, Amicus Regional Secretary was introduced to conference and a general industry open debate followed.

## **6. MOTIONS ON SECTOR MATTERS**

### **Motion 1. A LICENCE IN CIVIL AVIATION**

This conference deplores the use of 'A' Licence mechanics without proper remuneration.

To obtain licence training up to level 3 standard must have been undertaken plus sufficient experience in the industry to be able to work without supervision.

This conference calls on all employers to award 'A' licence holders either by promotion to Technician grade or by separate licence payment taking account of the extra responsibility that goes with the use of an 'A' licence.

#### **South East**

**Moved by: Bob Fromant (Del. 6)**

**Seconded by: Ken Hayhoe (Del. 9)**

**Carried unanimously**

### **Motion 2. AIRLINES SECTOR MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE**

This Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to rationalise coverage so that all Airlines staff can be in the same sector. It further calls for a recruitment campaign to be initiated across all UK airports.

#### **South West**

**Moved by: Tony Chudley (Del. 2)**

**Formally moved by: John Sterne (Del. 1)**

**Carried unanimously**

### **MOTION 3. CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECKING**

This conference deplores that fact that criminal record checking is flawed and calls upon the Executive to use all powers necessary to secure a just and equitable structure and its fair implementation.

**Moved by: Ken Hayhoe (Del. 9)**

**Seconded by: Frank DeGraaf (Del. 5)**

**Carried unanimously**

## **7. MOTIONS ON GENERAL POLICY MATTERS**

### **Motion 4. SHORTER WORKING WEEK**

This conference calls on the Executive Council to consider a strategy and implement a campaign to reduce the working week to a common 35 hours. The biggest cluster of working hours in the UK is from 37 to 37 \_ .

We are part of a rapidly changing world, particularly in manufacturing where annualised hours, greater flexibility and increased productivity is now the norm.

The common sense interpretation of the effect of shorter working hours, one that our Union has certainly used in the UK, is that not only does it give our members a better way of life but it also provides more jobs.

#### **Wales**

**Moved by: Alex Lane (Del.21)**

**Seconded by: Roy Sharland (Del. 22)**

**Carried**

### **Motion 5. APPRENTICESHIP SCHEMES**

This conference is concerned about the demise of the traditional apprenticeship scheme.

The 'skill shortage' often talked about by business leaders is really only a lack of appropriate training by the companies these people head up. Many large companies suspended their apprenticeship schemes under the last Tory government in an attempt to reduce costs. A low wage, low skill economy being the flavour of the day.

This conference believes that only way to reverse the trend and ensure the country has a sufficiently skilled workforce for the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to reinstate the traditional apprenticeship. This conference further calls on the government to set up a training fund to finance such schemes so that companies can take on the task of training young people to a high level without being financially disadvantaged.

#### **South East**

**Moved by: Bob Fromant (Del. 6)**

**Seconded by: Tony Chudley (Del. 2)**

**Carried unanimously**

Please note motions 6 & 7 should not have been on this agenda and therefore were not discussed.

**Motion 6. WORKERS ASBESTOS SCREENING**

This conference calls upon the National Executive Council to initiate a campaign for the introduction of low dose C.T. scanning for all workers exposed to asbestos in the past.

**South West**

Motion should be on the Railways Agenda

**8. MOTIONS FOR 2005 POLICY CONFERENCE**

Motions 4 and 5 to be submitted for the agenda of the 2005 Policy Conference.

**9. MOTION TO AMEND THE RULES**

**Motion 7. Rule 4, Clause (6)(a), Line 2**

Delete "20" insert "22"

Clause (b), Line 2

Delete "20" insert "22"

**Wales**

Motion should be on the Railways Agenda

**10. ONE RULE AMENDMENT FOR 2005 CONFERENCE**

No Rule amendments had been submitted.

## 11. ELECTIONS

(a) Seven delegates to the 2005 Policy and Rules Conference

1	Sterne, John	Eastern	4	Brittania Airways
2	Chudley, Tony	South East	6	British Airways
9	Hayhoe, Ken	South East	6	British Airways
14	Phillips, Justin	South East	6	British Airways
15	Smith, Jeff	South East	6	British Airways
16	Tarrant, John	South East	6	BAA
21	Lane, Alex	Wales	12	British Airways

(b) One delegate to attend compositing meeting with the Conference Arrangements Committee at the 2005 Policy Conference.

14	Phillips, Justin	South East	6	British Airways
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(c) Two substitute delegates to the 2005 Policy and Rules Conference.

18	Fletcher, Russell	North West	9	Monarch
20	Fulton, Andrew	Scotland	10	British Airways

(d) One delegate to attend 2005 TUC conference

1	Sterne, John	Eastern	4	Brittania Airways
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(e) Airlines, Airports, Aircraft Maintenance and support National Sector Committee

1	Sterne, John	Eastern	4	Brittania Airways
2	Chudley, Tony	South East	6	British Airways
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14	Phillips, Justin	South East	6	British Airways
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16	Tarrant, John	South East	6	BAA
21	Lane, Alex	Wales	12	British Airways

## **12. General Secretary's Report – Derek Simpson**

The General Secretary gave a report covering a range of internal and external issues including the union's campaigning work and its relationship with government. Central to both was the need to place UK industrial relations legislation and employment rights on a par with the European equivalent. This was still being resisted by the Prime Minister – a state of affairs celebrated by other senior Government Ministers.

The union was leading a number of campaigns; notably for the revival of manufacturing including the need to ensure that Government procurement treated home production in similar manner to our European competitors; the need for compulsory pension provision; the inclusion of legislation on corporate manslaughter and the demand for mandatory equal pay audits. The General Secretary answered a number of questions from delegates.