



THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS STRATEGIC TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

## **AIRPORT SECURITY CHARGES**

### **REPORT TO HITRANS BOARD**

**16 APRIL 2004**

1. At the last meeting it was agreed to write to MPs asking them to raise in the House of Commons the issue of increased fares on our lifeline air services resulting from increased security charges. Letters have been sent to all Highlands and Islands MPs with a covering note explaining the potential impact on fares resulting from HIAL's decision to levy passenger search charges at Tiree, Barra and Campbeltown in 2004/5. The note estimated that fare increases would range from 8% to 18% on the Glasgow flights serving these three airports.

2. Alan Reid raised a question and received a Parliamentary Answer from Tony McNulty which stated:

“We do not want an aircraft travelling from Barra, Campbeltown or Tiree to a major city airport such as Glasgow, to be subject to less security than an aircraft operating from any other UK airport. We propose to introduce a regime tailored for smaller and lighter aircraft and the airports from which they operate, commensurate with the nature of such operations and the risk that they pose. We shall consult the industry shortly.”

Loganair has confirmed that DfT officials have been in touch with the company, and that a consultation document is being prepared on proposals for a tailored national regime for smaller and lighter aircraft.

3. Calum MacDonald has received a written reply from Alistair Darling. This states:

“HITRANS' letter does not accurately present the position on a number of issues. Whilst the UK has one of the most developed and demanding security regimes in the world, no new security measures have been introduced in the UK since January 2003, when EU Regulation 2320 came into force. None are planned from 1<sup>st</sup> April. EU Regulation 2320 is a baseline regulation designed to raise standards across the EU at low threat levels. It gives Member States the ability to apply their own particular measures to aircraft under 10 tonnes or 20 seats and to apply more stringent measures where higher threat levels apply. The current requirements were introduced following 11 September 2001. UK civil aviation continues to operate, under enhanced threat, long established security requirements in excess of those in Regulation 2320. Also DfT does not

require the aerodrome operator to pass costs on. We are not involved in cost apportionment or retrieval. HIAL have to date borne the costs of implementing existing requirements at Barra, Tiree and Campbeltown. They have now decided to pass the costs on to the airline”.

4. Clearly our initiative has had some success in triggering the review of the regime for small aircraft. I will report verbally on the HIAL position since they seem to have some discretion here. We have our August meeting as guests of HIAL at Dalcross and this issue should be revisited then.
5. Scott Grier has raised a separate but linked issue of Air Passenger Compensation Legislation which will come into effect in February next year. Common rules will be set up throughout the EU requiring airlines to compensate and assist passengers in the event of denied boarding, cancellation or long delay. Denied boarding or cancellation already results in compensation either by way of refund or rescheduled flights. However delays of over 5 hours could result in compensation which may involve refunding travel costs on other airlines where connections are missed. Tony McNulty has confirmed that he is not able to seek exemptions for small regional carriers. A Statutory Instrument is being drafted and will be subject to consultation this summer. Again this is an issue to be raised at the August meeting.

Howard Brindley  
April 2004