



**Cathal Guiomard,
Commissioner for Aviation Regulation,
Commission for Aviation Regulation
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7th July 2009

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COMMISSION FOR
AVIATION REGULATION

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Response to Airport Charges Draft Decision Paper

Dear Mr Guiomard,

Fingal Dublin Chamber would like to make the following submission in relation to the Airport Charges Draft Decision Paper (CP3/2009):

Dublin Airport represents the single most important economic entity not only in the Fingal and Dublin Region but also in the country due to its large employment base (both direct and indirect), passenger throughput, ready access to airfreight services and its major role as the international gateway into and from Ireland. It is therefore of the utmost importance to ensure that the airport is allowed to develop its full potential to maximise its economic benefit for all airport stakeholders and for the country as a whole.

While there is a decline in passenger numbers in the current economic climate, there will inevitably be a return to growth as happened after 9/11 in 2001 and Dublin Airport Authority must be ready to offer a much improved service to passengers and airlines both landside and airside when this occurs. It is only by investing in the proper infrastructure in the period ahead that the airport will be in a position to do this.

Dublin Airport Authority must develop the new runway to attract more airlines and be capable of handling the largest aircraft to make Dublin and Ireland a potential destination for more business travellers and tourists from around the globe. The new runway will increase capacity at the airport and provide more airlines with the opportunity to compete for business into Dublin Airport. Not all airlines would welcome such competition but it is in the country's best interest.

In the past, poor investment decisions by Government caused great difficulties for the airport and its customers and led to a negative experience for passengers. The present economic downturn creates a window of opportunity to put in place the proper facilities at the best possible price with minimum disruption to a smaller number of airport users.

The Chamber believes that the necessary infrastructure can only be funded by increased efficiencies in the running of the airport, additional commercial activities and through passenger fees.

Dublin Airport Authority is committed to achieving sustainable cost reductions in the running of the airport and this will contribute to maintaining its international competitive standing.

The airport must be allowed to take advantage of any increased commercial activities that present themselves and must not be hamstrung by short term decisions that are not flexible and impede access to funds for future investment opportunities.

Despite the protestations of some airlines, Dublin Airport is, according to CAR and the ACI, still a low cost airport for passenger charges and whilst wanting to retain this status there must however be a realistic approach to passenger fees.

In furthering your statutory objections to facilitate efficient and economic development of the airport to meet requirements of current and prospective users, Dublin Airport Authority must be allowed to properly fund the improved facilities and infrastructure that they are putting in place and to be able to provide for the future needs of all airport users.

The Fingal Dublin Chamber supports the objective to enable Dublin Airport Authority to operate and develop Dublin Airport in a sustainable and financially viable manner and believes that this can best be achieved by proper financial planning with long term goals which protect the reasonable interests of current and prospective users of the airport.

Trusting you find this in order.

Yours sincerely,



Tony Lambert
Chief Executive

Fingal Dublin Chamber is the largest and most representative business organisation in the Fingal Region and one of the most active Chambers in the country. The Chamber promotes sound, sensible and dynamic policies that ensure a vital economic climate in which businesses can grow and prosper.

With a membership of over 300 companies, the Chamber represents the business community on the following bodies: Dublin Airport Stakeholders Forum, Fingal County Development Board, Fingal Tourism, Ratepayers Council and Transport Users Council of Chambers Ireland, Dublin Regional Business Alliance, Fingal Integrated Transport Forum, Invest Fingal and Fingal County Council's Strategic Policy Committee for Planning.