



Resolution to the Commission of the European Union, DG TREN, May 14th, 2004

Annex 3

List of References of National and European Institutions

(sorted by relevance to the SEAPLANE resolution)

- **Decision No 1692/96/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 1996 on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network** states as objective among others that the network must “cover the whole territory of the Member States of the Community so as to facilitate access in general, link island, landlocked and peripheral regions to the central regions and interlink without bottlenecks the major conurbations and regions of the Community; ...” (Article 2). For Airports it is specified in Section 6 that “Regional connecting points and accessibility points shall facilitate access to the core of the network or help to open up peripheral and isolated regions.” (Article 13, Point 2)
- **High Level Group on the Trans-European Transport Network (Van Miert Group) (June 2003): Report (Van Miert Report)** recognises that airports play a particular role in the European Transport network. Their function as facilitators of economic growth and gateways to intra- and extra European markets for goods and passengers is vital in light of the enlargement and economic globalisation processes” (Chapter 6.3., Paragraph 28). Moreover, in a statement on financial aid for airports from the Community the High Level Group maintains that “The airports in the isolated and less developed regions constitute an exception and, under the structural financing instrument, should be able to benefit from aid from the Community” (Chapter 6.4, Paragraph 5).
- **ACI Europe (September 2003): ACI Europe position on the revision of Decision No 1692/96/EC on Community guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network (TEN-T)** supports the Community’s vision of the TEN-T Guidelines regarding regional airports as access points of islands, landlocked and peripheral regions to central regions (Paragraph 26, 27). Moreover, “ACI Europe supports the High Level Group recommendation that airports in the isolated and less developed regions should be able to benefit from aid from the Community”. (Paragraph 30.). In the same way the organisation supports the opinion of the Committee of the Region (2003) and maintains that “Public subsidies may still prevail in these airports where commercial activities cannot be adequately developed and for which subsidies are of vital importance for infrastructure development and for avoiding excessively high charges. The revision of the TEN-T should take into account that airports require specific public support” (Paragraph 31).

- **Committee of the Regions (July 2003): Outlook Opinion, The Capacity of Regional Airports** states that *“From a regional point of view, regional airports are an asset: they enable the region to have faster and easier access to the major centres in the EU and the rest of the world. Regional airports are critical access points to regions, especially in the outlying regions of the EU where there is often no other possibility to access the region. In the interests of economic and social cohesion within the EU, it has been suggested that it should be possible to make a return trip from any region in the EU to the major economic, political and research centres within the Member State, and the European Union in one day’s travelling time. This is especially true for those regions on islands, in Central and Eastern Europe and in the countries in the periphery of the EU. Accessibility of these regions depends on regional airports. But all regions in Europe nowadays feel the need for being accessible easily, and for being connected to the other regions efficiently. (Chapter 2.1.) ... The development plans will provide the necessary environment for the airport to develop and support the competitiveness of the region and hence of the EU. The CoR recommends that the Commission promotes relevant research on the issue of regional airports and their role in the region and European transport infrastructure” (Recommendation 2).*
- **European Commission (2003): 23rd Report on the action taken on the opinions delivered by the Committee of the Regions, February, April and July 2003** in a response to the CoR Outlook Opinion on the Capacity of Regional Airports confirms that *“The assessment of the situation will indeed need to further distinguish between better access to major gateways from regional gateways and improved attractiveness of point-to-point traffic. Access for regional airports and the regions they serve via the large gateways to all parts of the world is of increasing concern as limited availability of slots at hub airports implies a risk of gradually disconnecting important regions in the EU from competitive links to other parts of the world. This is a significant development to be addressed” (page 16).*
- **Committee of Peripheral Maritime Regions (July 2002): Balance and Outlook, Memorandum from the General Secretariat** stresses that the *“question of accessibility by air transport ... is very important for the islands and ultra-peripheral regions in particular, and ... would merit specific attention: monitoring of Community texts, allocation of airport slots to regional companies, competition policy applied to this sector, etc.”*
- **The North Sea Commission (June 2002): Proposal for Communication to the CPMR General Assembly On the White Paper on Transport and the TEN-T Review (presented by the Highland Council, Scotland)** includes the following item: *“To examine and consider the potential of developing a network of European Regional Airports. Integral to this should be the establishing of a system of protected airport slots specifically allocated to peripheral regional airports, thus ensuring that such remote airports have guaranteed access to national/core hubs. It is further recommended that these slots be allocated to and controlled by the relevant regional transport authorities.”*
- **Assembly of the European Regions (November 2001): Declaration on The Regions for a new European Transport Governance (submitted by AER Committee C and adopted by General Assembly in Sopron)** notes that *“the problems of the peripheral and rural areas, whilst recognised, are not adequately addressed (in the TEN-T Guidelines). Regional air transport is a sustainable means of serving many such areas and has more potential for doing so. ... Indiscriminate policies to reduce dependence on air ... will exacerbate their economic and social problems” (page 3).*
- **Assembly of the European Regions (November 2001): Final report on Regional Aviation (adopted by General Assembly in Sopron)** concludes inter alia that *air traffic essential for regional development should be guaranteed attractive slots at hub airports. ... The strategic importance of regional airports should be recognised by the EU, allowing regional airports to be fully included in the TEN-T support system.”*
- **United Kingdom Parliament, Transport Committee: Sixth Report (July 2003)** constitutes that *“liberalising international access to regional airports would bring economic benefits to the regions and that Government policy should seek to maximise the contribution regional hubs made to meeting demand. ... There will always be a need for services which offer interlining at such hubs, at the very least to support business services and to provide vital connections from peripheral areas. ... Slot allocation systems should allow slots to be used for the benefit of the region around the airport and for the benefit of peripheral regions which need transport links.”* The Transport Committee is *“concerned, however,*

that regional services are being squeezed out of Heathrow and Gatwick which are both important local business markets and key hubs for interlining.” Concerning the support of regional airports the Transport Committee states that “There has to be cohesion between regional economic policy and transport policy. It is absurd to put billions of pounds into regional aid yet not give the any assurance to provide guaranteed air access. ... The biggest concern remains regional access to the main airports of Heathrow and Gatwick. In the absence of Government intervention, regional services will continue to be cut. The Government must address the regional access issue by agreeing a minimum level of access of at least three return services per day. The most effective way to do this would be through some form of slot reservation.”

- **UK Department for Transport: White Paper ‘The Future of Air Transport’, (December 2003) finds that** *“Airports are particularly important for the development of regional and local economies, and proposals for their development need to be incorporated within the relevant spatial and economic development strategies. The Government wishes to encourage the growth of regional airports in order to support regional economic development, provide passengers with greater choice, and reduce pressures on more over-crowded airports in the South East. Proposals to establish Centres of Excellence for aircraft maintenance and aviation-related business clusters at or around regional airports could also contribute to these aims“ (p. 10). Further it is said that the British Government intends “to encourage the growth of regional airports to serve regional and local demand, subject to environmental constraints. This will have a number of benefits, including:*
 - *supporting the growth of the economies of Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the English regions;*
 - *relieving congestion at more over-crowded airports, particularly in the South East, and therefore making better use of existing capacity;*
 - *reducing the need for long-distance travel to and from airports; and*
 - *giving passengers greater choice” (page 54).*

Concerning small local airports in Scotland the British Government acknowledges that *“Some of these airports require deficit funding to cover operating costs and investment in new capacity, but in return offer important accessibility, economic and social benefits to the catchment areas which they serve” (p.56).*

Moreover, the problems of regional airports (in Scotland) are exacerbated since *“airlines will not take into account all the wider economic and other benefits that domestic air services to London may bring to other parts of the UK. The Government notes that the Route Development Fund established by the Scottish Executive in November 2002 has been very successful, having already helped to deliver fifteen new routes from Scottish Airports, bringing the prospect of substantial benefits to Scotland’s economy” (p. 56).*

Generally, the British Governments sees *“wider economic benefits: to industries such as tourism; attracting more inward investment and trade; and lower business costs from reduced delays at airports. Regional airports can have significant benefits for local and regional economies, promoting economic regeneration, encouraging inward investment and contributing to regional competitiveness” (p. 162)*