



**Department
for Transport**

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Our Ref: TSB 01/13
Your Ref:

DATE 1st February 2013

Andrew Haines
Chief Executive
Civil Aviation Authority
45-59 Kingsway
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Dear Andrew,

IMPLEMENTING THE CIVIL AVIATION ACT

I am writing on behalf of the Transport Sector Transparency Board regarding the enhanced powers that have been granted to the CAA following the successful passage of the Civil Aviation Act through Parliament.

As you know the Board has taken a keen interest in the provisions of the Act and are very keen that the powers are quickly and effectively utilised to increase the transparency of the air sector. Of most interest to the Board are the extension and deepening of data and information about the operation of airlines and airports, both in terms of the overall service levels in key areas affecting passengers such as punctuality and luggage reclaim. These are of interest in both airline specific terms but also in comparative terms so that customers can use this data and information to make informed decisions and to switch providers where there is a clear service quality advantage.

The second area of interest is in the publication of data in open, machine readable formats for re-use by third parties to create compelling new customer-friendly services and to also act as intermediaries for users seeking better value from suppliers. In this field there is much interest in details of the operation of flights both planned and real-time, including information currently held by NATS.

Finally the Board are keen to stress that whilst they understand that there is a need and obligation for you to consult with the industry on the detailed implementation of the new powers, that in other areas where progress can be made in the shorter term, these should not be delayed by the formal process.

The Board will be inviting CAA to attend meetings at least twice in the current year, to set out the CAA's plans for consultation and then to discuss the likely proposed candidate data and information for release. To date the Board has been very pleased with the openness and enthusiasm of Graham French on this agenda and were especially pleased with the suggestion that the Open Data community would be included in the consultations on the use of the new powers.

I look forward to a very constructive and effective year as you move from the new powers being granted to enacted in a meaningful manner. This will certainly start to move the air sector onto a level playing field with the rail, bus and road sectors in the Transparency and Open Data agendas.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Illsley
Transport Sector Transparency Board