



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Is inclusion of Bristol airport in SWRA climate change debate a red nose stunt?

Campaigners from the Stop Bristol Airport Expansion group, while giving a strong welcome to the move by the South West Regional Assembly (SWRA) to debate climate change measures at Friday's meeting, have issued a strong criticism of the inclusion of Bristol International Airport (BIA) on the panel of 'experts'.

"The aviation industry is the fastest growing source of CO2 emissions and will be responsible for 25% of the UK's emissions by 2050 if its growth is left unchecked" said SBAE spokesperson Jeremy Birch.

"In this context, the inclusion of BIA in a discussion on climate change seems like a red nose stunt. What we would expect to see from the rest of the panel is a discussion of the environmental impact of BIA's expansion plans on efforts to reduce carbon emissions in the South West.

"Emissions from increased numbers of flights from BIA will cancel out the efforts made by all other sectors of society and industry. BIA cannot possibly be viewed as an environmental champion however much it may strive to make its infrastructure 'green'.

"A serious panel should have included representatives from Friends of the Earth and the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, alongside local climate change experts from the Met Office's Exeter-based Hadley Centre, or Bristol University's Quest programme on climate change.

"Unless BIA's environmental impact is seriously challenged, its inclusion in a crucial discussion on climate change seems so misplaced that it cannot possibly represent the interests of the people of the South West – which is surely the purpose of the SWRA."

ENDS

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For further information on the Stop Bristol Airport Expansion campaign, visit:
www.stopbia.com

Notes

See 'The Times', 15/03/07:

"The Government estimates that its [aviation's] rapid growth — at 4 per cent a year for passengers and 7 per cent for freight — will provide 25 per cent of the UK's carbon emissions by 2050. The cross-party House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee and the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change have gone farther, saying that unchecked aviation could actually bust the 60 per cent carbon budgets that the Government announced on Tuesday, even if every other industry slashes its emissions."

http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/camilla_cavendish/article1517252.ece