



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Campaigners challenge business community to debate on airport expansion**

The Stop Bristol Airport Expansion group (SBAE) is challenging Bristol's business community to take part in an open and transparent debate following Business West claims on the economics of the airport's expansion based on a report that has not yet been made public.

"Business West chairman John Savage has made a number of claims based on work by academics from UWE that BIA's expansion is good for business – yet the background to these claims has not been released to allow SBAE and members of the public," said SBAE spokesman Jeremy Birch.

"We would like to see Business West be as open with their data as we are with ours, and allow scrutiny of its arguments by both the public and its own membership."

"SBAE will be able to issue a full comment on the Business West/UWE report once it is released.

"In the meantime we are challenging Business West to organise a live debate for their membership on whether Bristol Airport's expansion will really benefit the local economy. Despite hearing presentations from BIA, Business West has yet to take up our invitation to hear a presentation on the airport's expansion from our point of view."

The campaigners say that although a prosperous region may need an airport, there is no proof that expanding BIA is necessary for the continuing prosperity of the region. With most of the expansion focused on short haul leisure flights for British tourists, this will lead to an ever growing tourism deficit – the cash lost as more people travel abroad than is brought in by visitors – an area that John Savage's outline of the report appears to ignore.

They also point out that The South West Regional Development Agency's 'Informing Sustainable Aviation Policy' acknowledges the high contribution airport growth would make to the UK's carbon footprint – as high as 32% by 2030 – and questions "whether any RDA investment in airports can be reconciled with the concept of 'economic growth with environmental limits' as outlined in the RES[Regional Economic Strategy]". Significantly, SWRDA has now decided *not* to invest in further airport expansion.

In this context, say campaigners, John Savage has also neglected to mention how the UWE findings address the 2006 Stern Report's clear indication that the economy will suffer dramatically if we do not move to a low carbon economy.

Further information is available from Stop Bristol Airport Expansion at: [www.stopbia.com](http://www.stopbia.com)

**ENDS**

For media enquiries and more information, contact Susan Pearson on: 07891 460942

**Notes**

1) Final report produced for the SWRDA (with supplementary annex) - obtained from SWRDA under the Freedom of Information Act , EKOS Consulting, January 2008  
'Informing sustainable aviation policy for the South West'

## 2. Executive Summary

2.7 it is estimated that aviation currently accounts for about 5% of the overall regional carbon footprint (which is around 12.1 MtC). If aviation growth projections are set against the overall CO2 reductions needed to achieve UK Governments targets, then by 2030 this proportion is estimated to rise to 16% (given a 60% overall reduction) or 32% (with an 80% overall reduction). If radiative forcing is applied this rises considerably higher. One of the key policy questions that will need to be addressed, therefore, is whether any RDA investment in airport can be reconciled with the concept of 'economic growth with environmental limits' as outlined in the RES.

2) SWRDA has decided not to invest in further airport expansion – SWRDA board meeting minutes.