



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Airport boss's tax complaints insult working families

Stop Bristol Airport Expansion (SBAE) has today condemned Bristol Airport Chief Robert Sinclair's complaints about a passenger 'stealth' tax as nonsensical and insulting as the aviation industry does not pay any duty or VAT on aircraft fuel yet hard working families face rising motor fuel taxation on essential journeys.

SBAE were responding to the Bristol Airport's boss's comments backing a UK travel industry campaign to prevent further rises to flight duty.

The campaigners highlighted that the Treasury loses at least £9 billion a year due to the unjustified exemption of the aviation industry from paying duty and VAT on fuel, VAT on tickets and other exemptions on new aircraft and parts. They emphasised that this policy is deeply unfair to ordinary people and the rest of British industry who all have to pay their way and will suffer from cuts to services, including cuts to public transport and rises in rail fares.

SBAE spokesman Jeremy Birch said:

"Robert Sinclair's comments are insulting to ordinary hard working people when he complains about a rise in taxation when aviation already fails to pay its way.

"Airports and airlines reap the profits of this nonsensical tax break that no other industry receives. If they picked up the tab and started contributing to the public purse there would be no need for further taxation of passengers.

"If Robert Sinclair wants a 'fair' tax, I assume he would have no objection to a similar level of taxation per passenger mile as that borne by motorists on daily vital travel.

"The Government will start drawing up its aviation policy in the next few weeks. If the Coalition wants a 'progressive' policy, it could reduce cuts elsewhere by imposing genuinely fair taxes on the aviation industry."

In response to Robert Sinclair's claims that aviation is addressing its environmental duties Jeremy Birch said:

"Aviation is one of the dirtiest and noisiest industries and remains the UK's fastest growing source of carbon emissions. The planned expansion of Bristol Airport would increase the carbon emissions from its flights by 60% by 2019, overtaking the climate change impact of B&NES today, and far outweighing the miniscule savings made by its ground operation."

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For further information please contact Susan Pearson on 07891 460942

Notes

In December 2009 the Government's own advisers said the UK's spiralling air passenger numbers cannot continue if we are to meet the UK's climate change targets and proposed a

limit on aviation growth, see: <http://hmccc.s3.amazonaws.com/Aviation%20Report%2009/21667B%20CCC%20Exec%20Summary%20AW%20v2.pdf>