



ACI Policy on Climate Change

Approved by the ACI World Annual General Assembly, Nov 2006

Introduction

1. Aviation's main contribution to global warming is through emissions from the operation of aircraft. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimated that in 1992, aircraft emissions were approximately 3.5% of the total human contribution to climate change. The IPCC's reference scenario estimates that aviation emissions will rise to 5% of the total in 2050, although the scenarios range from 3.5% – 15%. Aviation's overall future contribution also depends on emissions in other sectors. If other industries achieve significant cuts in greenhouse gas emissions, aviation's share as a proportion of the remaining emissions could rise.
2. Although airports are an important part of the wider aviation industry, the main direct contribution that airports have to global warming is minimal, and is related to energy use for airport infrastructure. Many airports are working to manage emissions within their direct control.
3. As a result of political and public pressure, it may become increasingly difficult for airports in some regions to be allowed to increase capacity unless the aviation sector can demonstrate that it is addressing its impact on climate change. Impacts on regional capacity could negatively impact the global airport network.
4. Noting that ICAO States have endorsed the development of an open emissions trading system for aviation, and that the European Commission has recently published a Communication on aviation and climate change, ACI has developed the following policy on climate change.

Policy

- A. ACI believes that aviation should address its climate change impacts on a global level.
- B. ACI believes that the best approach for addressing aviation's climate change emissions is a long-term strategy that identifies and phases in environmentally effective, economically efficient and politically viable measures for each category of emission. ACI suggests that ICAO establishes a roadmap for long-term global action, with an Action Plan that identifies interim stages, specific measures and sets out the policy milestones for achieving aviation's emissions objectives by 2050.

- C. Recognising the role of ICAO in setting standards, and calling upon this institution to devise more stringent emission standards for aircraft, ACI believes that the policy measure with the least negative impact on the aviation industry will be the integration of aviation's CO₂ emissions into a global emissions trading system. ACI does not believe that capacity constraints, taxation or charges that do not satisfy ICAO's criteria for legitimate aeronautical charges are viable solutions to address aviation's contribution to climate change.
- D. ICAO's Action Plan should also identify the measures and timeframe for addressing NO_x and contrails/cirrus once there is greater certainty over the scale and nature of those impacts. ACI emphasises that in the future, if the effects of NO_x and other non-Kyoto gaseous emissions are addressed by aviation, it will be important that they also be addressed by other industrial and transport sectors.
- E. ACI airports will continue to take action to minimise emissions within their control, and will support the development of technologies and design strategies in the aviation industry that will help to reduce aircraft emissions globally.

Explanatory notes

- 5. Many airports are working to manage emissions at their airports through improvements in energy efficiency and conservation, ground vehicles fleet conversions, and by introducing low emission power generation plants on site or renewable energy supplies. In addition, some airports are already participants in the emissions trading scheme introduced in Europe.
- 6. ACI believes that the alternatives to emissions trading – such as capacity constraints, taxes and charges that do not satisfy ICAO's criteria for legitimate aeronautical charges – would impose higher costs for lower return for the climate. They would also constrain the ability of aviation to contribute to regional development by meeting demand and create social exclusion by reducing access to air travel for the poorer members of society. Policy approaches for aviation that aim to cut emissions by reducing demand, through taxes or charges where revenues flow to general Government revenues, are not well targeted.

Analyses by ICAO's Committee for Aviation Environmental Protection and the EU indicate that the use of taxes could lead to negative economic effects with limited environmental benefit, and could ultimately affect the ability for the aviation industry to grow.

- 7. A targeted approach will be needed to address aviation's total climate impact, with specific measures for the specific impacts. These measures should include further scientific research and technological development, as needed. It may also be possible in future to expand any emissions trading scheme to include impacts other than CO₂.
- 8. ACI recognises that due to political and public pressure there are differing regional needs for action on climate change, and that some ACI regions may take a more active approach to climate change as a result. ACI supports regional solutions to climate change impacts as an interim step to a global solution and also supports airport specific solutions.