



Ministerial Statement to the House of Assembly

Aviation Policy Consultation Conference

By
The Hon. Shawn G. Crockwell, JP, MP
Minister of Tourism Development and Transport

Friday, 30th May, 2014

Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform this Honourable House of the Aviation Policy Consultation Conference that I attended with the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism Development and Transport. The invitation to attend the second annual conference was received from the Department for Transport (known as DFT) in the United Kingdom. The conference was held on Tuesday, May 13th at the DFT headquarters in London. His Excellency the Governor also attended as part of his responsibility for oversight of the Department of Civil Aviation.

Mr. Speaker, the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is the statutory corporation which regulates and oversees all aspects of civil aviation in the UK. Air Safety Support International (or ASSI) is a wholly owned subsidiary company of CAA, and the company's primary objective is to provide a more unified system of civil aviation safety regulation in the United Kingdom Overseas Territories.

Under ASSI governance arrangements, this conference is held to allow the UK, Overseas Territory (OT) and Crown Dependency (CD) governments to discuss aviation policy issues of mutual interest.

The conference was well attended and had high-level representation, including Governors, Ministers and senior civil servants from Overseas Territories and Crown Dependents.

Mr. Speaker, the conference agenda covered a wide range of aviation items and matters that included Global Market Based Measures, Space Planes and Space Tourism, Airspace and Air Traffic Control Services, Bilateral Air Services Agreements, Airport Development/Extension, Development of Regulatory Competence and Offshore Aircraft Registry Policy.

Mr. Speaker, there was robust discussion and debate on most topics. With regard to the Global Market Based Measures, on the 4th of October 2013, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (known as ICAO) 38th Assembly considered global solutions to address emissions from international aviation and reached agreement to develop a global market based measure (known as MBM). The agreement is considered an historic milestone for air transport and for the role of multilateralism in addressing global climate challenges. By reaching consensus to formulate the MBM agreement, the air transport industry became the only major industry with a multilateral global MBM agreement to govern future greenhouse gas emissions. ICAO member states agreed to finalise a proposal for the MBM scheme for discussion in 2016, with implementation planned for 2020.

Mr. Speaker, Space Planes and Space Tourism are becoming more prominent, and this area of aviation is being led by *Virgin Galactic*, the world's first commercial space line, which is owned by Sir Richard Branson's Virgin Group. The company will primarily cater to extremely wealthy clients and plans to provide suborbital spaceflights to space tourists, suborbital launches for space science missions and launches of small satellites.

The CAA work on this segment of the industry involves regulations and the safety of travellers, as they will be classified as participants, and not passengers, for space flights. Some of the concerns include medical issues, the impact of space flight on the body and the types of aerodromes that will be required for space planes.

Mr. Speaker, the use and proliferation of Unmanned Aviation Vehicles [UAV], which is a small aircraft with no pilot on board (commonly referred to as a “drone”) was raised and highlighted as an area of concern. Most of the UAVs are fitted with cameras; therefore, there are concerns with data protection. And while they are typically small in size, weighing less than two kilograms, the issue of safety will also need to be addressed. The operation of UAVs is unregulated in most jurisdictions; however, Bermuda was pleased to report that the operation and use of UAVs is regulated in Bermuda, and we have offered to assist other Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies with the development of policy in this area.

Mr. Speaker, the UK has confirmed that the Cape Town Treaty will be ratified in the autumn of 2014, and the treaty will be extended to Bermuda as requested. This Honourable House was previously informed of the treaty benefits by the former Minister responsible for Civil Aviation, the Honourable Dr. Grant Gibbons, and how Bermuda is disadvantaged by not being a signatory to this treaty. In essence, the Convention seeks to provide financiers, creditors and lessors in the aviation market greater confidence when granting credit, and in practice it has also had the benefit of lowering cost of financing due to decreased credit risk. The announcement of the UK’s timeline for ratification is welcome news for Bermuda.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Tourism Development and Transport will continue with progressive development of our Aircraft Registry and will keep this Honourable House informed of our progress.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.