Message from Angela Gittens

Director General, Airports Council International (ACI) World

Airports Council International (ACI) World forecasts global passenger traffic will double to 16.9 billion by 2034 based on a projected growth rate of 4.3% per annum. It is, therefore, more important than ever for airports and the aviation industry at large to continue to work in partnership towards a cleaner, quieter and more environmentally sustainable sector.

ACI actively supports the industry's goal of carbon neutral growth from 2020 and reducing aviation carbon emission by 50% by 2050 compared to 2005. We recognize the leadership of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) regarding international aviation emissions. The CO_2 Certification Standard for Aircraft and the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA), as the single global market-based measure for international aviation, are landmark agreements that will help secure the future of a sustainable aviation industry and our ability to deliver the connectivity needs of the world.

This is a global challenge requiring a global response and, given the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) call for a net-zero economy by 2050, the aviation industry at large must develop more ambitious CO_2 reduction goals to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement. For instance, ACI World has established a Task Force to work on a long-term carbon goal for airports, including considerations of net zero carbon airports by 2050. The world economy is faced with this challenge, and we need to join forces to address it. In addition, ACI Europe has just committed its airports to net zero emissions by 2050.

MANAGING AND REDUCING CO_2 EMISSIONS

ACI is taking a leadership role through the *Airport Carbon Accreditation* (ACA) Programme's growth year after year. As of June 2019, ACA boasts 275 participating airports, reaching 44% of global traffic and 52 carbon neutral airports.

The programme, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2019, continues to gain adherence because it recognizes that airports can address their CO_2 emissions in a variety of ways. The emphasis is on airports reducing their own energy requirements, and on working with airlines, air traffic management and other stakeholders at and around the airport to reduce their emissions.

Further, ACI offers free of charge, the Airport Carbon Emission Reporting Tool v.5.1 (ACERT), to help airports measure and manage their CO_2 emissions. Initially designed by Transport Canada, the tool can be used by all airports, even those without a staff expert in environment.

ACI also has a new tool, the Airport Ground Energy Systems Simulator (AGES-S), that helps airports quantify the environmental and economic benefits of reducing the use of aircraft auxiliary power units by replacing them with a more efficient ground energy system.

INVESTING IN SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

In planning for new and better infrastructure, it has become more important for the world's airports to effectively plan and communicate that environmental sustainability makes good business sense, and to develop appropriate business cases, because it can reduce natural resource consumption and operating costs.

Renewable energy, an essential component for airports' ability to reduce their own carbon footprint, can and should make good business sense. As recognized by the United Nations Environment Programme this year, Cochin International Airport in India became the first airport to be powered solely using solar energy. It also became the first greenfield airport to be built under public-private partnership in India, demonstrating how relevant private and public investment has become to support airports' eco-friendly initiatives.

AIRCRAFT NOISE MANAGEMENT

As we prepare to facilitate air traffic growth, reducing the impact of aircraft noise should remain a key priority for all aviation stakeholders. Progress on aircraft noise at the source has been challenged by increases in traffic and the introduction of more, larger aircraft. It has also become more difficult to identify new ways of improving the noise performance of aircraft and therefore aircraft noise technology advancements have slowed down.

In addition, the implementation of Performance-Based Navigation (PBN) has brought an additional layer of complexity to aircraft noise management. PBN offers benefits including, fuel efficiency and hence emissions reductions, capacity, flexibility in routings, safety, predictability as well as the possibility for noise improvement. However, it also presents challenges, since while it can reduce the number of people affected by noise, the concentration of noise over a smaller area can increase the intensity and may have an impact on the negative perception of aviation.

Aviation stakeholders need to cooperate with communities to efficiently implement PBN. We can even use PBN as part of the solution to relieve concentration by defining appropriate respite areas/times in accordance with communities' feedback. ACI welcomes the work done by the ICAO Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP) on PBN and Community Engagement, and, in collaboration with CANSO, will soon have a new joint publication on *PBN Implementation and Noise Management* that will guide our respective members.

Another challenge is the potential re-introduction of supersonic aircraft. The industry as a whole has to consider the overall effect on the noise and emissions footprint. ACI supports the development of new technology, but the noise and emissions standards for supersonics must be stringent enough that they do not compromise the work we have been doing for decades.

A key element to airports' license to operate and grow, and thus meet future growth, is sensible land-use policies to ensure that the activities near to airports are compatible. Airport operators should engage with their local authorities and also need the cooperation and engagement of aircraft operators and air traffic managers to listen to and communicate with airport neighbors and these decision-makers.

ACI has worked hard in CAEP to set the course for greater community engagement. ACI advocates that communities should be at the core of noise management strategies.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

Environment and sustainability issues affect each and every one of us – it is global matter that affects all regions, and it is also a very local one dependent on the unique factors according to the location of each airport. As we move forward into the future of aviation, we must consider innovative solutions to address our most pressing environmental issues, and strengthen our partnership with all aviation stakeholders, at the local, regional and international level.