

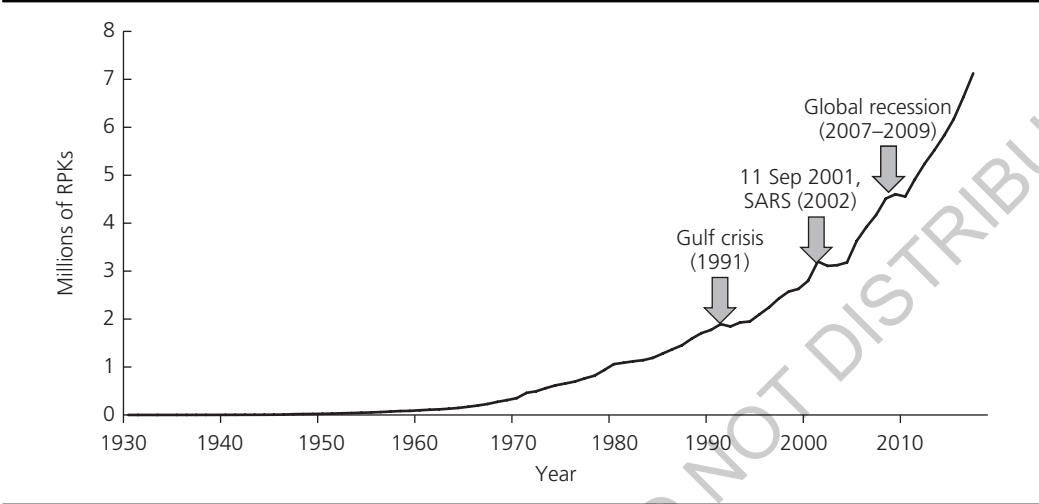
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ISBN 978-0-7277-6365-5

<https://doi.org/10.1680/ilap.63655.001>

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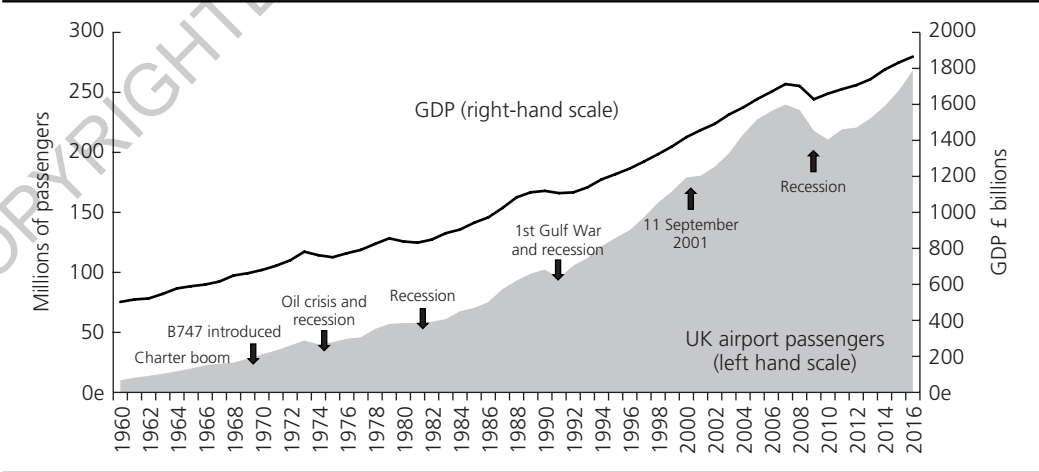
Figure 2.1 Absolute growth of worldwide aviation (1930–2016) recorded by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) in terms of Revenue Passenger Kilometres (RPKs)
(Data from Airlines for America; after Masiol and Harrison, 2014)



Civil aviation in the UK was effectively suspended during WW2 and a large number of military airfields were built throughout the country. Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted were developed and used for military purposes during WW2 (Donne, 1991).

After WW2, air travel in the UK took time to become established. Heathrow (which had opened as a civil airport in 1946) was dominant, particularly for international flights. In the 1960s, jet aircraft were introduced and air-passenger growth rates increased, although there were counter trends, such as when the London–Manchester rail route was electrified (Sealy, 1967), demonstrating the importance of journey time in determining demand. Figure 2.2 shows how

Figure 2.2 Passengers at UK airports and GDP, 1960–2016
(After Airports Commission, 2015, redrawn with data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS), Department for Transport (DfT) and Civil Aviation Authority (CAA))



In the discussion, the need for public and parliamentary debate, and for public expenditure on road and rail links, was noted. The minutes record the prime minister's summing up of the discussion and the Cabinet's approval. The announcement was made to Parliament on 17 December 1979, along with the publication of the ACAP and SGSEA reports and the decision on the Heathrow Terminal 4 Inquiry. The subtitle of this book is taken from John Nott's words on that day in Parliament, when he said, 'Years of indecision, decision and counter-decision reflect no credit on this country's capacity to make difficult but necessary choices' (HC Deb 17 December 1979).

Academic comment on this period is limited, but there are a few key papers worth noting. The issue of regional diversion has been studied, with Francis and Humphreys (2001) suggesting that regional 'clawback' would occur if Heathrow charges were higher, although they recognised that such higher charges would threaten the share of connecting traffic and weaken the UK's competitive position. The processes of the Maplin Review, the Airports Strategy for Great Britain consultation, the 1978 White Paper, ACAP and SGSEA were noted by Professor Peter Hall as not having the benefit of a South East Regional Plan to guide them (Hall, 1982). Hall also noted the influence of various parties, although he implied that these may even balance or cancel each other, for example with the pro-expansion airports lobby losing influence during the Roskill Commission period while the Wing Resistance Association (who opposed expansion at Cublington) used resources supplied by some residents to influence the overturning of the Roskill majority recommendation. In an article in *New Society* in January 1979 (Hall, 1979), Hall commented on the campaign by Amsterdam Schiphol Airport to market itself as London's third airport, and suggested that this fortified the arguments for a major new airport

Figure 6.2 A 1979 cartoon from the *Architects' Journal*, published after the shortlisted sites considered by SGSEA were revealed
(Cartoon courtesy of Louis Hellman)



CASE STUDY 3

Peter Sanders and Brian Ross told me how SSE campaigned through this period. Immediately after the publication of the White Paper in December 2003, BAA had written to local house-holders in the Stansted area. SSE believed that the letter backfired as it seemed to suggest that expansion was a fait accompli, and it led to many people joining the campaign. SSE decided to campaign against G1 and G2, on the basis that G1 was a step towards G2, and they pledged to ‘fight every inch of the way’. Money was raised, a campaign manager was appointed, and the use of email and the internet made gathering evidence and communications for the campaign much easier. They received helpful input from BA and Virgin, which were opposed to Stansted being cross-subsidised from Heathrow revenues. SSE sought to inflict reputational damage on BAA by raising the issue of free car parking at airports for MPs, by briefing city institutions on the funding issues, and by challenging BAA’s monopoly. Campaign materials included posters and the ‘Monopoly beer mat’, which was distributed at political party conferences (see Figure 8.2). For the G1 proposal, even if it was approved, a delay would be considered a success, given the political adages that ‘a week is a long time in politics’ (attributed to Harold Wilson) and things being affected by ‘events, dear boy, events’ (Harold Macmillan). G1 was eventually approved, but the delay to G2 meant that it was overtaken by the recession of 2008, the break-up of BAA and then the 2010 general election.

The White Paper had proposed significant expansion at Luton, based on a relocated runway. The airport, which is owned by Luton Borough Council and was operating under the terms of a 30-year lease, published a draft master plan in 2005, but withdrew the plan later that year, probably because the 30-year term of the lease would not enable the investment to provide a return. Luton had grown rapidly in the late 1990s and had quadrupled in size in the decade to 2006, but then suffered a significant downturn in 2009. Although Luton’s reputation is as an LCC

Figure 8.2 SSE’s ‘BAA Monopoly beer mat’
(Courtesy of Peter Sanders, SSE)



my colleagues were seconded for several years and became established in the Middle East. Even today, some of the key names in Middle East airport management had an apprenticeship in BAA. Whether they find their political masters in these countries any better or worse than those in the UK is an open question, but I can certainly recall that, in Iraq, there was always a military figure at the back of every meeting, to whom all decisions were referred. We wondered why the terminal design was required to have such a large basement, but we discovered later that these were, of course, bomb shelters.

Dubai is the Middle East's largest airport in terms of passenger numbers, handling 88.2 million in 2017, making it the world's third busiest in terms of total passengers and the busiest for international passengers. Flying boats had called at Dubai since the 1930s, but the current airport site was first used in 1960, with tarmac runways added and extended through the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. By 1990, the airport was handling more than 4 million passengers a year, but the real growth took place after a 1997 master plan for new terminals and other facilities. The airport is wholly owned by the Dubai government and has grown along with Emirates Airlines (the links between airlines and airports are discussed in Chapter 2). There are claims by some (particularly US) airlines that Emirates is unfairly financially supported by the Dubai government and, at the time of writing, this is unresolved. Emirates has acquired the world's largest fleet of Airbus A380 aircraft, and this may have been in part due to the limited runway capacity at Dubai Airport (average loads are 200 passengers per aircraft movement, compared with 160 at Heathrow). The two runways are not far enough apart to be operated independently, which means their capacity is less than other two-runway airports with wider-spaced runways. Recognising these capacity limits, a second airport has been established at Jebel Ali, some 23 miles (37 km) from the centre of Dubai city, as part of Dubai World Central, a planned residential, commercial and logistics complex. The site covers 14 000 hectares (35 000 acres) and the ultimate capacity is planned to be between 160 and 260 million passengers and 12 million tonnes of cargo per year. Al Maktoum

Figure 11.4 The Persian Gulf and its airports (Google Maps)

