

SECTORUPDATE

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BREXIT: THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD

Empty supermarket shelves in Northern Ireland; parcel shippers who've temporarily stopped their deliveries from Britain to the European continent and Ireland; customs problems for textile traders and their products made in Asia; and seafood exporters who can't deliver their perishable goods in time due to new complex declarations.

These were just a few of the headlines that dominated the media for many weeks after Britain left the European Union.

During a recent round table with representatives of the EU and the UK government, Seamus Leheny, policy manager for Northern Ireland at trade association Logistics UK, raised the concerns of the sector regarding the implementation of the NI Protocol.

According to Leheny, the group wants to see the development of a "retail movement scheme" to govern the transportation of agri-food goods, plants, and animals between the mainland and Northern Ireland. The checks on these items must be proportionate to the low risk that these items present to health to prevent any unnecessary administration and delays.

Second, industry needs to see the introduction of a 'trusted trader' status for parcel operators to reduce expensive administrative burdens. And finally, "to enable the successful delivery of these schemes, the grace periods currently in place under the NI Protocol must be extended sufficiently to enable longer term simplifications to be agreed and implemented," said Leheny. ([Link: Logistics Management](#))

EASTERN AIRWAYS ANNOUNCES GIBRALTAR SERVICES



Eastern Airways is to launch flights to Gibraltar from Birmingham and Southampton airports.

The UK based airline's twice-weekly services will be the first scheduled passenger service to Gibraltar from Southampton, while the Midlands link is restored after a four-year hiatus following the demise of Monarch.

The services between Birmingham, Southampton and Gibraltar will be operated on the airline's Embraer 190 e-Jet fleet. ([Link: Aviation Tribune](#))

NEWQUAY UPGRADES FOR G7 MEETING

Council-owned Newquay Airport in Cornwall has been given Government funding of £7.8m to prepare it to handle the aircraft of world leaders arriving for the G7 summit in June.

A Cornwall County Council report said the airport could not currently support 'the needs of the aircraft types that will be arriving'. World leaders including US President Joe Biden and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau are due to attend. "The council has very recently received notification from the government's Cabinet Office that it would be providing grant funding of £7.853m to support required upgrade works at the airport in readiness for the G7 summit," the council report stated.

([Link: Pilot](#))

MOMENTUM BUILDS FOR CESSNA SKYCOURIER PROGRAMME



Textron Aviation's Cessna SkyCourier turboprop continues to surpass significant milestones as it begins the certification flight test phase of the program for the high-wing, large utility aircraft.

The fleet of three flight test aircraft has now completed more than 700 flight test hours, and the programme continues toward FAA certification and first deliveries later this year.

"The SkyCourier was designed to fulfil a need in the marketplace for a flexible, reliable, high-utilization aircraft for customers around the world, and its versatility makes it a great fit for a wide range of operations," said Chris Hearne, senior vice president. "The aircraft has performed exceptionally well through every phase of testing, and we're pleased by its progress." ([Link: BlueSky](#))

RYANAIR BIDS FOR MORE SAF FLIGHTS

Ryanair has launched a new sustainable aviation research centre in partnership with Trinity College Dublin, along with a goal to power 12.5 per cent of its flights with sustainable aviation fuels (SAF) by 2030.

The initiative will see Ryanair donate €1.5 million which will be used "to seed a multi-disciplinary research team to engage in best-in-class research around sustainable aviation fuels, zero carbon aircraft propulsion systems and noise mapping".

The group said that the project, along with investment in its new Boeing B737 Max



200 aircraft, of which the carrier has 210 on order, will help it significantly reduce its CO₂ and noise footprint over the coming decade. ([Link: Business Traveller](#))

CAA REJECTS HEATHROW FEE APPLICATION



Heathrow Airport's plan to pass on its pandemic losses to airlines by increasing charges by up to 10 per cent has been rejected by British aviation regulator CAA. The airport suffered a loss of £2bn and asked CAA to approve a steep increase of charges by relaxing the Regulatory Asset Base pricing confinements.

The regulator agreed to only a fraction of this – £300m pounds. "We have taken the decision that an early intervention on the scale of its request is disproportionate and not in the interests of consumers," said CAA director Paul Smith. ([Link: aero.uk](#))

CARGO BOOM FOR COLOGNE-BONN

Cologne-Bonn airport has recorded the highest increase in cargo volumes in a decade, seeing double-figure growth rates since August.

During the first quarter of 2021, cargo volume at the German hub rose by 25 per cent to 235,580 tonnes, achieving the highest increase in the last 10 years. In March alone, the record high of last December was surpassed, with a volume of more than 87,800 tonnes of air cargo.

"An average of three tonnes more goods were transported per aircraft and there was an increase in particular in the number of flights on inner-European routes and to the American express air cargo hubs of Louisville, Kentucky and Memphis, Tennessee," said Johan Vanneste, chief executive. ([Link: Air Cargo News](#))

LONDON CITY AIRPORT SWITCHES TO REMOTE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL



London City airport has switched to a remote digital control tower, with its operations organised from a facility at the southern UK's en route centre in Swanwick, Hampshire.

Controllers at Swanwick, 115km south-west of the airport, have access to live video and other information relayed from a 50m tower at London City.

Air navigation service NATS says all flights on the summer schedule are being managed by the remote system, following intensive testing and live trials which took advantage of the quieter periods arising from UK pandemic restrictions.

NATS says the 'step-change' technology will enable the airport to meet increasing demand as pandemic-related travel restrictions are eased from mid-May. ([Link: FlightGlobal](#))

AIRFIELD AND HOME IN DEVON FOR SALE | OFFER IN EXCESS £900,000

A Devon home with its own airfield has gone on sale. Situated near Sidbury in an area of outstanding natural beauty the 30-acre property has two runways of about 550m each and a hangar for several aircraft. Offers in excess of £900,000 are requested. ([Link: Pilot](#))

VIRGIN ATLANTIC POSTS £659 MILLION LOSS

British carrier Virgin Atlantic released its annual financial results for the year of 2020, displaying financial difficulties brought by the ongoing pandemic and international travel restrictions.

Virgin Atlantic disclosed that the airline suffered a pre-tax loss of £659 million (\$916 million). Virgin also noted that the passenger numbers fell by 80% compared to pre-pandemic figures in 2019 due to "the ongoing travel restrictions, border closures, country-wide lockdowns" and grounded aircraft.



"2020 has been the toughest year in our 36-year history. We have taken incredibly difficult decisions, reshaping and resizing the business to reduce costs, preserve cash and crucially, to protect as many jobs as possible," CEO of Virgin Atlantic, Shai Weiss said. ([Link: AeroTime](#))

SWEDEN'S THIRD-LARGEST AIRPORT TO CLOSE



Sweden has quietly announced the closure of Bromma Airport, its third-largest and the nearest to the capital Stockholm. Behind the move are the devastating effects of the pandemic on air travel and a particularly Swedish growing sentiment called 'flygskam', or 'flying shame', promoted by the movement led by environmental activist Greta Thunberg.

Until 2019 BMA Airport serviced 2.4 million passengers but, says Swedavia, which manages the 10 most important Swedish airports, it is no longer commercially viable. A public enquiry is to be held before the closure can be confirmed. Plans for the site include housing. ([Link: Airways](#))

ROLLS-ROYCE STARTS BUILDING WORLD'S BIGGEST JET ENGINE

Rolls-Royce says it is creating the world's largest aero-engine. The Derby-based firm has started construction on its UltraFan unit at its DemoWorks facility in the city.

The company says the engine, which is set to be finished by the end of the year, could provide the basis for a new generation of engines that could be used on a variety of aircraft.

With a fan diameter of 140 inches, Rolls-Royce says it has the potential increase fuel efficiency by 25 per cent compared to older engines. The carbon titanium fan blades and composite casing would also reduce weight by up to 1500lb per aircraft.

([Link: MAA](#))