

Lee Waters AS/MS  
Y Dirprwy Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd  
Deputy Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref WQ88370

Sam Rowlands MS  
Member of the Senedd for North Wales

[Sam.Rowlands@senedd.wales](mailto:Sam.Rowlands@senedd.wales)

26 June 2023

Dear Sam,

Further to WQ88370 tabled on the 02 June to the Minister for Climate Change regarding what assessment has the Minister made of the environmental impact of potential increased flight activity at Cardiff Airport, please see the following response. I am responding due to my portfolio responsibilities.

The Welsh Government monitors the progress of Cardiff Airport's plans to achieve net zero for its ground operations but does not monitor direct emissions from flight activities.

I recognise the tension between owning an airport and achieving net zero. However, people in Wales will continue to want to fly for leisure and business purposes. The increase in services available from Cardiff gives more people in Wales the opportunity to fly from closer to home, rather than having to travel to airports in England. So, for a given amount of existing flight demand across South Wales, an increase in service availability at Cardiff is likely to reduce the surface transport emissions generated getting to and from airports.

Aviation demand cannot continue to increase indefinitely if we are to achieve net zero, but any measures taken unilaterally by Wales to reduce flight activity will disadvantage Welsh travellers and businesses without offering any net environmental benefits – the carbon emissions would just be exported to England. Aviation policy is a reserved matter, so it is for the UK Government to lead on work with international partners to find globally equitable measures to reduce the environmental impacts of commercial flights.

The UK aviation sector has already contributed towards this, participating in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) since 2012. Since Brexit, the aviation sector has been included in the [UK ETS](#) to ensure the sector continues contributing to decarbonisation. The UK ETS includes flights between the UK and the EEA and Switzerland. The UK ETS Authority (comprising the UK Government, Welsh Government, Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive) consulted last year on developing the scheme in line with our

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

[Gohebiaeth.Lee.Waters@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Lee.Waters@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Lee.Waters@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Lee.Waters@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

net zero ambitions. The consultation proposed options for amending the trajectory and distribution of aviation free allowances, looked at how the scheme incentivises Sustainable Aviation Fuel uptake, and sought evidence on the feasibility and appropriateness of expanding the scope of the UK ETS to incorporate the non-CO2 impacts of aviation. The response to this consultation will be published in due course.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee', is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

**Lee Waters AS/MS**

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