

BATA Press Release

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PUBLIC BACKS CARBON TRADING FOR AIRLINES

VOTERS believe that the best way to tackle aviation's impact on climate change is to include airlines in emissions trading rather than impose extra taxes, a new opinion poll reveals today.

The YouGov survey found that 48 per cent of the public felt the environmental costs of air travel should be met through an international system of carbon trading, even though this would lead to higher fares.

In contrast, only 32 per cent thought that a special green tax should be levied by Government on airline tickets.

The UK aviation industry has been at the forefront of the campaign to include airlines in the EU's emissions trading system, which could come into effect in 2008.

Backing for such a policy was strong among all age groups, social classes and supporters of all political parties, the survey showed.

Emissions trading was particularly favoured by Conservatives, 51 per cent of whom were for the idea, compared with 30 per cent supporting an additional tax.

The poll also established that while most voters are aware of the environmental effects of air travel, few want to reduce the number of flights they take.

Forty-four per cent of those interviewed said they were 'fairly concerned' about aviation's impact on the environment, while a further 12 per cent were 'very concerned'.

However, only three per cent said they had given up flying as a result and another 10 per cent had reduced the amount they flew.

The British Air Transport Association, which commissioned the poll, said the results showed that emissions trading was a policy in line with the public mood.

Roger Wiltshire, BATA secretary general, said: "It is quite clear that most people have concerns about climate change but want to keep flying and do not see taxation as a solution.

"That is why they support a system of carbon trading, which would require airlines to cut their own emissions or pay for emissions reductions elsewhere. This would produce a specific, direct environmental benefit in a way that taxation could never achieve.

"We fully support the inclusion of aviation in the EU's emissions trading scheme, and look forward to the European Commission's draft legislation for this, which is due before the end of the year."

Notes to Editors:

1. UK domestic and international aviation accounted for six per cent of UK man-made CO₂ emissions in 2004, and 0.1 per cent of global CO₂ emissions.
2. Passengers using UK airports contribute more than £900 million a year to the Exchequer in air passenger duty, a tax introduced on environmental grounds.
3. For the survey, YouGov interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,955 adults.
4. BATA represents UK registered airlines covering the scheduled, charter and freight sectors. It's members account for 85% of UK airline output.
5. Further information is available from Roger Wiltshire, BATA Secretary General, on (020) 7222 9494 or 07767 660658.
6. The full survey results are available on the BATA website, www.bata.uk.com in the Media Centre under Publications.