

25th September 2018

David Rees AM
Chair, External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Mr Rees

Cardiff Airport's response to the follow-up inquiry into how the Welsh Government is preparing for Brexit – ports

I am writing in my capacity as Chief Executive Officer and on behalf of the Board of Directors at Cardiff International Airport Ltd, in response to your Committee's findings regarding the preparedness of Welsh ports (including airports) for the UK's departure from the EU.

We have been working closely with industry peers and representative bodies – particularly the Airport Operators' Association (AOA) and the Regional & Business Airports Group (RABA) for some time, to understand the potential impact of a 'No Deal Brexit' outcome. I have personally attended high-level industry roundtable discussions chaired by the Secretary of State at Department for Transport, to ensure that the UK aviation industry has a robust contingency plan in place. Furthermore, we have Director-level representation on the Wales Ports Steering Group, set up one year ago by the UK Government, to focus on the potential impact of a 'No Deal Brexit' across all ports in Wales, including Cardiff Airport.

In terms of the impact of a 'No Deal Brexit' on Cardiff Airport, we expect there could be considerable changes to operational procedures and policies, especially the processing of passengers arriving into Wales at the UK border. These changes may result in considerable delays at passport control and impact the customer experience overall. To mitigate this possibility we have worked with the Welsh Government to procure latest technology Passport e-Gates, which will allow faster, automated processing for passengers in possession of a biometric UK passport. This project will significantly increase resilience at the UK Border and will be in place before March 2019.

Our work also continues with UK Border Force, who are carrying out individual site visits and issuing questionnaires to port operators presently in order to identify any specific issues and to put contingency plans in place ahead of Brexit.

As well as passenger flow into and out of the UK, we are also currently investigating any impact to our cargo operation.

With daily flights to global hubs - including the Middle East - we must highlight gaps in infrastructure that would hinder the processing and movement of air freight should there be a No Deal Brexit outcome.

May I also refer you to the points outlined in our initial submission regarding our observations as an Airport, and how a 'No Deal Brexit' will affect both airlines operating within the UK and Europe and their passengers. In our efforts to diversify the Airport business and promote passenger growth, we will continue to review our offering regularly and work closely with airlines, particularly carriers based in the UK and Europe, to provide a choice of global destinations for our customers.

To conclude, it is essential for us to be prepared for all eventualities, and to continue to serve our market by offering an enjoyable, efficient customer journey and diverse route network. We will continue to support our airline partners, work with agencies including the Department for Transport, UK Border Force and the Welsh Government and seek out new opportunities to grow the Airport business throughout this period of uncertainty. Overall, we aim to ensure that, as a key capital city airport and gateway into the UK, our voice is heard and we have an input into national aviation contingency plans.

Yours sincerely



Deb Barber
Chief Executive Officer
Cardiff Airport