

FAO: NEWS, BUSINESS, TECHNOLOGY & TRANSPORT EDITORS

Transport Systems Catapult Media Release PR02-15

Embargoed until Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 00.01hrs GMT

## **New technology to reduce delays at UK airports**

The installation of new technology to reduce passenger delays was successfully completed at seven UK airports today. Rolled out by the Transport Systems Catapult, the technology is also expected to improve airspace management and efficiency and reduce fuel consumption and carbon emissions – leading to estimated savings for the UK air transport network of more than £10 million over the next three years.

Previously only installed at Heathrow and Gatwick, Departure Planning Information (DPI) allows airports to provide real-time information about the departure of aircraft to a European flight information network which in turn enables national and European Air Traffic Control Centres to make much better assessments regarding the flow of traffic and arrival times of aircraft.

Carried out as part of the UK's Future Airspace Strategy, the Transport Systems Catapult programme has now seen DPI capability installed at London City, Stansted, Manchester, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Luton airports. The technology is due to go live on a staggered basis over the course of the next few months, but offline tests have already shown a significant improvement in the accuracy of information related to when planes take off and the routes that they subsequently follow.

"When you consider that this roll-out covers over 30% of all commercial air transport flights taking off in the UK every day, then you start to realise the scale of improvement that we're talking about," said Transport Systems Catapult CEO Steve Yianni.

"If the offline test results are replicated for real once the systems go live in the coming months, then we can expect to see less delays for passengers, both on the ground and in the air, as well as reduced fuel costs for the airlines and less harm to the environment."

A review of the expected cost savings of DPI carried out on behalf of the Department for Transport has estimated that the technology will save the UK air transport network at least £10 million over the next three years – including direct financial savings by airlines and opportunity costs of passengers' time, but not including the expected additional benefits to adjacent airports and the European continental network.

"The DPI project is a key deliverable for the UK's Future Airspace Strategy and with the Catapult's support we have been able to update NATS control tower systems to provide this more accurate information to our controllers and the European Air Transport Network," said Andy Shand, NATS General Manager of Customer Affairs. "With DPI, our controllers will have a more accurate prediction of take-off times, and this in turn will allow our airport and airline customers to better plan their operations, while NATS will be able to offer more fuel efficient routes."

The next stage of the DPI programme will involve regional airports that do not yet have air traffic control systems integrated with the European network. An open tender process is now underway to select a company to carry out the installation work.

“So far, only a small proportion of airports in mainland Europe are using this technology, and they tend to be among the continent’s biggest hubs,” Mr Yianni added. “By extending DPI capability in the UK from major international hubs to regional level airports, the Transport Systems Catapult is helping to put the UK at the forefront of European air space efficiency.”

- Ends -

For media enquiries, please contact TSC Communications Manager Mark Ledsom ([Mark.Ledsom@ts.catapult.org.uk](mailto:Mark.Ledsom@ts.catapult.org.uk), Tel: +44 7508 023 758). For enquiries related to NATS, please contact the NATS press office ([press.office@nats.co.uk](mailto:press.office@nats.co.uk), Tel: 01489 615 945).

*The Transport Systems Catapult is the UK’s technology and innovation centre for Intelligent Mobility, harnessing emerging technologies to improve the movement of people and goods around the world. It is one of an elite network of not-for-profit technology and innovation centres established and overseen by the UK’s innovation agency, Innovate UK. For more information see [www.ts.catapult.org.uk](http://www.ts.catapult.org.uk)*