



MICHAEL McGRATH T.D.
CORK SOUTH CENTRAL



Cathy Mannion, Commissioner
Commission for Aviation Regulation
3rd Floor
Alexandra House
Earlsfort Terrace
Dublin 2
D02 W773

20 August 2019

Re: Response to the 2019 Draft Determination CP3/2019

Dear Ms Mannion,

I am writing regarding an article that I read in the Irish Examiner on 1st August, titled '*Fundamental threat to Cork Airport's future as Dublin plans to cut charges*'.

As you may be aware, in the article Cork Airport's Managing Director Niall MacCarthy outlined a number of concerns with respect to the recently published proposals by the Commission for Aviation Regulation (CAR) to reduce average passenger charges at Dublin Airport by 22% in 2020. The article indicated that a decision to implement pricing at this level could mean that Ireland's regional airports would have to engage in below-cost selling in order to remain competitive, which could impact Cork Airport's operating profits and reduce annual revenue at the airport by over €4m.

Naturally, the prospect of such a scenario potentially arising at Cork Airport in 2020 is very concerning, from all perspectives. It would also potentially present challenges in the context of current Government Policy, which recognises the key role that regional airports play in an Irish context and seeks to promote the sustainable operation of regional airports in order to optimise their contribution to their respective local economies and communities. Project Ireland 2040 also specifically calls for Cork to act as a counter-balance to Dublin in terms of regional development, and this is a policy which I strongly support.

I fully acknowledge and support CAR's role as an independent public body, and I understand that CAR will ultimately make an objective determination on these matters, based on all of the evidence available to it. Given that CAR is currently in an open consultation process to inform its final decision, I am writing to ask that – in the course of your work over the coming months – you give due consideration to any potential impacts that this determination may have for Cork and other regional airports in the coming period, as well as for overall regional balance on the island of Ireland. Thank you for your time and attention on this. It is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael McGrath". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'M'.

Michael McGrath

Fianna Fáil TD for Cork South Central