

Tekst 6

AIRPORT SERVICE

1 MANY PEOPLE embarking on their summer holiday this morning will have a unique opportunity to consider the wonders that are Britain's airports. They will have such an opportunity because they will almost certainly be trapped in check-in and security queues for hours on end. They might question how such a vital part of our national infrastructure could be so badly run. Not one major airport in Britain has the grandeur of Amsterdam's Schiphol, the efficiency and scale of Frankfurt or the imagination of Charles de Gaulle in Paris. We arrive in architectural celebrations of aviation; we depart from graceless sheds. Even Stansted, a Norman Foster design, is little more than a glorified warehouse.

2 Gatwick, the country's second airport, is an entity of unparalleled hideousness, an offence to good taste and an obstacle course of poor layout. It shames the nation that its arrival hall might be the first sight to greet newcomers to Britain.

3 To be fair to BAA¹⁾, which runs the UK's three biggest airports, passenger numbers are growing at a rate of tens of millions every year. The company is, meanwhile, spending £1.5bn every year to keep up with demand. But then, to be fair to the passengers, it is not unreasonable to expect some of that investment to translate into a more comfortable travelling experience sooner rather than later.

4 The same applies to airlines. It is not as if airports are constantly being taken by surprise by hordes of spontaneous jetsetters. It ought not to come as a surprise, for example, that in the summer months people go on holiday. (The clue is in the well-known phrase 'summer holiday'.)

5 It is presumably within the capability of managers to identify how many will be travelling and when – perhaps by looking at their own ticket sales – and then to make staff available to manage the flow.

6 The reason they don't do this, besides old-fashioned incompetence, is that there is no immediate incentive for them to do so. Once passengers are inside the airport, queuing for their flight, the airport has their captive custom for its numerous lucrative shopping outlets. The single greatest source of revenue for BAA is its retail outlets – they earned it £800m last year.

7 Naturally, the long-term interests of the aviation industry would be served by providing a pleasant, secure environment for passengers. 27, long-term planning might also have saved BAA from this year's hostile takeover by Spanish construction group Ferrovial.

8 Meanwhile, given the toxic environmental impact of flying, passengers are probably best served by giving up air travel altogether and taking their holidays closer to home. Neither shows much sign of seeing sense. ■

noot 1 BAA: British Airport Authority

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- 1p 22 Which of the following statements is true according to paragraphs 1 and 2?
- A Flights from British airports are more frequently delayed than flights from continental Europe.
 - B Security at British airports is tighter than at other European airports.
 - C The main airports in Britain are both inefficient and ugly.
 - D The state of British airports is a true reflection of the state of the country.
- 1p 23 What does the writer seem to suggest about Norman Foster's design for Stansted (paragraph 1)?
- A It is not as attractive as might have been expected.
 - B It pays too much attention to the building's exterior.
 - C It was too ambitious to be realised.
- 1p 24 What point is made in paragraph 3?
- A Although BAA's annual spendings are high, passenger facilities have not been improved.
 - B By breaking its promise to improve service for air passengers, BAA has lost credibility.
 - C It is essential for airports to function smoothly even with the present growth in passenger numbers.
 - D The fact that Britain's airports are about to be modernised does not interest today's passengers.
- 2p 25 Geef van elk van de volgende citaten uit de alinea's 1 tot en met 5 aan of dit wel of niet spottend bedoeld is door de schrijver.
- 1 "the wonders ... airports" (vooraan alinea 1)
 - 2 "It shames ... to Britain." (achteraan alinea 2)
 - 3 "(The clue ... 'summer holiday'.)" (achteraan alinea 4)
 - 4 "perhaps by ... ticket sales" (alinea 5)
- Noteer het nummer van elk citaat, gevolgd door "wel" of "niet".
- "there is no immediate ... to do so" (begin alinea 6)
- 1p 26 Hoe verklaart de schrijver dit?
Begin je antwoord met "*Hoe langer*".
- 1p 27 Which of the following fits the gap in paragraph 7?
- A As a result
 - B Furthermore
 - C In short
- "Neither shows much sign of seeing sense." (laatste zin)
- 1p 28 Naar welke twee woorden/woordgroepen in de alinea's 7 en 8 verwijst "Neither"? Geef antwoord door de volgende zin in het Nederlands of het Engels aan te vullen: "*Neither*" verwijst naar ... en