

# EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

## CONFIDENTIAL

**Title of Report:** Maintenance of air landing Strips  
**Paper No:** 120/10  
**Date:** 24 June 2010  
**Report of:** Director of Procurement & Efficiency/Aerodromes Manager

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To recommend and seek authorisation from Executive Council to introduce a system of users pays in relation to the supply of materials and equipment used by airstrip owners to maintain their airstrips.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended to Executive Council that the following table of charges for the supply of materials and equipment are applied to airstrip owners for the maintenance of airstrips.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the following changes come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010.

White painted aluminium edge marker	£19 ea
Edge marker fastener	£1.10 ea
Wind sock	£130 ea
Mower hire	£75 / rental
Strimmer	£75 / rental
Heavy roller non-mechanical	£30 / rental
Freight of the above items	At user's expense

### 3. Summary of Financial Implications

	2010/11	2011/12(and on-going)
Revenue	<b>£500</b>	<b>£500</b>
Cost saving in materials & equipment	<b>£3000</b>	<b>£3000</b>
Cost saving in cost of freight	<b>£3000</b>	<b>£3000</b>

The above costs and revenues had already been considered during the budgeting process and have factored into the 2010/11 budget.

#### **4. Background**

4.1 Stanley Airport budget's targeted saving for 2010 / 2011 is £9,780 (3% of total budget). The only service that the airport provides that is not a legal requirement is the supply of materials and equipment to airstrip operators.

4.2 Increasing the budget provision for the supply of materials and equipment to airstrip operators would be better than reducing it however, with the requirement to cut spending that is not possible.

4.3 There is not any formal FIG policy about the supply of materials and equipment to airstrip operators but the following practice has generally been in place in 2006 when the post of Aerodromes Manager was created and the airport was split away from the local Civil Aviation Department;

- Runway edge markers and fasteners were supplied free of charge to airstrip operators
- Wind socks were supplied free of charge to airstrip operators
- Paint was supplied free of charge to airstrip operators
- Materials for the construction and maintenance of fire trailer shelters was supplied free of charge to airstrip operators
- Lawn mowers, strimmers and rollers were loaned free of charge to airstrip operators

4.4 Stanley Airport has continued on with this practice but found two general problems with doing so;

- The budget of £5,000 was not enough to meet the demand
- Serious damage was being inflicted on the loan equipment with nobody taking responsibility for it.

4.5 In line with Treasury request to budget managers to consider the introduction of charges with the aim of cost recovery where appropriate, it is proposed that FIG starts charging for the supply of materials and equipment to airstrip operators. *Appendix A* details all of the practical and technical aspects in relation to the necessary equipment standards, maintenance thereof and associated costs.

#### **5. Risks and Issues**

5.1 The local regulator and the UK regulator ASSI are aware of the proposal to move to this user pays arrangement. There are no issues in relation to the principle of who pays.

#### **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 Overall it is very difficult to know if airstrip operators will decide to buy/hire the equipment from FIG or source their own. They use FIG equipment now because it's at no cost to them, however, there is a

high probability that most will identify cheaper solutions to this proposal if forced to do so.

- 6.2 For this reason the costs identified in section two are best estimates. These costs and revenues have already been considered during the budgeting process and have been factored into the 2010/11 budget.

## **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1 None.

## **8. Human Resources Implications**

None

## **Appendix A**

Practical & technical aspects of airstrip equipment, maintenance and associated costs

**Maintaining Airstrips** - It doesn't have to cost an airstrip operator much to maintain his own airstrip. Many things can be done to keep the price down to a bare minimum. As long as some regular maintenance is carried out, little effort is required in the case of most airstrips

**Edge Strip Markers** - An airstrip only needs edge markers if there is not an obvious difference in the appearance of the strip itself from the surrounding ground. For example, clay strips generally do not need edge markers as long as they are surrounded by grass-covered ground.

The markers FIG supplies are white painted aluminium sheets 750 mm x 1500 mm and cost approximately **£19.00 each**. However these are not proprietary aerodrome markers and nor do they need to be. Any similar marking will suffice as long as the pilots can see them from the air and they are acceptable to the local regulator.

Other examples of suitable markers include;

- ▶ Flat or corrugated sheet metal, painted white and pinned flat on the ground
- ▶ Flat stones or paving slabs buried flush with the surface and painted white
- ▶ Old tyres buried flush with the surface (or slightly proud) and painted white
- ▶ White paint or white-wash applied directly onto the grass

The markers don't have to be expensive. The important things to remember are that they must be clearly visible as a reference for the pilots and they must not present any hazard to the aircraft. If sheet metal is used it must be kept flat on the ground with no sharp edges sticking up. The fasteners used must be checked regularly to ensure no nails or spikes are sticking up. These could damage an aircraft tyre. At some settlements sheet metal markers are securely held down by flat stones also painted white. This is fine.

**Marker Fasteners** - Stanley Airport has found a new fastener that works extremely well for flat sheet metal markers. It is a large plastic screw that is inserted through a pre-drilled hole in the marker and screwed into the ground using a cordless drill. They hold much more securely than the nails we have supplied until recently. They cost **£1.10 each**. As explained above, they don't have to be used but they are a very simple and quick option. Each marker requires 6 to make it secure.

**How many markers?** - Markers need to be spaced about every 60metres on both sides of the strip with 2 L shaped threshold markers at each end. If the strip has a lot of undulations care should be taken to place the markers on high ground so that they don't get lost to sight in dead ground. A pilot can easily confirm if the markers are clear from the air or not.

**Red and White End Markers** - The easiest thing to use for these end markers is 45 gallon drums painted red and white and held down with wire and pegs. These last for many years and just need repainting every couple of years to maintain high visibility.

- ▶ If the settlement doesn't already have a supply of old drums they can be obtained from the PWD at Megabid and sent by Concordia Bay or collected from Megabid itself. There is no charge for these drums.
- ▶ At some settlements wire fences cross close to the end of an airstrip. In these cases there should also be red sheet metal markers placed in line with the airstrip on the fence. This makes the fence line stand out so that pilots can clearly see the hazard.

**Wind Socks** - A proprietary aerodrome wind sock must be used. The ones that the airport supplies to Camp cost around **£130.00 each**. The wind socks at Stanley Airport are required to be left up at all times and they last approximately one year each. If a wind sock is put up and taken down for each flight it should last for many years.

- ▶ Stanley Airport can still supply wind socks for sale or airstrip operators can buy their own ones. However they must be proprietary aerodrome wind socks and they must be at least 2.4 metres (8 ft) long.

**Ancillary Equipment** - Stanley Airport also supplies other items such as nails, paint, wire and timber. These items are readily available in several stores in Stanley and will no longer be supplied by Stanley Airport.

**Mower and trimmers** - Stanley Airport owns and tries to maintain 5 mowers however the costs of doing this outstrips the budget allocation. The two newest mowers cost over £3,000 each and both have been subject to significant repairs and maintenance costs despite being less than two years old. One was damaged badly during transport and the repair bill was over £300. Nobody involved with the transportation (three different companies) took responsibility for the damage. Another mower was immersed in salt water somewhere. We weren't told this by whoever did it but the outbreak of rust over the entire machine, internally and externally can only mean one thing. Many hours have been spent stripping, sanding, painting and rebuilding this machine also.

The airport proposes to recover for FIG the cost of this equipment from the users with a flat charge of **£75.00** for the use of a mower. The user will need to arrange transportation and pay for this himself on top of the £75 payable to FIG.

**Alternatives to Mowers** - Not many airstrip operators mow their strips. Most of them graze sheep to keep the grass down. This also has the effect of keeping the ground firm and well fertilized. The pilots say that the best strips are the ones that get grazed on a regular basis.