

YOUR LONDON AIRPORT

Gatwick

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Mr Iain Osborne
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Dear Iain

Gatwick Airport – Service Quality Failures

Thank you for your letter dated 11 May 2011 regarding the service quality rebate (SQR) for cleaning in the South Terminal. In response to the points you raise, I have set out below the background to the South Terminal cleanliness, the actions already taken to restore standards and future plans for this service area.

As you know, 2010 was a challenging year for the aviation sector, particularly with the ash cloud disruption during the first quarter and the severe winter weather in the fourth quarter. During these periods, our focus was on maintaining a safe and reliable operation for the travelling public. It also has to be noted that with our £1 billion investment programme now well underway, there will inevitably be an impact to our passengers' journey through the South Terminal.

In September we began improvement works to the South Terminal forecourt. Our new £47m central security area will progressively open through this summer and construction work is underway with new escalators and lifts in one of the busiest areas of the South Terminal. We are also upgrading the flooring and ceiling in South Terminal check-in and arrival areas, which has meant large areas of this space is behind hoardings. All this construction work has resulted in some additional dust and disruption. Although we are working hard to minimise this, the perception of cleanliness has been impacted. Whilst I have no doubt the result of these major works will vastly improve the passenger experience, it has been a challenge to meet the 4.0 target.

During the summer period our own audits showed a degradation of cleanliness standards, below our own very high levels and immediate management action was taken. This assessment was visible in the SQR scores, in certain areas of the South Terminal, after the busy summer period.

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Therefore, in July 2010, we completed a review of the cleaning regime and increased frequencies in some areas, giving focus on high volume areas and those immediately adjacent to the major works. In the Autumn we started a separate programme of deep cleaning and enhanced our plans to refresh building fabric, counteracting a legacy of under-investment in certain passenger areas not yet subject to our major capital investment. Over the coming months, after taking further actions and whilst some improvements were recognised in our audits, we decided to take more radical steps towards raising the standards further. We served early notice on our incumbent contractor, commenced procurement processes through OJEU (to be concluded in September 2011) and completed an interim "hot swap" of our contractor in February of this year.

Since the interim appointment of the new cleaning contractor, we have seen a step change in cleanliness standards, through improved processes, integrated team ownership and staff training. This is reflected in our own audit scores and in April's SQR score of 4.09, with a 0.18 improvement on the previous month and the highest score for two years. However, due to the MAT being weighted by passenger flows, the lower scores and high passenger numbers during the Summer and Christmas has continued to hold down the overall MAT score to 3.944.

I am confident that with the new contract, improved processes and management focus from my team, we will see the SQR scores exceed the target in the next two months.

I hope this answers your questions. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this in more detail.

Yours sincerely



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