

BRITISH AIRWAYS PLC
Form 6-K
March 05, 2003

TRAFFIC AND CAPACITY STATISTICS - February 2003

Summary of the headline figures

In February 2003, overall load factor remained flat at 66.1 per cent. Passenger capacity, measured in Available Seat Kilometres, was 3.5 per cent below February 2002 and traffic, measured in Revenue Passenger Kilometres, was lower by 5.6 per cent. This resulted in a passenger load factor down 1.6 points versus last year, to 70.0 per cent. A number of operational issues have impacted the month including, snow and ice at London Heathrow and major snow storms at many of our US east coast gateways and security alerts and Heathrow and Gatwick. The fall in traffic comprised a 14.3 per cent reduction in premium traffic and a 5.6 per cent decrease in non-premium traffic. Cargo, measured in Cargo Tonne Kilometres, increased by 0.9 per cent.

Market conditions

The economic and political environment is challenging as the threat of war and terrorism grows.

Strategic Developments

British Airways criticised the Civil Aviation Authority for failing to revise its new pricing regime at Heathrow airport which will allow the airport operator, BAA, to raise landing charges by up to 50 per cent over the next five years.

The airline believes the new charges, which will come into force on April 1, 2003, are stacked against airlines and passengers and go way beyond the requirements needed to fund BAA's capital programme over the next five years.

British Airways introduced a short term policy to allow customers to change their ticket reservation free of charge on long haul economy tickets, including restricted tickets that currently do not allow changes. The new arrangement applies to reservations made between 14 February and 17 March 2003 which can be changed anytime up to 31 May 2003, for travel until the end of December 2003. Customers can choose to change their destination, dates or class of travel.

A three month internet trial began on a British Airways 747-400 aircraft, on services between London Heathrow and New York using Connexion Boeing broadband system. Passengers can plug in their laptop from their seat and access personal and work emails, corporate intranets and the web.

British Airways, its oneworld partner Iberia and franchise partner GB Airways announced new codeshare routes from February 20 on services between London Heathrow and Seville, Valencia, Malaga, Santiago de Compostela and Bilbao and services between London, Gatwick and Madrid, Barcelona and Bilbao.

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Iberia added its code to nine GB Airways operated services; London Gatwick and Almeria, Girona-Costa Brava, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, Mahon-Menorca, Malaga, Seville and Valencia, and London Heathrow to Malaga.

British Airways and its oneworld partner Cathay Pacific Airways increased their code-shared destinations to nineteen with the announcement of extra code-share flights to Seoul, Copenhagen and Lisbon.

From 4 March 2003, British Airways will add its code to a daily Cathay Pacific flight between Hong Kong and Seoul providing smoother connections and improved choice for passengers travelling to Asia Pacific.

At the same time, Cathay Pacific will add its code on selected British Airways' European flights operating between London Heathrow and Copenhagen and Lisbon providing smoother European connections for passengers travelling on Cathay Pacific's flights between London and Hong Kong.

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BRITISH AIRWAYS MONTHLY TRAFFIC AND CAPACITY STATISTICS

BRITISH AIRWAYS GROUP SCHEDULED SERVICES	Month of February April through February	Financial year to date				
	2003	2002	Change (%)	Change 2002/3	2001/2	(%)
Passengers carried (000)						
UK/Europe	1923	1895	+1.5	24522	25166	
-2.6						
Americas	465	479	-2.9	6123	6092	
+0.5						
Asia Pacific	113	147	-22.9	1431	1625	
-11.9						
Africa and Middle East	220	217	+1.4	2368	2539	-6.7
Total	2722	2738	-0.6	34445	35422	
-2.8						
Revenue passenger km (m)						
UK/Europe	1458	1463	-0.4	19220	20167	
-4.7						
Americas	3159	3293	-4.1	41319	41666	
-0.8						
Asia Pacific	1171	1502	-22.0	14645	16398	
-10.7						
Africa and Middle East	1510	1477	+2.2	16025	17192	
-6.8						

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Total	7298	7735	-5.6		91208	95424
-4.4						
Available seat km (m)						
UK/Europe	2358	2399	-1.7		28722	32224
-10.9						
Americas	4521	4534	-0.3		56372	57874
-2.6						
Asia Pacific	1566	1923	-18.5		18920	22408
-15.6						
Africa and Middle East	1983	1950	+1.7		22501	24266
-7.3						
Total	10429	10806	-3.5		126515	136772
-7.5						
Passenger load factor (%)						
UK/Europe	61.8	61.0	+0.8	pts	66.9	62.6
+4.3 pts						
Americas	69.9	72.6	-2.7	pts	73.3	72.0
+1.3 pts						
Asia Pacific	74.8	78.1	-3.3	pts	77.4	73.2
+4.2 pts						
Africa and Middle East	76.1	75.8	+0.3	pts	71.2	70.8
+0.4 pts						
Total	70.0	71.6	-1.6	pts	72.1	69.8
+2.3 pts						
Revenue tonne km (RTK) (m)						
Cargo tonne km (CTK)	323	321	+0.9		3850	3658
+5.3						
Total RTK	1051	1089	-3.5		12972	13203
-1.8						
Available tonne km (m)	1589	1649	-3.6		19430	20778
-6.5						
Overall load factor (%)	66.1	66.1	+0.0	pts	66.8	63.5
+3.3 pts						

Certain information included in this statement is forward-looking and involves risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by the forward looking statements.

Forward-looking statements include, without limitation, projections relating to results of operations and financial conditions and the Company's plans and objectives for future operations, including, without limitation, discussions of the Company's 'Future Size and Shape' programme, expected future revenues, financing plans and expected expenditures and divestments. All forward-looking statements in this report are based upon information known to the Company on the date of this report. The Company undertakes no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

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It is not reasonably possible to itemise all of the many factors and specific events that could cause the Company's forward looking statements to be incorrect or that could otherwise have a material adverse effect on the future operations or results of an airline operating in the global economy. Information on some factors which could result in material difference to the results is available in the Company's SEC filings, including, without limitation the Company's Report on Form 20-F for the year ended March 2002.

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