

**CONSULTATION ON WHETHER AN AIRPORT IS THE MOST
APPROPRIATE OPTION FOR ACCESS TO ST HELENA IN THE
CURRENT ECONOMIC CLIMATE**

CONSULTATION REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The consultation, which ran from 9 April 2009 to 31 July 2009, concerned whether an airport is the most appropriate option for access to St Helena in the current economic climate. It was carried out in accordance with the criteria of the Government's Code of Practice on Consultation.

2. The Government retendered the contract to design, build and operate an airport for the island in May 2007. Since then the financial climate has changed. The cost of the airport is considerably higher than anticipated, economic conditions in the UK demand review of short term spending priorities; and the value of the international development budget (from which financial support to the Overseas Territories is funded) has dropped in many countries, while urgent new pressures for aid have arisen. In light of these considerations the Government announced (in December 2008) a pause in the airport contract negotiations. The purpose of this consultation was to seek the views of interested parties before taking a final decision on whether an airport is currently the most appropriate option for access to St Helena.

3. Views were sought on three options, and what impact they would have:

- a) Go ahead with the airport now ('Option A')
- b) Decide now not to build the airport and commission a new ship ('Option B')
- c) Defer a decision for a period of up to five years. ('Option C')

4. The consultation also invited any further information or proposals that the Government should take into account before reaching a decision.

5. The Government's view is that in the current economic climate Option C, to defer a decision for a period of up to five years, would appear to be the most appropriate choice.

6. More than 3500 people responded to the consultation. Of this total, some 2420 responses were in the form of campaign letters or petitions; 108 were in writing; and over 1000 people participated in meetings in St Helena, Ascension and the UK. Most responses came from private individuals. These numbers are high in relation to the size of the target group and by comparison with participation in the 2002 referendum, and demonstrate the strength of interest in the question of access to St Helena.

7. Neither December's pause in negotiation nor the consultation was well received by most Saint Helenians. In almost every meeting, participants on St Helena said they felt disillusioned, and a sense of disbelief, distrust or betrayal when the Pause was announced. Morale on St Helena is very low, a point made both in discussions on St Helena (with business, government and private individuals) and in written responses.

8. Most respondents felt it inappropriate to compare funding needs in the Overseas

Territories with demands in developing countries, where the issues are different. Many emphasised that they are British and should not have to compete for funding with developing countries. Some drew attention to legal and policy commitments to the Overseas Territories.

9. A strong majority thought that Option A (going ahead with the airport now), was the best option for the island and its future. 69% (1672 individuals) of the petition signatories, 80% (87 responses) of the written consultation, and a significant majority of those who responded orally (at least 70% in all groups and in some cases much more) took this view.

10. The fundamental point made was that St Helena's economy is so weak and its population declining so much that it needs a major impetus now to halt this decline. Most of those leaving the island are working age people, leaving elderly people and young children behind, with adverse consequences for the island's social fabric as well as its economy. Access to adequate health provision is constrained. Supporters of both air access and sea access shared this assessment, and agreed that better access is the potential catalyst for halting the island's decline and rebuilding its economy. But while some support faster ships and other sea based options, a large majority of respondents do not believe that continuing access by sea can provide the means to a vibrant economy, and note that it has failed to do so in the last twenty years. Most, whether supporters of air access or a replacement ship, fear that deferring a decision for up to five years will take the island beyond the point where decline can be reversed.

11. A minority (mainly private individuals) supported a replacement ship. A majority of that group did so because of their concerns about the changes that tourism and investment could bring to the island, and the risk that it could spoil the island's culture, environment and way of life, while sea access would allow tourism to be developed more sensitively and maintain the tranquillity of the island.

12. Virtually no-one (less than 1% of total respondents) sympathised with the Government's preferred option, (to defer a decision for a period of up to five years and to reconsider the economic case when conditions are right), or supported the 'affordability' premise of the Government's argument. In most meetings and in the written responses strong views against that option were expressed, and powerful language was used ('suicide for the island'). There is a strong sense that further delay will take the island to a point where – largely because of continuing population decline - recovery will no longer be possible.

13. A range of views were expressed (by business and private individuals) on the specific question of affordability and the current economic climate. One strand of opinion did not acknowledge that costs were so high as to call the project into question, noting that £300 million over the next five years is not a significant portion (they estimated around 1% per year on average) of the aid budget. This group (and others) also observed that costs would be likely to be higher after a period of delay, and the St Helena population lower. A different view did acknowledge the UK's financial

challenges, and competing demands, but thought that St Helena access was a question of a different order: it affected the whole future survival of St Helena, and should be considered in that light.

14. Responses were received to the question on additional information or proposals, both technical proposals which could make the current airport proposal less costly; and financing proposals which could reduce the financial burden on the Government. These will be examined for feasibility by relevant experts.

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The consultation concerned whether an airport is the most appropriate option for access to St Helena in the current economic climate.

Background

2. The Overseas Territory of St Helena is one of the most remote inhabited islands in the world. It has been dependent on financial support from the UK since the 1960s. This has risen from under £10 million per year ten years ago to over £20 million per year now. In the same period the island's population has declined from over 5000 to around 4000 people.

3. St Helena can only be reached by sea. Access is via the (UK Government subsidised) Royal Mail Ship St Helena (the 'RMS'), built in 1990 with an expected working life of 20-25 years. The Government now needs to decide how to replace the ship. In 2004 it commissioned a feasibility study which considered a range of access options and concluded that an airport could generate higher levels of economic development on the island than any shipping option. In March 2005 the Government announced its intention to establish air access for St Helena, subject to satisfactory contract bids and a rigorous environmental impact assessment. In May 2007 it re-tendered the contract to design, build and operate an airport for the island.

4. Since then the financial climate has changed. First, the cost of the airport is considerably higher than anticipated. The estimated cost has risen from under £100 million at the initial announcement in 2005 to over £300 million now. Second, the economic conditions the UK faces present serious challenges which force review of short term spending priorities. National public finances are stretched, the value of the international development budget (from which financial support to the Overseas Territories is funded) has dropped in many countries (because of depreciation of sterling against the US dollar), and urgent new pressures for aid have to be met. These considerations change the context in which the Government agreed to start the air access project. In December 2008 the Government announced a pause in the airport contract negotiations (referred to by many St Helenians as 'the Pause').

5. The purpose of this consultation was to seek the views of interested parties before taking a final decision on whether an airport is currently the most appropriate option for access to St Helena.

Options on which views are sought

6. The Government is considering three options:

- a) Go ahead with the airport now ('Option A')
- b) Decide now not to build the airport and commission a new ship ('Option B')
- c) Defer a decision for a period of up to five years. ('Option C')

7. None of these options represents a reduction in the current level of access to the island, and the Government's commitment to ensure access is not in question.

8. The Government's view is that in the current economic climate Option C, to defer a decision for a period of up to five years, would appear to be the most appropriate choice. However, it has said it is open to other views and will make its decision in the light of views received through this consultation.

9. The consultation sought views from all interested parties on:

- the three options, in the light of the current climate;
- how each of the three options would affect them or the organisation they represent; and
- whether there was any further information or proposals that the Government should take into account before reaching a decision.

10. The consultation did not seek to re-open discussion of any of the other access options that were considered as part of the 2004 Feasibility Study, but did invite proposals on how any of the options identified could be modified to be more acceptable to interested parties.

11. The consultation was intended for St Helenians¹, both resident in St Helena and expatriates. It was also intended for any other stakeholders and interested parties with an interest in access to St Helena or with an interest in the overall use of the Government's development budget. These groups could include representatives of potential investors and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

B. CONDUCTING THE CONSULTATION EXERCISE

How the consultation was carried out

12. The Consultation was carried out in accordance with the criteria of the Government's Code of Practice on Consultation ('the Code of Practice'), which are printed inside the back cover of the Consultation Document.

13. The consultation period began on 9 April 2009, with the publication of a Consultation

¹ St Helenians are often referred to as 'Saints', and that name is used from time to time in this document.

Document, and ran until 31 July 2009. Efforts were made to bring the consultation to the attention of all those for whom it was intended: Saint Helenians around the world, through the use of radio, press and internet, and other potentially interested parties through their representative groups or directly in the case of those with a known interest.

14. The Consultation Document described the scope of the consultation and the questions on which it sought views, and provided relevant background information in a number of annexes, so making the document self-contained.

15. It also explained how to become involved in the consultation. Addresses were provided for responses by post or e-mail. In addition, and in line with the Code of Practice's emphasis on accessibility, a series of meetings were planned, in the UK and on St Helena, Ascension and the Falklands, to reach those stakeholders who would not necessarily be able to or comfortable with responding to a purely written consultation. An independent facilitator was appointed to manage these meetings, and to record all views expressed.

16. The intention of the meetings was to reach as wide a body of St Helenians as feasible, particularly those who would not be likely to respond in writing, and do so in a way which encouraged them to say freely what they thought. There was therefore a focus on meeting private individuals in one to one and small group meetings, as well as larger group and public meetings. All public meetings allowed time at the end for one to one conversations with the facilitator, for those who did not want to express their views in public. This option was taken up by between two and eight people after each meeting, the meetings ranging in size from about 30 to 70 people. In meetings with local organisations, government and businesses, department heads and team leaders as well as top management were encouraged to give their views on how the options would affect them and their organisation. Care was taken to ensure that meetings were not confined to the capitals (Jamestown in St Helena and Georgetown in Ascension), to which a number of residents did not routinely travel. And in St Helena, a radio phone-in provided an opportunity for people who were not able to come to any meetings to express their views.

17. Meetings in the UK and St Helena took place in June, and those on Ascension in July. Meetings in the Falklands were planned for July, but exceptionally adverse weather conditions prevented travel. Alternative steps were taken to facilitate response by contacting managers of the main employers of Saint Helenians in the Falklands and asking them to highlight the main points and questions of the consultation to their staff, remind them of the forthcoming deadline, and assist with collecting views. A simple form which listed the options and provided space for any comment on reasons was provided to assist them with this process.

Summary of the response

Numbers

18. More than 3500 people responded to the consultation. Of this total, some 2420 responses were in the form of campaign letters or petitions; 108 responses were in writing; and over 1000 people² participated in the meetings in St Helena, Ascension and the UK. There is a limited amount of double counting in these figures, as some participants in meetings followed up with written responses, and some who signed campaign letters or petitions also wrote or participated in discussions³. A consultation is not a vote, but a qualitative exercise to seek evidence, so this is not a cause for concern. Indeed, while petitions are useful in demonstrating the level of interest and people's preferred options, the richer response provided through letters or participation in meetings is welcome and helpful in analysing what people's main underlying concerns are, and what sort of policy choices would best address them. Even taking this duplication into account, the numbers of responses is high in relation to the size of the target group and by comparison with participation in the 2002 referendum, and demonstrates the strength of interest in the question of access to St Helena. For example, the rate of participation in public meetings on the island on this topic was significantly higher than that for discussion of the constitution, which was under consideration around the same time.

Composition of respondents

By sector

19. Most responses came from **private individuals**, writing in their personal capacity. Leaving aside the petitions and campaign letters, more than half the participants in meetings on St Helena (about 550 people) and almost all those on Ascension (about 240 people) and the UK (about 20 people) were individuals speaking personally on their own behalf. About 60% (64 items) of the written response is from private individuals.

20. **Business** interests are represented by investors, financiers, service providers and representative bodies, both in larger companies and small-scale or individual investors. On St Helena the Chamber of Commerce, the Bank of St Helena, two major companies and a number of individual investors, between them accounting for a large majority of St Helena's private sector, took part in meetings. 26 written responses were received from local and international businesses, about a quarter in number of the written responses, and including all those previously known to have an interest.

² Including participants in meetings with organisations as well as private individuals

³ A small amount of duplication within petitions – less than 1% of total signatures – has been subtracted from total figures.

21. From **government and official bodies**, St Helena’s Governor, its Legislative Council, all government heads of department including the police department senior team, and the St Helena Development Agency contributed in meetings on St Helena. This was supplemented in written consultation by responses from the St Helena government (SHG)’s UK Representative, the UK Overseas Territories Association, UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum, and the Chief Islander of Tristan da Cunha.

22. **Civil society** on St Helena was represented by the National Trust and the Heritage Society, the Citizenship Commission and a Young People’s Group. The RSPB (UK) additionally made a written contribution, but no other British NGOs did so.

23. **Figure 1** below illustrates the share of the written responses to the consultation contributed by each sector⁴.

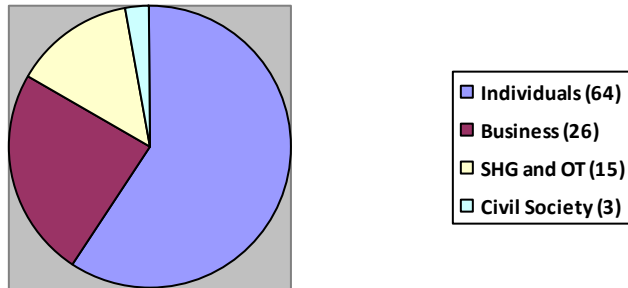


Figure 1: Share of Written Responses by sector

By location

24. In terms of location, most contributors to the consultation are based on St Helena. More than 1600 (two thirds) of the total campaign signatures (covering all campaign options) are from St Helena, as are about a quarter of the written responses from individuals. Turnout at all meetings in the oral consultation on Saint Helena was high, covering about 550 individuals, as well as the business, government and civil society participants .

25. On Ascension, the oral consultation reached about 240 people, and 190 campaign signatures come from Ascension. On the other hand, written responses from Ascension are in single figures, possibly because they expected the oral consultation meetings,

⁴ It is not possible to illustrate the breakdown of the oral consultation with such precision, but the broad picture it would present would be similar. It is assumed that all signatories of petitions do so in their personal capacity

and preferred to contribute by that route.

26. The Falklands contributes around 190 signatures to the campaigns. Of these just over 100 use a form that allows more space for personal comment. Where it does so, this comment is drawn on to describe reasons and impact from the Falklands. As with Ascension, other written response is low. As noted on page 5, bad weather prevented the holding of meetings on the subject in the Falklands.

27. Many St Helenians in the UK (who were not consulted at the time of the referendum in 2002) also participated. 275 sent campaign letters to MPs, around 140 signed other campaign letters, and about half of the written response from private individuals is from UK based respondents (though these are not all Saints). Many of the business responses are UK based, as is one of the contributions from civil society.

28. Small numbers of responses come from elsewhere: South Africa, the USA, and about ten cases where it is not possible to identify the location of the respondent. Other Overseas Territories organisations, and the Chief Islander of Tristan da Cunha contributed in writing, as did the Honorary Consul of France on St Helena, who has responsibility for the French properties there, including Napoleon's tomb.

29. **Figure 2** below illustrates the location of responses by private individuals, whether through campaigns, written responses or participation in meetings. The figures are necessarily approximate because of the difficulty of assessing precise numbers participating in meetings.

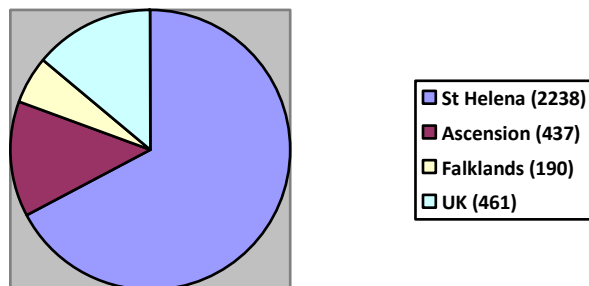


Figure 2: Approximate location of responses from private individuals in campaigns, written responses and participation in meetings

C. KEY FINDINGS

30. This section will outline the main themes which were raised consistently by respondents, before considering, in section D, the full range of responses received for each question.

Reactions to the Pause and the Consultation

31. Neither December's pause in negotiation nor the consultation was well received by most Saint Helenians. In almost every meeting, participants on St Helena said they felt disillusioned, and a sense of disbelief, distrust or betrayal when the Pause was announced. A number of individuals expressed frustration at being asked their views again, and some said they doubted they would be listened to, whatever they said. Morale on St Helena is very low, a point made both in discussions on St Helena (with business, government and private individuals) and in written responses: as one noted, the island is 'more dejected and lacklustre than ever before'.

32. Most respondents felt it inappropriate to compare funding needs in the Overseas Territories with demands in developing countries, where the issues are different. Many emphasised that they are British, serve Britain well (for example in the armed forces) and should not have to compete for funding with developing countries. Some drew attention to legal and policy commitments to the Overseas Territories.

Options

The preferred option

33. As is illustrated in **Figures 3 and 4** below, a strong majority thought that Option A, (going ahead with the airport now), was the best option for the island and its future. 69% (1672 individuals) of the petition signatories, 80% (87 responses) of the written consultation, and a significant majority of those who responded orally (at least 70% in all groups and in some cases much more) took this view.

Figure 3: Petitions

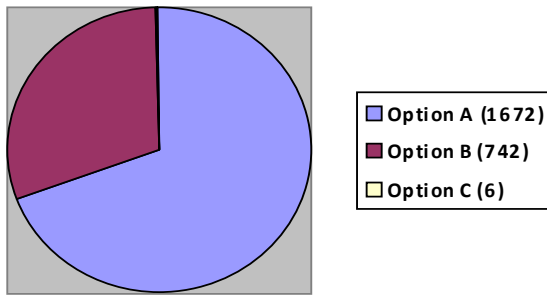
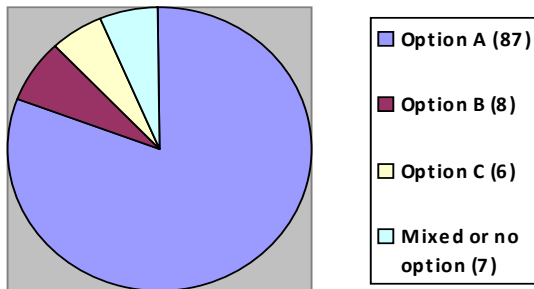


Figure 4: Written responses



34. While different groups emphasised different elements (these will be elaborated further in section D), the fundamental point made was that St Helena's economy is so weak and its population declining so much that it needs a major impetus now to halt this decline. Most of those leaving the island are working age people, leaving elderly people and young children behind, with adverse consequences on the island's social fabric as well as its economy. Access to adequate health provision is constrained. Supporters of both air access and sea access shared this assessment, and agreed that better access is the potential catalyst for halting the island's decline and rebuilding its economy. But while some support faster ships and other sea based options, a large majority of respondents do not believe that continuing access by sea can provide the means to a vibrant economy, and note that it has failed to do so in the last twenty years. Most, whether supporters of air access or a replacement ship, fear that deferring a decision for up to five years will take the island beyond the point where decline can be reversed.

The response to Option C (the Government's preferred option)

Affordability and the current economic climate

35. Virtually no-one (about 25 people, less than 1% of total respondents) sympathised

with the Government's preferred option, Option C (to defer a decision for a period of up to five years and to reconsider the economic case when conditions are right), or supported the 'affordability' premise of the Government's argument. In most meetings and in the written responses strong anti-Option C views are expressed, and powerful language is used, as illustrated by the following written comments by individuals on the island: Option C is 'suicide for the island'; 'C will exacerbate outward migration, leading to D – decline, decay and desertion'; 'Another five year delay would starve the island of any opportunity to recover, as more people leave, pushing the island beyond the point of no return'. A major private sector employer on the island said it might not be able to survive another five years, as did several small investors. There is a strong sense that further delay will take the island to a point where – largely because of continuing population decline - recovery will no longer be possible.

36. A range of views were expressed, mainly by business and private individuals, on the specific question of affordability and the current economic climate. One strand of opinion did not acknowledge that costs were so high as to call the project into question, noting that Heathrow extension and Crossrail are going ahead despite the economic climate, that the cost is barely more than that of a computer glitch in a major department, and that £300 million⁵ over the next five years is not a significant portion (they estimated around 1% per year on average) of the aid budget. This group (and others) also observed that costs would be likely to be higher after a period of delay, and the St Helena population lower. A different view, most strongly articulated by the St Helena Chamber of Commerce, did acknowledge the UK's financial challenges, and competing demands, but thought that St Helena access was a question of a different order: it affected the whole future survival of St Helena, and should be considered in that light. A number of others, business, government and private individuals, thought that it made sense to invest into a recession, so as to be ready when investors appeared, rather than wait until then to start. One observed that there was in any case no guarantee that the UK would have the funds available after a delay. Others pointed out that by then contractors may not be interested, given the history.

37. A small number of private individuals (single figures) did think that the costs of air access were too high to go ahead as planned, especially in the current financial situation. A handful thought this argued for Option C, while others thought it led to either a less ambitious and costly airport proposal, or to a replacement ship.

38. Amongst the written responses are technical comments from two major consulting groups about the possibility of making the air access option less costly overall, and comments on financing possibilities from St Helena Government and a group of financial experts, who consider a range of options which would reduce the cost to the

⁵ Some people thought this figure included items which should not be considered part of the costs of a stand alone airport project. Others (including among the crew of the RMS St Helena ('the RMS')) thought costs for a replacement ship could be higher than estimated.

British Government.⁶

Uncertainty

39. Uncertainty is mentioned frequently, by businesses, government, and private individuals, as one of the reasons why they consider Option C difficult, and the question has been asked whether it is the uncertainty in itself that worries them, or the fact that the air access project has been halted. It is worth looking further at what people mean by uncertainty and its consequences in this context. A number of private individuals refer to the emotional drain and frustration that prolonged uncertainty can cause (at least one person noting that they would rather go ahead with a ship than have continued uncertainty about an airport). A number (in government and business as well as private individuals) talk about the difficulties of planning when one is not sure what one is planning for.

40. Others look at a broader picture and fear that continued uncertainty will lead to further emigration by young people who see no reason not to pursue opportunities elsewhere, so exacerbating population decline. One St Helena Government employee reported that 'Immigration numbers have declined since the 'Pause' and this year has been very slow, whereas last year we were inundated' (as people started returning in expectation of the airport). Business respondents note that investors do not invest into uncertainty, and that St Helena will miss out on investment which is needed now to strengthen the economy (at least two of the investors who responded in writing to the consultation confirm that they would not invest further were Option C selected). One individual at a public meeting on St Helena observed that, given the history and lack of trust, 'No-one will be prepared to invest until they see diggers in the ground'.

Impact

Impact on the island and its future

Population decline

41. St Helena's population declined by almost 20% between 1998 and 2008 (from 4913 to 3981 individuals), and the composition of the population changed. People over 60 increased from 760 to 1034, while all other age groups saw a decline. There was a significant fall in birth rate, shown by the drop in pre-school numbers from 312 to 166.⁷ Most of the decline comes from emigration of working age Saints, usually to Ascension,

⁶ Some of these proposals are commercially sensitive, and will not be described here. Their feasibility will be examined by relevant experts and advisors.

⁷ Information from A Muir, Social Development Planner, St Helena

the Falklands or the UK for employment⁸. Many who are parents leave their children behind in the care of grandparents.

42. These figures and potential forward projections based on them are a cause of concern for all sections of the St Helena population (and for both airport and replacement ship supporters). Businesses talk of the customer base being too low to be profitable or to justify expanding services even where there is demand, and the difficulty of finding and retaining suitable staff. Government talks about a small and shrinking tax base, of the difficulty of recruiting staff and of providing services to an aging population; civil society has similar concerns about finding people to work with them or contribute subscriptions to support their work; and families worry about separation, and its effects, particularly on children. In different meetings, individuals highlighted problems with development and with behaviour of children on the island; elsewhere, a member of Council in Ascension noted that children there were more settled in family life. An individual at a public meeting expressed a view that St Helena was becoming an old people's home – with no-one to look after the residents.

43. A high percentage of St Helenians who had left to work on Ascension confirmed that they would prefer to be on St Helena, with their families, but that there was no employment or opportunities for them there. Many said they would be interested in working on airport related business and some had already sent CVs to the potential contractor (who has expressed an intention to use St Helenian skills where possible). A number expressed fears about the consequences of any downsizing by employers on Ascension, where there is no right of abode. If this happened, some said they would go to the UK, but a number would return to St Helena, where they would be users of services without necessarily being able to find work, or contribute their previous remittances. A small number of UK based St Helenian respondents also said they would consider returning if there were opportunities for them. The strongly expressed view by all groups was that population decline will only stop when there is a stronger economy and better employment opportunities on St Helena.

The weak economy: salaries, jobs and inward investment

44. St Helena's income comes mainly from the UK government subsidy and remittances from St Helenians working overseas⁹. About 70% of employees work in the public sector. Average salaries are about £4500, less than on Ascension and the Falklands (in both of which they were said to be at least double). Taken with a high cost of living (as

⁸ While it is not possible to draw conclusions from one example, it can be noted that the ship going to Ascension in mid June took out 103 St Helenians, while it brought back only 54 on its return journey. Most of the members of the young people's group planned to leave St Helena for work.

⁹ In 2007/08, British Government support totalled 77% of GNP (St Helena Government economist). Small amounts also come from agriculture, fishing, mooring fees for yachts, tourists (currently averaging 19 people per week). St Helena's exports in 2007/08 were 3% of GNP.

so much needs to be imported), many people find it difficult to manage on these sums. For example, one man said he limited his trips into Jamestown because of high fuel costs. Another individual observed 'Day to day you do not see the decline, until someone else leaves, or something is in short supply, or you notice your money is not going far enough'. One major employer on the island said they could offer better salaries if their profits were greater.

45. Others – in particular the Young People's Group – commented on the lack of opportunity to use skills or pursue career ambitions on the island. This was emphasised also by St Helenians on Ascension.

46. Most people recognised that for salaries and opportunities to increase there had to be an injection of new money into the economy. The St Helena Development Agency (SHDA) pointed out that only two outside investors have invested since 2000. SDHA also pointed out that, given the history, other outside investors would not come until they saw work on an airport started. This view was repeated by a head of department in St Helena Government, who said that once she explained access arrangements, potential investors had told her she was wasting their time. Individuals in public meetings said some (mostly small scale) investors were already putting a pause on their consultations until this was resolved; and in the written responses three relatively large scale, serious potential investors confirm that, while they would seek to create opportunities for locals through their investments, they would not invest if Options B or C were chosen¹⁰.

47. Some reservations about inward investment and whether it would bring benefits for the whole island, rather than just a few, or whether it would change the culture of the island were expressed by a number of private individuals. This is discussed in more detail below, in Section D under discussion of Option B (paragraph 95).

Infrastructure

48. The poor state of infrastructure on the island and the lack of sufficient funds to make necessary improvements (whether to attract tourists and investors or simply to improve quality of life for the island) was highlighted by businesses, government and numerous private individuals. In particular, the cost of fuel (because of small storage facilities); the state of the water and electricity supplies; maintenance of roads; poor wharf facilities and the need for a jetty at Ruperts Bay, to separate passenger and cargo transfers; inadequate housing stock; and lack of money to repair or restore heritage buildings were mentioned by both those who preferred air access and those who did not. As the Citizenship Committee pointed out, improvements in infrastructure (some of which is currently included in the air access project) would benefit the island regardless of which access option went ahead.

¹⁰ This includes two (paragraph 40) who referred specifically to Option C

Impact on individuals

Individual investors

49. A number of individual St Helenians have invested in the island on the strength of air access being developed and leading to additional work in construction, to more tourists, and to a bigger customer base arising from both tourists and from returning St Helenians. In one to one meetings, a few of these investors described their current position.

- One who invested around £250,000 in 2005 geared at the potential tourism market notes that without these tourists he cannot recover his costs. He added that developing an export business (rather than face to face selling) is difficult, because of volume and contract terms, and his intention and business plan had been to sell direct to tourists.
- Another returned from the UK in 2006 to settle, with the prospect of an airport. He invested significant sums in a construction business. But he finds that with the population continuing to dwindle there is only a limited market. He cannot afford to continue and is returning to the UK. He will not return to St Helena without an airport. He added that with a ship the costs to business in travel time and frequency are too high, and he has problems maintaining stock: he cannot keep everything in stock, but has trouble waiting for supplies to arrive: especially if they turn out to be wrong or faulty and have to be returned.
- A third example, a large investor in construction and plant, who had imported various pieces of machinery, said that he had worked in Ascension, and came back in 2003, gearing up for an airport. He had had expressions of interest from the potential contractors – for whom it was more effective to hire his equipment than to bring it in from outside. He would create employment for others. He has plenty of friends and ex-colleagues on Ascension who would want to come back if there was enough going on. But without airport work there is not much market.

50. According to the Chamber of Commerce, who had carried out a survey of its members, losses from investments already made because of the Pause totaled £19.4million.

Healthcare

51. A high proportion of private individuals raised healthcare issues. On Ascension and in the UK it was given as one of the reasons why people might not be inclined to go back to St Helena to live or to make longer visits. A number of different elements were raised. One concerned the difficulty of recruitment, for example for nurses. One gave an example of qualified nurses who choose to work in other sectors or go to Ascension and work in non-professional roles because of higher salaries. This led to efforts to recruit

expatriates at higher cost, but it was proving difficult to find people willing to work in St Helena, partly because of its isolation. Shortage of nurses was demonstrated by, for example, none being available to accompany seriously ill patients going to South Africa for treatment.

52. Other issues concern time taken for diagnosis, receiving drugs if they were not in stock, and getting to South Africa if that was necessary, especially if the ship had just left. One woman who was sailing to Cape Town for medical treatment said she would have been able to have her operation sooner if air travel had been available; another returning from an operation said she found the journey long. Ship crew noted that deaths have occurred on the ship because of delays in reaching specialist healthcare. Others noted that some patients are not able to fly; some noted that sea freight vessels with limited passenger capacity should be sought, to supplement air access.

Education

53. Education was a concern particularly for parents. The Government of St Helena confirmed that, as with nurses, recruiting qualified teachers was difficult. A number of parents said that the curriculum was limited, and that, for example, there was no provision for anything beyond core subjects, particularly in arts or music. One woman, based on Ascension, said that she had already taken her grandchild there, where she was doing better than on St Helena, and at least two parents on St Helena (one an employee of the Bank of St Helena and one a business woman) said that they were considering leaving the island to further their children's education, if there had not been improvement by the time the children reached secondary school age.

Family separation

54. Family separation is one of the biggest problems identified by private individuals. This was highlighted most strongly in relation to the issue of parents going offshore to work, because of low salaries and lack of opportunities on St Helena, and leaving their children behind in the care of grandparents or other family members. The St Helena government representative in the UK noted that there are about 150 children and young people in informal foster care of this sort. While the parents leave with the best of intentions, to improve the family's economic welfare, their move involves sacrifices, and there are social costs for children's development; for grandparents' right to be grandparents, not parents or childminders; and for St Helena's previously close knit family structure. Greater investment and a stronger economy in St Helena would reduce the need for parents to work offshore, but for those who continued to do so, faster access would allow them to interact more regularly with family. This was a point made most frequently by respondents on Ascension, who emphasised the importance for them of a fast and regular link between Ascension and St Helena.

55. A number of people on St Helena, especially older people, regretted that their children and grandchildren who lived offshore were not able to visit more often. One

woman, whose son served with British forces in Afghanistan, noted that although she had seen him, because he paid for her to travel to South Africa, his leave was not long enough to allow him to return to the island to visit. On Ascension, most employers understand the reality of the time needed to travel to St Helena; but St Helenians living in the UK frequently noted that they would have to use all their annual leave to make a worthwhile trip home, and many said they were not in a position to take unpaid leave. One man, currently on Ascension, but previously in the UK, said he went home last year for Christmas with his whole family for the first time since the 1980s, because his UK employer did not allow so much time away at Christmas. This sentiment was echoed by St Helenians in the UK. One manager on Ascension said it would also be a benefit for employers if their staff did not have to be away for so long when they took leave¹¹. Many also highlighted the prohibitive cost of travel to St Helena.

56. Specific examples were given of family emergencies, where people were not able to travel home in time before the death of a family member, sometimes with the consequence that children were left without family support for some time, until a parent could return.

D. SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

57. Section C describes the key issues of concern that were raised by the majority of respondents. This section breaks down that information further, to look at the full range of responses provided, and to look at what sections of the population held particular views. It will consider all three of the questions asked in the consultation, but will take the first two together, as they are interconnected.

Options and impact

58. As is noted above, a strong majority – over 70% - supported Option A, to go ahead with the airport now. This was broadly consistent across all sectors of respondents, though the emphasis and the reasons given differed.

Business response

59. 26 written responses came from business, and a number, including small private investors, participated in meetings on St Helena. Details of the respondents are contained in the annex.

60. Some of these respondents confined their comments to services they could provide,

¹¹ Although the ship journey from Ascension to St Helena takes only 2 or 3 days, it is usually necessary to wait for the ship to complete its cycle to South Africa and back to St Helena before it is possible to get a ship back to Ascension, so necessitating an absence of several weeks.

such as sea freight (which all respondents considered to be necessary, whatever future option was taken forward), or air cargo provision; or to discussion of requirements in an interim period, whether based around extending the life of the RMS or relying on charter provision. Of others, one niche tour operator favoured a replacement ship, suggesting that St Helena's attraction for niche tour operators is the fact that it is inaccessible and does not have an airport, and one environment consultancy acknowledged the possibility of deferral, but emphasised that if that were to happen it would be necessary to provide support in the interim period to maintain momentum to conserve natural and historic features. All other business respondents supported Option A, with some providing technical comment about potential possibilities for reducing airport cost, through use of recent technical developments which might allow a shorter runway to be used, and some putting forward alternative financing arrangements, based on private as well as public involvement.

61. The main reasons businesses gave for their choices were difficulties of access under current arrangements, which made it difficult to monitor investments and to receive spare parts and supplies; too small a customer base to be profitable, and a limited pool of skills and workforce on the island, with risks that workers would leave for better salaries on Ascension or the Falklands. Some were concerned about inability to provide professional training or skills updating for staff, where this had an overseas element. But some respondents noted scope to expand (for example export of fish) or invest (for example in a hotel/resort) if there were faster and more reliable access. For most small investors who had invested on the back of airport plans there were fears that they will lose their investment (and matching concerns shared by the Bank of St Helena about their potential bad debts). Some who returned to St Helena to invest are planning to leave again. Some small employers said they may have to cut costs and lay people off. The largest employer on St Helena after government (just over 200 employees), feared it would not survive Option C. Many mentioned difficulties in planning during uncertainty.

St Helena Government and Overseas Territories bodies' response

62. Fifteen written responses came from St Helena Government and Overseas Territories bodies, and St Helena Government and its departments and agencies participated actively in meetings on St Helena. Full details of respondents are provided in the Annex.

63. The Chief Islander of Tristan da Cunha noted that while an airport would be very helpful to St Helena it would do nothing for Tristan. All others support Option A, the only variant to the existing proposal being that it needs to include a link to Ascension.

64. The main reasons this group gave for their views were their concerns, as government, about the state of the economy and population decline, and the difficulties they faced in attracting people (investors, tourists, staff for posts that could not be filled locally, returning Saints, including Saints visiting family for holidays) with current access

arrangements. They noted low morale across the workforce, and loss of skills. Low wages and salary levels contributed to people leaving the island, but in the current economy they were powerless to fix that. Constraints in their budgets meant inability to invest in staff development, or offer any overseas training or to maintain services, improve infrastructure or conserve the natural and built heritage. Like business respondents they highlighted difficulties in planning during uncertainty; and said they would welcome the challenges which change would bring.

Civil Society response

65. Although civil society's response was limited in number, those who did respond engaged actively in discussion in St Helena. Both participants in meetings and respondents in writing are listed in the Annex.

66. The St Helena National Trust, the Citizenship Commission and the Young People's Group expressed support for Option A, the latter very strongly; the Heritage Society were mixed in their views (but agreed there should not be further delay), and the RSPB said it could not support any of the current options, but proposed a wider view, and a short period (up to two years) to consider a broader range of options.

67. What most of this group had in common was a focus on the need for sustainability, and for sensitive and well managed implementation of any option, to ensure the whole island was able to benefit, rather than only a few. They agreed on the need to improve St Helena's economy, and bring jobs, opportunity and education for young people, and to have money in the system to enable them to maintain St Helena's assets, which are what tourists will come to see. But it was necessary to ensure that investment is managed and sustainable, for the benefit of the island, and does not spoil its heritage, or lead to degradation of the way of life, environment and natural assets.

Responses from private individuals

Individuals on St Helena

68. About 330 individuals on St Helena took part in individual or small group discussions; about another 220 took part in public meetings or larger group sessions, and the written response contains around 15 items from residents of St Helena¹².

69. 12 of the 15 written responses favour Option A, 2 favour Option B, and one prefers faster shipping options, but would also like to see air access to Ascension. In one to one and small group meetings on St Helena around 75-80% of participants preferred Option A and all the public meetings had a strong Option A majority, in some cases in the

¹² 15 are clearly identifiable as such; some responses by e-mail do not show location.

region of 90%. Almost all others supported Option B, a replacement ship. A few said they were undecided, or could live with either A or B. Support for Option C was very limited (single figures) and more often people spoke about the problems delay would bring.

70. The main reasons this group gave were the poor state of the economy, which they experienced through low wages and difficulties making ends meet; population decline, as they saw many of their friends and family leave the island; population aging, with not enough people left to look after older people; worries about health, and the time taken for diagnosis, drugs and treatment; difficulties of visiting family offshore, because of cost and journey time; and families split as parents go offshore to work. A number reported that morale on the island was low.

80. Reasons given by supporters of Options B and C will be considered in detail in later sections, in paragraphs 90 – 102.

Individuals in Ascension, the Falklands, and the UK

81. About 240 people, employed by the main service providers on Ascension, but speaking as private individuals, took part in the discussions on Ascension, while very few responded in writing. About 20 people took part in meetings in the UK, and another 26 wrote. Bad weather prevented meetings on the Falklands, but a 'petition-type' form was sent via their employers which allowed space for personal reasons (and although the totals are included in the petitions section, reasons will be highlighted here). Only two people from the Falklands wrote individual letters. As with the other groups, many preferred to respond through petitions, which are described in the section below.

82. On Ascension there was a very strong majority for Option A, at social venues as well as in the workplace, and the three items of written response support Option A. For those based in the UK, about 65% of the written correspondence supports Option A¹³, as well as a majority of those who took part in meetings. Falklands' responses also show a strong majority for Option A. Most of those who did not support air access favoured Option B, a replacement ship. As in other groups support for deferral was very limited.

83. Reasons given varied to a degree between locations. Many of those on Ascension said they would much rather work on St Helena if there were jobs and economic opportunities to use their skills, and salaries they could live on. Several said they had sent their CVs to the potential airport contractors, and some described plans to invest in St Helena. This would avoid separation from their families and children, which many suffer. Falklands' respondents noted that with better jobs and wages, St Helenians would not have to leave the island and could enjoy a better life there. Although a

¹³ 17 of 26 items

handful of St Helenians living in the UK said they would consider going back, they were, in general, much more focused on short visits, to see family or for holidays.

84. Those on Ascension would also like to be able to go home more often for a shorter period to keep in closer touch with their families, especially where they have left children behind, and to be able to get home quickly in the event of a family emergency (several described tragic incidents of deaths in the family where they could not get home in time, and a number, particularly from the Falklands, mentioned healthcare limitations on St Helena). Length of journey is also an issue for the Falklands, where examples were given of the time taken to get back to St Helena; because of uncertainties over flight schedules to Ascension St Helenians tend to book one flight earlier than they need, then spend time on Ascension – usually about four days – waiting on the RMS, so extending their journey time more. Some Falklands' respondents said they would rather be able to spend more time with their families on St Helena during leave periods, rather than travelling. St Helenians in the UK focused on the difficulties they can have in taking sufficient leave from their employment to visit the island. Cost of travel was also an issue.

85. A number highlighted the additional opportunities for travel that they have on Ascension, and the isolation which some feel on returning to St Helena. For them an air link between Ascension and St Helena is a crucial element of the package.

Individual responses through campaigns and petitions

86. The largest group of individual responses was that provided through campaigns and petitions, which between them accounted for 2420 (69%) of total responses. There are a number of different types, all organised by interested individuals or organisations¹⁴. As noted above, 69% of petition responses overall support Option A, 31% Option B and 0.25% Option C¹⁵. This low response may have been because no-one organised a 'C' campaign, or because it is less usual to campaign for a preferred option. In any case, plain forms for all three options were available on demand from the access office in St Helena.

87. In support of Option A the 'St Helena Airport Consultation Response' refers to the Government's 2005 commitment and says that the decision not to proceed as promised with the airport project will condemn St Helena to inevitable and irreversible decline and offer no hope for a better future, whereas investment in an airport will help develop the economy and infrastructure so that St Helena can offer jobs to its young people, fund education, health and social services, and look after old and sick people. A second,

¹⁴ Except for the Falklands short form (which simply describes the three options and asks which people prefer and why) and was provided by the consultation facilitator to facilitate response when it became clear that meetings would not be possible.

¹⁵ Totals more than 100% because of rounding.

'Save our Airport', calls on the British Government to meet the commitment announced in 2005 to build an airport as soon as possible. It then says that an airport offers the best chance of increased prosperity and self-sufficiency for the island and its community and that without an airport social and economic decline will continue and the prospects for St Helenians will not improve. In addition, 275 Saints sent petitions to 4 British MPs, giving similar reasons.

88. Most Option B campaign forms do not individually include a reason, but come under a cover letter. This notes that most islanders accept that tourism would be of benefit to the island, but highlights the improvements to infrastructure which would have to happen before the island was ready for tourists, and the concern that a luxury hotel and golf course investment would take away the island's uniqueness. It concludes that they should work with what they have – an unspoilt island and maritime and environmental heritage – constructing a breakwater to create safer landing from cruise ships. Of those from the Falklands, reasons expressed in short forms favouring Option B include that sea access will allow the island to remain peaceful and quiet, free from drugs and disease, but that with an airport the island will become over populated; and that there are other things the money for an airport could be used for.

89. The Option C form from St Helena does not offer reasons. Two of the four Falklands forms do so. One emphasises the improvements to facilities which would have to be done before St Helena could welcome tourists. The other notes that given other needs on the island the money that could be spend on an airport should be spent on these before deciding if an airport is what is needed for further development.

Option B: a replacement ship

90. Most support for a replacement ship comes from the B petition (742 individuals, of a total campaign response of 2420 – 31%).

91. Of others, there are two institutional B supporters: a niche tour operator based in Switzerland; and representatives of the St Helena Heritage Society (though not all its individual members). All others supporters of a replacement ship are private individuals – 8 plus 1 with a mixed view (14%) of the 64 written responses which are from private individuals; and a minority of the private individuals who responded in the oral consultation.

92. A variety of reasons were given. The niche tour operator, a provider of specialist cruise experiences that has been offering trips to St Helena for ten years, and the only business respondent to support the ship option, notes that St Helena's unique tourist selling point is that it does not have an airport. He notes that if it did have an airport it

would not be of interest to the niche tour operators¹⁶.

93. The views of private individuals can be divided into those that are specifically about sea access (and how to improve it) and those that are about wider issues linked to the development of tourism and investment associated with the air access option.

Focus on sea access

94. Some respondents focused their comments narrowly on the benefits of sea access, and how it could be improved. They observed that the ship was part of St Helena's tradition and maritime history, and maintained the island's quaintness and heritage. Some thought it provided a good introduction to the island, and provided an opportunity to meet people, to relax and unwind. They also noted that some people cannot fly, or prefer not to. They thought that faster more frequent ships, perhaps achieved by having two ships, would help meet some of the needs in relation to health and employment. Some people expressed concern for the employment of the RMS crew.

Wider issues

95. The most common concern among supporters of Option B is about wider issues and the changes that tourism and investment could bring to the island. Some fear that tourism by air will bring too much change and risks spoiling the island's culture, environment and way of life, while sea access would allow tourism to be developed more sensitively and maintain the tranquillity of the island. This group do not support the development of a luxury hotel/resort with villas and a golf course, as has been proposed by a potential major investor, on the grounds that this might benefit only a few, rather than the island as a whole, and could cause the gap between rich and poor to grow. Some feared that employment opportunities would go to better skilled foreigners, and small local businesses might struggle to compete. They also feared that too many tourists could bring disease or drugs to the island, put too much burden on the island's infrastructure and services, and fail to respect St Helena's heritage. In other words, they feared that air access was for the benefit of tourists rather than islanders, and that increased tourism would not bring benefits to the island. In this regard, one noted that St Helenians may not be able to afford air tickets in any case.

96. Some of this group also worried about the potential role of private investment in the airport project, in the light of the project's history¹⁷. While views about the desirability of private funding differed between respondents there was a sense (expressed for

¹⁶ In contrast, the views of the St Helena Tourism Team can be noted: they note that the number of agents promoting St Helena holidays is currently only 2, and that others have been approached, but are sceptical about the travel option, including time taken to plan.

¹⁷ As Annex D of the consultation document shows, initial discussions with potential private sector investors broke off in 2004, when St Helena Government and DFID cancelled the invitation process after considering responses, and agreed that they would conduct full feasibility work.

example in the public meeting in the Consulate Hotel in St Helena) that public control was important, as was distribution of benefits to the island as a whole, not just a few individuals.

97. Other individuals, who generally shared concerns about maintaining the island's way of life, took the opposite view, observing that without natural resources St Helena had to rely on tourism; that the numbers involved, when added to the local residents, were not more than St Helena's population had been ten years ago so should be manageable; and that an influx of tourists would help galvanise people to think more about their heritage and what they want to preserve. Island culture was changing anyway, because of population decline and separated families.

98. Reflecting on both these points of view, the Citizenship Commission, The Saint Helena Tourism Team, the St Helena National Trust and numerous individuals in St Helena, Ascension and the UK, highlighted the need to manage change, within a strategic framework that listened to islanders, guarded their interests, and addressed potential problems.

99. Finally, a small number of private individuals preferred a replacement ship because of fears that the airport option would not deliver what was planned or expected and would not lead to financial independence; some doubted that tourists would come in the necessary numbers, and others whether St Helena's infrastructure could cope if they did. One or two worried about the risk of air accidents, and whether St Helena had the capacity to deal with that.

Option C: deferral

100. Option C was not supported (less than 1% of total responses), and in many meetings as well as some of the written responses a strong anti-Option C view was expressed, both by supporters of air and sea access. Option C is also not well understood by some of those who did support it. Some of them would more accurately be described as supporters of 'A deferred' (as is illustrated by one UK based respondent, who observes that it would be churlish to insist on A at this point, given global economic downturn, but that a new ship would send morale into a downward spiral and the future for the island lies in an airport); others are an anti-airport voice (there are a few 'B/C' responses); and others are concerned only with the interim period, for which in some cases they can offer services.

101. Of those who support Option C as it is intended – that is, as a means of maintaining flexibility in the current economic climate – there were four types of reasons given: one, an understanding of global financial problems and competing spending priorities; second a sense that not all voices had been heard (for example that of civil society on St Helena) and that more consultation, based on a fuller picture of options,

could be beneficial; third that delay could be spent considering other possible options which may not have been available when original plans were made; and finally that there was a lot that needed to be done on St Helena (infrastructure, social structure) before it was ready for any package, whether ship or air based.

102. Two of those who envisaged delay (though neither an exclusively Option C supporter) noted that if there were delay the island needs financial support in the meantime to provide services, and to maintain momentum on conservation of natural and historic assets.

Any additional information or proposals which should be taken into account

103. The third consultation question asks whether there is any other relevant information or proposals which the Secretary of State should take into account. This section will include first, technical proposals which could make the current airport proposal less costly; second, financing proposals which could reduce the financial burden on the British Government; third proposals based on improving a future based on sea access; and fourth, other options which may have been considered previously or which are of peripheral interest to the main focus of the consultation. This section will simply summarise what was said in response to the consultation; technical or financial experts will evaluate the proposals where relevant.

Technical improvements to current airport proposals

104. A major engineering consulting firm with previous involvement in the air access project proposes that the Government should look again (quickly) at the types of aircraft that are now available or in development in the region, with a view to potential scope for reducing runway length. It should also look again at the possibilities of using Ascension as a scheduled stop and designated alternate. This would need the full involvement of the regulator, Air Safety Support International (ASSI).

105. Another firm of management consultants with previous experience of the project shares the view that it is worth looking again at the new aircraft which have been developed since the original feasibility study which may be able to operate with a shorter runway. One of its staff, offering a personal view, mentioned modern aircraft, such as the Bombardier C100 and C300 (planned to enter commercial service in 2013) which could operate from Walvis Bay, and require a shorter runway.

106. A Cape Town based firm of Consulting Engineers suggests going ahead now with useful preparatory work which would make the airport more cost effective, such as the marine works at Ruperts, and the access road as far as Longwood.

107. The potential contractor notes that it is willing and open to consider viable alternative solutions, and adds that due to this project's particular logistics and complexity a partnership relationship is needed between the parties.

108. The Government of St Helena notes the possibility of construction of a smaller, less expensive airport initially, while recognising this would be likely to require operating subsidies to providers to make seat prices affordable for St Helenians, and that the ultimate cost of an expanded airport could be higher. It also suggests exploration of non airport dependent air options, such as a sea-plane option, until a land-based solution could be afforded.

109. A number of individual St Helenians said they would be content with (or in some cases prefer) a smaller airport which focused on flights to Ascension. (A link with Ascension was regarded as an important element of the package by a large proportion of St Helenian individual respondents).

Financing possibilities

110. St Helena government proposes consideration of a public-private partnership, based on the notion that the existing funding should be regarded as having three elements; non airport-specific infrastructure; a public capital grant; and a private sector investment by time limited equity or by bond. The Governor highlights a range of potential new revenue opportunities. He proposes that an iterative process begin, to improve the confidence level in the suggested new funding streams, and to construct a model for ownership, control and reward that is equitable to all the parties involved. Further detail, submitted on a confidential basis, has been provided by a team of financial experts and will be examined by appropriate financial advisors.

Proposals relating to future sea based access

111. As noted above, many of the supporters of a replacement ship agree that St Helena's economy needs to be strengthened, but want to do that through sea based options, rather than through tourism by air. The most frequently mentioned option (by about a dozen private individuals, one niche tour operator and in the cover letter for the 'B' campaign) is to develop the economy based on cruise ships, which can bring large numbers of passengers to the island for short periods. To do so consistently it would be desirable to construct a breakwater, to enable cruise ships to dock and off-load passengers – there have been recent cases where rough sea conditions have made it impossible for cruise ships to dock and offload their passengers.

112. Not everyone agrees with this approach. One written response from a St Helenian based in the UK said cruise ships bring very little economic benefit to the island; an individual on Ascension said she once did a Caribbean cruise, and agrees cruise passengers spend all their money on board, not in the places they visit. And a

businessman on St Helena said that from his experience cruise ship passengers tend to spend very little on the island. They did not use hotels or restaurants, and his gift shop made an average of only £5 from a ship. He had found that if people stayed on the island they were more inclined to spend money.

113. Others suggested that more could be made of income from yachts (who pay mooring fees), through improvements to the jetty and to harbour and waterfront facilities. A private company on St Helena confirmed that they have future plans for safer mooring, but for now can only afford a temporary stop-gap, which will have to be replaced in a few years.

Other proposals

114. Other proposals included ideas for amphibious planes; sea planes; fast ferries; faster and more frequent shipping, between St Helena and Ascension; a fast ship service to Walvis Bay; tilt rotor aircraft; the possibility of looking for cheaper options for freight; greater use of Ascension; and, not linked specifically to transport, one individual queried whether St Helena could become an offshore financial centre; another noted that one reason why St Helenians who had worked in the UK might not want to return was because their pension would not be index linked; and a third suggested development of a scientific community, rather than a tourist plan.

115. These proposals are not explained in detail here, on the grounds that they have either been considered before, in the 2004 feasibility study, or that they are not central to the topic of this consultation.

ANNEX: THOSE WHO RESPONDED TO THE WRITTEN CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATED IN MEETINGS

1. WRITTEN RESPONSES

Business Respondents (26)

Adam Dunlop, Cable and Wireless
Bill Millington, Halcrow Group Limited
Burgh House Ltd (private limited company on St Helena)
Donald Hawkes, Andrew Weir Shipping Limited
Guy Wilmot, Blue Mountain Coffee Ltd, St Helena Trading (UK) Ltd
Hedley Thompson, Marlin Design
Henry Thorpe, W.A.Thorpe and Sons Ltd, Jamestown
Jeremy Blake, Purcell Miller Tritton LLP
Jim Leighton, Davis Langdon LLP
Kathryn Thorp, AECOM
KFD Wilkinson, Consulting Engineers, Cape Town
Management Team, Solomon and Company, St Helena
Michael O'Donovan, Managing Director, Eurojet Ltd
Pall Mall Consult
Patrick Williams, entrepreneur, clutch and brake services on St Helena
PD Thomson, Argos Georgia Limited
Peter Allport, Shelco
Peter Meihuizen, Meihuizen International
PRS Oberoi
Reto Greub, AfricanAirCargo
St Helena Chamber of Commerce (60 registered members)
St Helena Line Board
Steven Luke, Director, Arup Wales and NI
Tiziano Zanin, Impregilo
Tony Moloney, Atkins Management Consultants
Urs Steiner, Product Manager of Globoship, Switzerland

St Helena Government and agencies; individual Councillors; Overseas Territories institutions and the Honorary Consul of France on St Helena (15)

C Leo, elected representative on Ascension
Cathy Hopkins, Speaker of the Legislative Council, St Helena
Conrad Glass, Chief Islander, Tristan da Cunha
Councillor Mervyn Yon, St Helena
Councillor Stedson Francis, St Helena
Councillor Tony Green, St Helena
Governor/St Helena Government
Hon Anthony Leo, St Helena
Iain Orr, Biodiplomacy, UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum

Lilla Yon, Chief Education Officer, and senior managers, St Helena
Michel Dancoisne-Martineau, Honorary Consul of France, St Helena
St Helena Development Agency
St Helena Government UK representative
St Helena Tourism Team
Sukey Cameron, UK Overseas Territories Association

Civil Society Respondents (3)

Rebecca Cairns Wicks, St Helena National Trust
Sarah Sanders, RSPB
Young People's Group, St Helena

Private Individuals (64)

St Helena based (15)

Basil George, Jamestown
Brenda Moors-Clingham, Alarm Forest,
Cliff Huxtable, St Helena
HC and AR Roberts
Ian and Belinda Rummery, St Helena
John Turner, St Helena
Louise Blessington, St Helena
Lyn Thomas, Alarm Forest, St Helena
Margaret Blessington, St Helena
N and EE Dollery, Jamestown
Olive Brown, St Helena
Pat and Pam Henry, St Helena
Peter Johnston
Sharon Wainwright, St Helena
Tracey Williams, St Helena

Ascension Based (3)

Jolene Williams, Ascension
Kerry Benjamin, Ascension
Theresa Corker-Coleman, Ascension

Falkland Islands based (3)

Aubrey George, Falklands
John Clifford, Stanley,
Joint response from 4 individuals in the Falklands

UK based (26)

Alistair McLean
AMB Bell, Cornwall
Andrew Pearce

Anthony Savage, Fareham, Hants.
Chris Langham, London
Clive and Dorothy Warren
David Wanless, Tyne and Wear
David Wearing, Reading
Edward Baldwin, Cranbrook
Edward Roos, Epsom, Surrey
Errol Yon, UK
Gail Thorpe, Bath
Ian Bruce, UK
Jamie Jamieson
Jessica Hottinger, Reading
John Siraut
Joyce and Neil Johnson, Wales
June Jacobs, UK
K McMillan, UK
Marilyn Browell, UK
Maureen Boswell, UK
Mrs A Vincent-Prior, Portsmouth
Pamela Ward, UK
Reg Duncan, Shrewsbury
Roy and Vicky Beal, Oxford
Sarah-Lee Ward-Andrews, UK

UK Peers and MPs (6)

Andrew Rosindell, MP for Romford
Bob Russell MP, Chair, All Party Parliamentary Island of Saint Helena Group
John Austin, MP, Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Overseas Territories Group
Lord Jones of Cheltenham
Oliver Heald MP
Rt. Hon Lord Shutt of Greetland

Other or unspecified location (11)

Anonymous in confidence
Barbara Jones
Clifford Masters
Dorothy Johnson
Gratton-Cooper family
Lee Renshaw
Neal Terry
Nolan Phillips
RJ Glanville
Shorrna Thomas,
Thomas Weiss, USA

Campaigns and Petitions

1397	Forms supporting Option A
275	Petitions from Saints in the UK to (4) British MPs, for Option A
742	Forms supporting Option B
6	Forms supporting Option C

2. PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS

The purpose of the meetings was to improve access for those who might be less able or likely to respond to the consultation by letter or e-mail, and so the emphasis in all three locations was on private individuals, and on meeting them in locations and circumstances which they would find convenient and conducive to discussion. Therefore a number of sessions were held outside capitals; and to allow for individual or small group discussion opportunities were provided for one to one sessions, on a personal basis, after all meetings with organisations and after all public meetings.

To give an idea of scale, in relation to private individuals, approximate numbers of attendees at each meeting are included in brackets.

ON ST HELENA, BETWEEN JUNE 14 AND 22

Meetings with Business Organisations

Chamber of Commerce
Cable and Wireless, MD and team leaders
Solomon and Company, heads of sections
Bank of St Helena, Management and Board

Meetings with St Helena Government and government departments and agencies

The Governor
Legislative Council
Access Project Team
St Helena Development Agency
St Helena Government Heads of Department
Police Department senior team

Meetings with Civil Society Organisations

St Helena National Trust and The Heritage Society (in a joint meeting)
Citizenship Commission
Young People's Group

Meetings with private individuals

Three public meetings, in the Consulate Hotel, Jamestown; Kingshurst Community Centre; and Harford School (130)

Two meetings with St Helena Government employees, speaking as individuals (90)

Two receptions, including a mix of private individuals – teachers, medical professionals, business people, civil society - to provide opportunity for informal approaches (200)

Informal conversations with individuals on the main street in Jamestown, and at the wharf, as the RMS set off for Ascension (40)

Two one to one surgeries in Jamestown (6)

Weekend drop-in sessions at a number of locations all around the island: Half Tree Hollow, community centre and shop; Kingshurst Community Centre; Blue Hill; Sandy Bay; Ruperts Bay; Longwood and Levelwood, for those who did not normally travel into Jamestown or could not make it to the public meetings (55)

A Radio Phone in at Saint FM (to give an opportunity to anyone who could not get out to meetings) (2)

Passengers on the RMS, both coming to and leaving from St Helena (25)

RMS crew (22)

Prince Andrew School (pupils in two groups in Assembly).

MEETINGS IN THE UK, 6-8 JUNE

Drop-in sessions were held in London on the morning of 6 June and early evening of 8 June, and in Swindon on the afternoon of 7 June. (20)

A telephone call with one person located elsewhere.

MEETINGS ON ASCENSION ISLAND, 23-26 JULY

Meetings with Government bodies

Ascension Island Council
Ascension Island Administrator

Private Individuals

All the main employers on Ascension allowed time, during working hours, for their staff to join a meeting on the consultation. Staff attending these meetings spoke in their personal capacity and, as with meetings on St Helena, time was made available at the end of each meeting for those who preferred to give their views one to one.

Meetings with staff of:

Ascension Island Government (70)
US Military Base (14)
Interserve (40)
Sodexo (30)
SERCO (12)
VT Communications (35)
Obsidian Hotel (5)

At the weekend, informal conversations were held with private individuals in various weekend social venues (about 40 people, individually or in small groups):

Georgetown
The Volcano Club
Traveller's Hill
Two Boats
Traveller's Hill Sports Day
One Boat Golf Club