

Regional Airports Public Consultation
Department of Transport, Tourism, and Sport
Leeson Lane
Dublin 2
D02TR60

30 September 2019

RE: Policy Supports for Regional Airports

To whom it concerns,

Aer Lingus welcomes the opportunity to respond to the issues paper for consultation in respect of policy supports for regional airports.

At a general level, Aer Lingus is supportive of the existing Regional Airports Programme which is effectively restricted to airports that would be otherwise unable to fund certain safety and security investment adequately, primarily due to severe profitability challenges.

Firstly, Aer Lingus would be concerned if this policy approach were changed and resulted in the inclusion of Airports currently not reliant on state aid being included in future. Aer Lingus is also opposed to changes in the interpretation of the existing investment criteria within the scope of the Regional Airports support.

Both of these issues would set a bad precedent and adversely impact the incentive for airports to act as efficient commercial entities.

Secondly, Aer Lingus is conscious that certain stakeholders may try to make a link between the regulatory charges at Dublin Airport and the charging regime at regional airports. Aer Lingus believes that the charging regime at Dublin Airport is not a relevant consideration in the context of the Policy Supports for Regional Airports.

Aer Lingus remains supportive of the continuation of the Public Services Obligation (PSO) Air Services Scheme.

Regards,

