



PRESS RELEASE
17 July 2007

Travel Counsellors' launches UK's first website to record airport delays

One of the UK's leading, most innovative independent travel companies, Travel Counsellors has taken further action in its campaign against airport delays with the launch of the UK's first website that allows passengers to post information and feedback about delays they have encountered.

The company have launched the website in a further bid to force airports to cut unfair and unnecessary delays. This innovative site at www.ukairportdelays.co.uk allows customers to post specific information about waiting times at UK airports, including the latest news on check-in times, immigration, and security, plus any additional feedback and comments for other passengers to view.

Travel industry leader and innovator David Speakman, chairman and founder of Travel Counsellors, has been leading the call for immediate improvements to the way UK airports are operated and has even offered his services to airports free of charge to help them assess how they implement security procedures. The company's team of over 680 home-based agents across the UK have also been campaigning in their regions, raising awareness in their local press and appealing to their local MPs to support the campaign.

David comments "I fully appreciate the efforts of the government and airlines to impose increased security procedures and recognise that these are in place for all of our safety. However, I do not believe by adopting these we have to accept the lengthy queues that are becoming commonplace."

Speakman continues; "This website is the first of its kind to allow passengers to pinpoint exactly when, where and for how long they have been delayed while waiting for flights in UK airports. These results will enable us to form a body of evidence, showing that UK authorities need to take serious action."

With holidaymaker numbers increasing as we move towards summer, and no diminishing in the level of terrorist threat, David continues to push the campaign as customers brace themselves for further delays. He understands those bearing the brunt are reluctant to complain for fear of being labelled irresponsible and not caring about the terrorist threat, and this website will give them the opportunity to speak out.

The company will use the evidence taken from the website to further highlight the severity of the problem, enabling them to lobby the government on the need to make airports take responsibility and tackle the delays. The site is also an effective source of information for any passengers travelling through UK airports to find out about delays.

Speakman comments; "In my opinion it's the airports that are being irresponsible. They have the opportunity to show how efficiently they can overcome the problems of security through implementing better procedures and increasing resources, but at the same time having a system and a process that does not deter travellers".



Without exception, David Speakman believes the airport security issue is undermanned and suggests a simple solution is to scale up the process. However, for an immediate uplift in service, Speakman suggests a little more care and a better understanding of process would result in a 20% increase in throughput without any increase in staff.

He concludes; "The industry must now with one voice insist that airports look at improving their security processes, as otherwise they will unwittingly deliver to the terrorists the grid-lock of travel that they so crave. As an innovative, responsible company Travel Counsellors have created this website in order to give passengers the chance to have their say, enabling them to play an important part in making the UK authorities take action on this growing issue."

Visit the website at www.ukairportdelays.co.uk.

-ends-

ENDS

About Travel Counsellors: Travel Counsellors PLC is one of the UK's largest independent travel companies with turnover at the end of its last financial year (Oct 31 2006) of £175 million, a 17% increase year on year. Founded in 1994 it currently has over 780 travel consultants who work from home with the support of over 150 staff at the company's head office in the UK. The company also operates in Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, South Africa, Australia and the US. Travel Counsellors was the winner of the prestigious Queen's Award for Enterprise in 2003-2008, the technology category of the 2005 CBI Growing Business Awards and was voted 2006 Travel Agent of the Year by readers of the Guardian, Observer and Guardian Unlimited. In 2007 the company won the Accenture Innovation Award and the Outstanding Achievement Award at the Travel Weekly Globe Awards.