

**BEFORE THE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

In the matter of: :
: :
Notice of Proposed Amendments :
To Policy Regarding : **Docket No. FAA-2008-0036**
Airport Rates and Charges : :

Comments of Air France

Air France appreciates the opportunity to comment on the U.S. Department of Transportation's "Notice of Proposed Amendment to Policy Statement" (FAA-2008-0036).

We have great concerns about these proposed amendments, and we urge the Department of Transportation to withdraw them, as we believe they are inconsistent with international law and do not represent effective solutions for controlling congestion in US airports.

These concerns have been addressed by the International Air Transport Association, which comments and suggestions we fully support.

To be more specific:

1. Two-Part Landing Fees

We do believe that any congestion pricing system - and the proposed per-operation charge can be considered as one - is not an effective way to manage congestion. Air France, like most of international carriers, depends in large part on feed from local and regional airports to support our flights leaving the U.S.: therefore we cannot adjust our schedule to avoid peak without significant risks of losing connecting passengers.

2. Cost of Facilities Under Construction

We are strongly opposed to allowing airports to include pre-financing in their cost calculation, for the following reasons:

- Pre-financing through user charges has in practice been ultimately more expensive for airlines, passengers and the wider economy
- Pre-financing is unfair to airlines as there is no guarantee that airlines paying for future facilities will be the same as the airlines using the service when it comes on line
- Pre-financing through user charges is unnecessary and is not applied to other transport sectors where public sector financing is available
- Pre-financing is not consistent with ICAO Policies on Airport Charges

3. Cross subsidization

We are also strongly opposed to cross subsidization for the following reasons:

- Cross subsidization contradicts accepted ICAO principles that charges be directly related to the cost of providing those services.
- It often results in airlines and their passengers paying for facilities and services that they do not use and will not (or cannot) benefit from
- Cross subsidization will likely result in competitive distortions between full service carriers (that normally serve the primary hub airports) and low-cost carriers (that often support underutilized secondary airports).
- Cross subsidization will also lead to discrimination against international carriers (whose ability to utilize secondary airports is limited by either bilaterals or market realities) versus U.S. carriers (that are not constrained in their ability to fly to secondary airports).

We kindly request that the Department of Transportation withdraw these proposed amendments to the "Policy Regarding Rates and Charges".

Thank you for your consideration,

Yours sincerely,



Georges Lachenaud
Director Aviation Charges