

# BDC NOTES



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Mid January brought a very interesting event to Saudi Arabia, in the form of a Saudi British Airports Seminar.

The Seminar was held in the Jeddah Hilton Hotel and sponsored by General Authority for Civil Aviation (GACA) and UK Trade & Investment (UKTI). The visiting UK delegation was made up from representatives from British Airports Group (BAG).

The keynote introduction to the Seminar was from Mr. Alan McCartney, Vice Chairman of BAG, who set the scene for the day.

A welcome speech was given by HMA Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, who reminded the Seminar participants of the very long history of trade between the UK and KSA. HMA enlarged on the total expertise in the UK regarding Airport Design and Development Air Traffic Control and the important experience to implement privatization programmes. He brought to notice the recent introduction of a new to KSA airline operator, bmi. He also reminded the seminar of the recent successful introduction of the new Low Cost Domestic Airline, SAMA, under British management for its flight and maintenance operations.

Inauguration of the Seminar was by Engineer Abdullah M. N. Rehami, President of GACA, who explained the role of his Authority and welcomed the delegation.

Saudi Arabia has 28 Civil Airports, 4 International, 6 Regional and 18 Local. Presentations started with an introduction to the King Abdul Aziz International Airport (Jeddah) Development, given by Eng. Adnan Zuhairy, Project Director; Eng. Samir Eshky, Deputy Director Arch; Ibrahim Mandourah, Director of Planning and Architecture and Arch and Abdullah Fadhel Elahi, Project Architect.

Plans are well in place to provide significantly improved passenger and aircraft docking facilities, with full Air Bridges so to do away with the current bussing system. The actual new system will be deployed centrally between the main runways where the existing aircraft parking is situated.

The ultimate plan is to be fully operational during 2011. Since KKIA is such a busy airport, parallel projects will be running to upgrade the existing facilities. The Hajj Terminal alone has in recent years been operating at 70% over its designed capacity. The South Terminal Building (Saudi Arabian Airlines) is to be extended by 28%.

The North Terminal Building is to be extended by 20%. GACA anticipates a growth in foreign airlines using KKIA.

The Load Centres (Utilities) and Water Desalination Plants will be upgraded and extended to meet the much higher demands expected. The forecast is for nearly 18m passengers to be using KKIA by 2010, rising to nearly 22m by 2015.

During the presentations, Plans were revealed for other new airports. Significantly, 2006 saw a decree from HM King Abdullah, that the Madinah Airport shall be upgraded to full international status.

Currently Prince Mohammed International Airport handles about 3.8m passengers a year, including 0.75m Hajj Pilgrims and 1.7m Umrah Pilgrims. It is planned that the modernisation of PMIA will allow a considerable increase in international Umrah passengers to ease the pressure on KAIA. The projected capacity for PMIA is 12m passengers per year by 2014.