

Manufacturers Group Transport Report November 2013

Introduction

This report is based on both the results of the survey of members of the Manufacturers Group and free standing responses to an email following the announcement of the loss of flights from Newquay Airport. It is important to note however that because the numbers are so small that the statistical analysis is not sufficiently robust to presume that the sample is representative of manufacturing as a whole, or indeed the full Group. We have therefore set out the results in terms of relations with each other rather than absolutes so as to provide a picture of activity rather than a statement of level of activity. Where we asked you to rank choices the score is a weighted calculation. Items ranked first are valued higher than the following ranks, the score is a sum of all weighted rank counts.

Fifteen companies filled out the survey with a good size spread and 7 companies responded by email of which 4 also completed the survey. Thus we have 18 company responses.

Overall Activity

We asked in the first series of questions about the number of times you travelled out of Cornwall. Table 1 below gives the total; highest; lowest and average for the 4 destinations. The Overseas figure is dominated by one company that makes 1800 trips per year so we have also included the average without that. There is a reasonably even split between Other Southwest and London but interestingly twice the number to other UK.

Table 1: Business trips from Cornwall

Destination	Lowest	Highest	Total	Average
Other Southwest	6	200	560	47
London	0	200	646	46
Other UK	4	300	1136	81
Overseas	2	1800	2016	168
Overseas without 1800	2	50	216	18

Types of Transport

Table 2: Forms of transport for meetings outside of Cornwall

Item	Total Score	Overall Rank
Self drive	97	1
Train from Cornwall	79	2
Plane from Newquay	73	3
Train from other SW station	66	4
Plane from other SW airport	60	5
Taxi	30	6

Table 2 above sets out the methods currently used to undertake those visits. Self Drive is the most popular followed almost equally by Train from Cornwall and then Plane from Newquay but with Train and Plane from outside Cornwall close behind. This may be a function of geography but the email evidence also suggests that you find the rail journey within Cornwall too slow and therefore drive to stations further up the line to take the train.

We asked what you would do if the proposed changes to Newquay came about. Self Drive then becomes even more popular and dominant (111) followed by Train from Cornwall (88) and then Plane from other SW airport up from 60 to 84. Train from outside Cornwall rises to 79. Interestingly there was still a wish for the Plane from Newquay.

Overseas Visits

As we would expect the Plane is the dominant method of leaving the country though 34 Channel Tunnel trips were recorded. Perhaps more unexpectedly while London was dominant at 1100 trips Southwest airports recorded 80 trips and Other UK 360. What was of most interest to us was however the method by which you reached those airports and this is set out in Table 3 below.

Self Drive is the most popular with Plane and Train from Cornwall equal in second place though Train from outside Cornwall is close behind in fourth. How you think you will travel in 2014 changes the order in that while the others remain almost the same Plane from Newquay drops from 66 to 45.

Table 3: Forms of transport used to travel to UK point of departure

Item	Total Score	Overall Rank
Self drive	83	1
Plane from Newquay	66	2
Train from Cornwall	66	3
Train from other SW station	56	4
Plane from other SW airport	45	5
Taxi	35	6

Inward Visits

Table 4 sets out the origin of business trips to your premises in Cornwall. While these are fewer than the outward visits they are still a significant number with UK visits from outside London being the largest category.

Table 4: Business trips into Cornwall

Origin	Lowest	Highest	Total	Average
London	0	30	180	12
Other UK	1	50	248	18
Overseas	0	20	97	6

We also asked how you bring those people into Cornwall and Table 5 sets out the answers.

Table 5: How do international business visitors travel to your Cornwall site?

Item	Total Score	Overall Rank
Plane to Newquay	84	1
Train to Cornwall	76	2
Car hire	69	3
Plane to other SW airport	52	4
Company pick up	50	5
Train to Devon	47	6

Here the importance of Newquay airport is clear as it is the highest rank score followed by the Train to Cornwall. Worries about transportation time and availability means that driving down is significant as is being picked up by the company. A small number are not encouraged to come at all being met outside of Cornwall.

8 companies meet visitors outside of Cornwall between 1 and 5 times a year; 3 between 6 and 10; 2 between 11 and 15; and 2 over 20. When asked how this would change in 2014 the numbers drifted to the higher categories with 5 now assuming 20+ and 1 coming into the 16-20 category.

Comments

While the below comments cannot be regarded as anything but the opinion of those who made them they are useful in placing the context in which the survey answers were given.

Stopping the Newquay- Gatwick flights is of great concern to two companies -

“As you probably know we have sites in Redruth and Dartford and are part of an international group. We make extensive use of Newquay airport, flying into Gatwick to visit Dartford or to connect with flights to international destinations. Our colleagues in Kent or overseas regularly use the air links to visit us. We are using at least 2 flights (i.e. up and back) every week and on occasion this can be up to 12 flights in a week.”

“We use the airport as a cost effective transportation for our staff. Quite a few members of my staff fly in and out of Newquay every month for meetings in Redruth. We also fly in export distributors using Newquay from London when they visit. If the flights from Norwich were more regular I would fly. Not having an airport will mean the nearest airport will be Exeter with much longer transfer times. *We either hire cars for our staff or we have to drive to the airport ourselves to pick our guest up.*”

The following two quotes seem to sum up why companies do not use it as the views were echoed by a number of others.

“Historically we used Newquay airport a lot more frequently than we now do - on average probably a flight a month for several people when you combine our own staff movements with people coming to visit us. These days the much more limited selection of flights has reduced our usage to two or three flights a year which will typically be overseas customers/suppliers coming to visit us. Even this is pretty awkward as our overseas visitors usually fly into Heathrow then have to transfer to Gatwick then get a connection to Newquay which takes hours.

In my opinion the problem is not just a question of transport logistics but also the impression that the limited transport services give to potential new overseas business partners. It's difficult to portray Cornwall as a world-leading centre of manufacturing excellence when potential export customers have to endure such lengthy and arduous travel arrangements to come and visit us. In recent years we have had overseas visitors request that they fly as far as London and that we travel up to London and meet them there rather than them coming to visit our facility in Cornwall, purely because of the extra travel time it would take them to travel the last few hundred miles to and from Cornwall."

"Newquay airport doesn't link into anywhere at a sensible time. If there is a flight it's the wrong end of the day. You rarely can link into a flight at another terminal without an overnight stay. You can't fly up, have a meeting and come back in the same day.

Plymouths closed and Exeter's hardly any better. I'd either ditch the airport option completely or put the effort into Exeter as regional option. I have had both customers and suppliers use Newquay as a means of getting to us on occasions, but it certainly doesn't happen that often, once or twice a year. I have also used the airport on a couple of occasions and would love to use it more often but the cost of flights are crippling, especially if there is more than one of you!!"

What to do?

There were the obvious answers about decent flights to appropriate places – though there was recognition that Cornwall's low population means that profitable regular routes are probably few and far between and that those in the East of the County would travel Eastwards rather than westwards. The minimum was a decent London schedule.

Quite a few were resigned to this not happening and therefore concentrated on the alternatives where there was unanimity of view that the dualling of the A30 should be undertaken as a priority and that the A303 through the Blackdown Hills should also be improved.

Again there was unanimity on rail for a faster service through Cornwall and the provision of wifi – the latter being the area we lobbied on and which has been included in the franchise extension.

Conclusion

There is nothing in this survey that should surprise anyone but the feeling of being cut-off from mainstream business is there in the background and underpins the worries about transport infrastructure and particularly air links. The companies responding to this survey are significant employers in Cornwall with well paid non seasonal jobs. While there is no sense of anyone thinking of upping sticks they are well aware that there are

costs and disadvantages to operating from Cornwall as well as advantages and that transport infrastructure is in the negative column.

Ken Martin

SBD Associates Ltd

November 2013