“With a dedicated Met Office forecaster on-site delivering localised forecasts we are able to minimise delays. The forecasts give us confidence to plan our anti-icing activity with greater accuracy, reducing the amount of fluid we use and saving money in the process.”

Clive Exton
Duty Manager Airside
Airside Safety Department

We can offer a solution to any size of airport at any global location.

Please contact aviation@metoffice.gov.uk to discuss the possibilities.

Keeping airports open with on-site forecasters

Challenge

Heathrow is the world’s busiest international airport. With over 476,000 aircraft movements and 69 million passengers travelling through it every year, any small delay can cause knock on effects, slowing the carefully planned logistics of transiting so many people in and out of the airport. For BAA Heathrow to keep to schedule and give its customers as smooth a journey as possible, the latest and most detailed weather forecasts are essential.

Solution

The Met Office has provided services to Heathrow for some time. While we can provide tailored services remotely, Heathrow invited us to work on site, side by side with their operational staff – around the clock, every day of the year. This meant that we quickly gained an understanding of their operations and thresholds that would not have been possible from a different location.

Heathrow staff can call in at any time to ask forecasters for the latest information. They can discuss aspects which are most important to them, see the graphics that we use to forecast and discuss the probabilities attached to any risk. Alongside this increased accessible consultancy, we run Webex conference calls at least four times a day – or more, depending on the weather. All airport stakeholders can participate and hear how weather will impact on their operations over the next 24 hours.

Benefits

With such a vast airport community at Heathrow, the Met Office helps BAA Heathrow have one consistent message about the weather. We concentrate on the weather that will affect Heathrow and communicate it consistently across the airport community. This aids Collaborative Decision Making across all users including airside, landside and airlines. Not only do Heathrow staff have access to our forecasters, they can also access OpenRunway so they can see the latest forecast, graphics and runway sensor information.

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