

Airports

Ultra-low emission aircraft turn initiative reduces CO2 emissions by 97%

Tatiana Rokou / 02 Nov 2021

The aircraft turn trial – believed to be the first of its kind – is using electric ground vehicles to reduce emissions to almost zero. Learnings from the Bristol Airport trial will help shape future operational changes.



easyJet and **Bristol Airport** have announced they have achieved close to zero emission aircraft turnarounds through the use of electric powered ground equipment instead of Diesel. The initiative is part of a collaboration between easyJet and Bristol Airport to decarbonise ground operations at the airport. The trial results have shown a 97% reduction in CO2 emissions using the daily data produced throughout September.

Switching to electric ground equipment including steps, baggage trolleys, belt loaders and ground power units to service the aircraft between flights is one of a number of initiatives focused on reducing emissions. It forms part of a wider programme of cutting-edge developments and operational efficiency initiatives.

easyJet is using Bristol Airport as a test-bed to trial and implement the latest technological and innovative solutions for decarbonising its operations and reducing waste. Any successful results from the trials will have the potential to be rolled out across easyJet's network which spans 150 airports across 35 countries.

The six-month trial commenced on 1 September 2021 using two dedicated aircraft stands used by easyJet aircraft. The results to date show a saving of 1721 kgs of carbon during the period the electrical equipment was in use with only 59 kgs used compared with 1780 kgs emitted using like-for-like diesel equipment.

The joint partnership works with various expert associates and partners including TCR, DHL, ITW, Up and Away and Terbergh. Projects and trials will include work in the following areas:

- electric Ground Power Units
- Sustainable Aviation Fuels
- electric passenger coach transportation recycling
- and waste management
- employee carbon-saving initiatives
- supply chain carbon reductions
- aircraft continuous descent approaches zero
- carbon emission aircraft turnarounds NEO aircraft
- deployment and fleet optimisation

Johan Lundgren, CEO, easyJet, said: "At easyJet, we want to play our part to lead the decarbonisation of aviation, so we are delighted to see the results of this successful trial which has create a meaningful reduction in operational emissions by embracing the technology available to us today.

"The learnings from the Bristol trial will help us shape our sustainability strategy for future operational changes – all of which will help enable easyJet's transition towards our goal of net zero emissions by 2050.

"Alongside carbon offsetting and flying efficiently with a young, modern fleet, reducing the impact of our airport operations alongside our airport partners is an important component of our decarbonisation pathway while we are supporting the development of zero-emission aircraft for the future of flying."

Dave Lees, CEO, Bristol Airport said: "This is an outstanding achievement by all partners involved. The trial has reduced aircraft turnaround emissions by 97%*. This is another demonstration of how working together, including partners and experts in their field, we are able to create a positive reduction in carbon emissions today.

"As an airport we are taking our commitments to address climate change seriously and this trial is only one initiative we are delivering on towards achieving a net zero airport operation by 2030.

"We will continue to work in partnership with easyJet to enable us to develop joint initiatives and projects to contribute towards decarbonising aviation and the creation of green jobs."

Rob O'Dare, Airfield Technical & Compliance Manager, Bristol Airport added: "Leading on sustainability projects of this nature, at the forefront of what is possible, is hugely rewarding.

"This project has been particularly satisfying as a result of the teamwork demonstrated by the multiple participants, including amongst others EasyJet, DHL, TCR and ITW that was needed to pull this together.

"Many of those partners have invested in the trial significantly in terms of time and equipment at no cost, understanding that we are investing in the social responsibility the aviation industry carries.

"The low emission turnaround trial is just one of many initiatives Bristol Airport and easyJet are working on as part of our sustainability partnership."