

Uncertain future for Shannon - O'Malley

WITH the prospect of declining traffic under present policies, Shannon's future looks very uncertain, former transport minister, Des O'Malley, TD, claimed.

"As well as the position on the Atlantic, Shannon has failed to obtain any scheduled services to and from the continent of Europe. I see no commitment to regional policy so far as aviation is concerned. Rather on the other hand, there is a perfect willingness to allow Dublin to dominate to an ever increasing degree," said Deputy O'Malley.

He said the Department of Transport's statement on strategy must give cause for serious concern where Shannon is involved.

"One of the objectives of the Department, as approved by the current Minister, is to review by the end of this year the current regulatory requirement whereby airlines that wish to operate direct transatlantic services to Dublin must operate an equivalent number of direct services to Shannon in any 12 month period. It also states that national exceptions, which it defines as the Shannon stop requirement, will be removed under EU/USA multilateral negotiations commencing this year," he said.

This he believed would lead to Dublin becoming the principal transatlantic airport for the country with limited flights to and from Shannon.



Flashback to last year when Fergal and Laurie arrived back at Shannon Airport following the announcement of their engagement in Canada. (Pic: DERMOT LYNCH)