

(OMEGA NEWSLETTER – PROJECT ICARUS)

**[Icarus takes the carbon out of business air travel](#)**

**Whilst the growth of business air travel has brought many economic benefits, it nevertheless comes with the price tag of higher carbon emissions.**

**How to reduce and manage this growing carbon footprint without damaging corporate growth was the main driving force behind Project Icarus. The year-long study – funded by Omega and completed in February 2008 – brought together the expertise of the Institute of Travel Management (ITM) and Cranfield University.**

**The main achievements of the project were showcased at a one-day workshop held in London earlier this year. It was attended by 50 key stakeholders in UK business air travel including corporate buyers and travel suppliers.**

**Commenting on the success of the workshop, Principal Investigator behind Project Icarus, Cranfield University's Dr Kxx Mxxxx – said:**

**“The workshop highlighted the excellent work done both by Cranfield University and the ITM to help companies reduce their carbon-related footprint. Of equal importance,” he continued, “are the initiatives which help promote good practice by corporate buyers and travel suppliers to their peers.”**

The five main achievements of Project Icarus include:

- **Carbon Reduction Toolkit** - Provides companies with actionable information on how to make business travel more environmentally sustainable by reducing their business travel-related carbon footprint. Businesses have typically focused on service and price. With the Toolkit, they can now place more emphasis on environmental issues. Details are available on ITM's website: [www.itm.co.uk/toolkit.htm](http://www.itm.co.uk/toolkit.htm)
- **Buyer Accreditation Scheme** – A set of approved environmental accreditation standards for companies supplying travel services to UK companies. They must commit to reducing their total air transport-related carbon emissions to meet government targets ie. 60% of their 1990 emissions figure by 2050. The figures can be used in Annual Reports as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) commitment.
- **Supplier Awards Programme** – These prestigious annual ITM Awards demonstrate to buyers which travel suppliers – hotels, airlines etc – are making the best efforts to be 'green'.
- **Alternative Communication Methods** – Cranfield research suggests that up to 20 per cent of business air travel is not necessary. Communication methods such as video conferencing have been shown to be equally effective in certain cases.
- **Carbon Calculator** – Many companies don't know how to compare airlines on their environmental performance. With Cranfield's 'carbon calculator', they will now be able to make informed choices at the point of sale.

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