

## SU Officer arrested in fight against aviation emissions

By [Heidi Blake](#)

Tuesday 7 November 2006

Rose Rickford, a YUSU LGBT Officer, will stand trial later this year following her arrest at a 25-strong sit-in at Nottingham East Midlands Airport in September.

The sit-in, which lasted four hours and delayed up to 1,000 passengers, was part of the 'Plane Stupid' campaign aimed at drawing attention to the environmental damage caused by flying.

The 25 participants, who breached a perimeter fence before holding a sit-in on the taxi-way between two cargo holds, were subsequently arrested and charged with aggravated trespass and causing a public nuisance. Five are also charged with causing criminal damage. All 25 will face trial later this year at Leicester Crown Court.

Several of the protesters, including Rose and her sister Ellen Rickford, say they were held in solitary confinement for 36 hours without being allowed to make a phonecall to inform anyone of their situation. Their houses were raided by police, and computers, mobile phones, diaries and address books were confiscated.

Rose Rickford claims that her 15,000 dissertation was stored on a computer which police seized from her student house in York.

Francis Rickford and Brendan Martin, parents of Rose and Ellen, spoke out on behalf of their daughters last month in an interview with The Observer.

The pair claimed that their daughters had been released at separate times late at night on September 25 following 36 hours of solitary confinement in a police station in Leicester.

The two were allegedly told not to talk to one another as a condition of their bail. Their money, keys and mobile telephones were confiscated. Frances Rickford said she was "particularly horrified at how the girls had been released in a way that seemed almost calculated to put them in the way of harm."

Rose Rickford spoke to Nouse on Monday of her commitment to the battle against the aviation industry. She said: "Aviation is a hugely important issue if we're going to save the planet and save human life.

"It's the fastest growing source of CO2 emissions, releasing 80 million tonnes of CO2 per year, which is more than 10% of the UK's total. Aviation on its own will exceed the government's 2050 emissions target by 134%, even if we turn off all the lights and shut down all the factories.

"The fact is, 45% of the flights that leave Europe travel no further than 500 km, which is less than the distance between London and the Scottish border. There are obviously many far more sustainable ways of travelling that kind of distance.

"Despite this, the government is investing massively in the aviation industry, and obviously that's just mad."

When asked if she would be willing to face arrest again in the fight against aviation, Rickford said:

"Basically, my attitude is that the situation of the planet is urgent, and we have to do all we can using

peaceful means to get it on the agenda. Direct action is the way to do that, so yes, I will continue with this.”

‘Plane Stupid’ wants to bring short-haul flights to the fore in the battle against the aviation industry. To this end, it called a “day of action” for Monday November 6, during which the group claimed a number of national organisations planned major disruption to airports nation wide.



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## 5 comments

DeanyB

9 Nov '06 at 11:50 am

For Christ’s sake, I can’t stand these scummy lefty protestors who think it’s perfectly justifiable to inconvenience everybody else and then complain about their own treatment but the authorities. From what I’ve seen, night-time is best suited to the Miss Rickford’s looks.

I bet the people who had their flights cancelled/delayed hope that dissertation is gone for good – “How hypocritical are Plane Stupid?”

What was the point? A lousy 4 hours (some sit-in), a few planes delayed, a criminal record and no dissertation/keys/dignity – this is the funniest thing I’ve ever read in Nouse, keep the nutty stories of Rose Rickford coming!

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KB

10 Nov '06 at 9:58 am

To DeanyB – apart from being offensive and undermining your argument by writing like a spoilt child your point is largely invalid.

Delays occur regularly at airports and very rarely are they due to protest that actually has merit. If you’d read the article you would have learnt that short-haul flights are one of the fastest growing problems of global carbon emissions and that if the Air industry continues to grow in the unsustainable way it is currently, all other global efforts to reduce emissions will be negated.

Whilst direct-action protests invariable affect people in way perhaps not desirable, they are designed to cause disruption – this action is similar to the actions of the 90’s where motorway expansion proposed by the Tories was effectively halted by direct action protest. Whilst you effect a small number of people directly the consequences of your actions are intended to be far more wide-spread and in this case it is to create a media interest. I believe this was mentioned in many local and national news newspapers and one of the members was featured on Newsnight so Plane Stupid have achieved what they hoped from these actions, so that was the point.

As for your accusations of hypocrisy; complaining about being held in solitary confinement for 36 hrs (which is illegal) is hardly the same as being delayed for a few hours to go on holiday or visit your second home in the south of France.

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John Hall

10 Nov '06 at 5:43 pm

Right-wing c\*\*t.

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DeanyB

10 Nov '06 at 8:39 pm

Surely there are other ways in which Plane Stupid could raise awareness of their cause than cause disruption to customers who have done nothing wrong. The fact that delays occur anyway is irrelevant – murders happen every day but that doesn't justify politically motivated ones.

Direct action is never justifiable. There are other channels for Miss Rickford and her scruffy pals to voice their concern – peaceful, organised protests. Just because they might not be a successful does not mean that they should resort to breaking the law. If anything that's childish.

Also I can't stand it when people knowingly break the law and then complain about their subsequent treatment. It's like poking a crocodile and then complaining it attacked you. Even if Miss Rickford was held for 36 hours in solitary confinement (proof please?), it would be the least she deserves.

It's about time the police were given greater powers to tackle such criminals. That's what they are, no better than rapists and thieves.

As for the guy that has a problem with me being 'right-wing', come and say that to my face mate and we'll see who comes off worse.

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Ellen Rickford

2 Oct '09 at 10:58 pm

Hi Deany B, my name is Ellen Rickford, I am the Rickford sister whom you decided not to personally insult in the compelling monologue above. I'm writing because I am genuinely concerned that you're crazy... Suggesting that my sister (and my self, who you for some reason decided to ommit from your wrathful outburst) are no better than rapists is frankly ridiculous... if someone gave you the choice of being raped, or having your flight delayed by a few hours which would you choose? Secondly, If you'd like proof that we were held for 36 hours solitariy then by all means call up East Midlands constabulary and ask them, why would we lie about it? and just out of curiosity if that's the least we deserve then what would your suggested sentence be for people who embark upon political protests which inconvenience the public at large by delaying their journey by a few hours? Death or something by the sounds of you, why do you feel that you need to be so venomous? well thats pretty much it, but if you want me to 'say this to your face mate' then maybe you should leave a forwarding address, otherwise all that 'we'll see who comes off worse' bullshit is just empty threats that make you look like a dickhead... anyway, bye..

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