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SHANNON SETBACK IN TRAFFIC

By EUGENE PHELAN

SHANNON was hit by another major blow, today, with official confirmation that the airport is losing business and passengers — fast.

But there has been a massive increase in business at Dublin Airport.

The figures relate to the first six months of the year.

There has been a sharp drop of 20 per cent at Shannon, in the numbers of transit passengers generally — those passing through Shannon to airports elsewhere.

But Dublin Airport has had a sharp increase in terminal passengers from the United States — 34 per cent — those terminating, or starting, their journey at Dublin.

No reason is put forward by Aer Rianta for the dramatic switch in fortunes, but local Shannon lobbyists have been quick to point to the earlier decision to terminate Shannon's compulsory Transatlantic status.

Aer Rianta confirmed that overall passenger numbers at Shannon, for the first six months of this year, were down six per cent on those of last year.

The total passenger figures from January to June of this year were only 677,748 compared to 721,962, last year.

And to rub salt into wounds, overall business at Dublin airport was up a weighty 16% and Cork 8%.

Effectively, there has been a major shift of business and revenue from the Shannon area to the national capital.

The big problem at Shannon, says Aer Rianta, the management authority for the three major airports, is

that transit traffic is down 20%. This is the traffic figure for passengers who are passing through Shannon for other destinations.

"Despite the change in status," says Aer Rianta, commenting on Shannon's new difficulties, "US numbers were actually up at Shannon Airport by 9% for a total of 160,031, while continental traffic rose by 19% or 11,000 extra passengers."

This figure, however, refers to terminal passengers, i.e., those who terminate their flights at Shannon, or who begin their flights at Shannon.

There is no indication, as yet, as to whether this business is due to the "hard sell" marketing campaign for the west of Ireland carried out earlier in the year by Aer Rianta, or whether it was an inevitable improvement in business. And the

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No more catering

BY TOM BROWNE

A YOUNG Shannon man who is to sign on the dot for the first time today, alleges that he has been prevented from earning a liv-

ing by the action of Aer Rianta.

Sean Reynolds (19), of Tullyglass, and his brother, Des, have been operating a mobile catering unit at the entrance to the industrial

estate, since last year.

A week ago, Aer Rianta removed his van and cordoned off the area where he had been trading, claiming he had been trespassing on company property.



Dolores O'Riordan, of The Cranberries, at her wedding to her Canadian boy friend, Don Burton, at Holycross Abbey. (LL)

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It was Dolores' day of days

By AIDAN CORR

CRANBERRIES' lead singer Dolores O'Riordan, of Ballybricken, married her Toronto sweetheart, Don Burton, in an impressive ceremony at Holycross Abbey, yesterday.

She arrived at the church in traditional style — in a florally-decorated horse-and-cart.

The groom, together with the best man, fellow-Canadian Gordy Pitts, and page-boy Gerard O'Riordan, cousin of the bride, had earlier arrived on horseback and had to wait an anxious 25 minutes for Dolores' arrival.

Bridesmaid Breiffne McCarthy, a former school-friend of the bride, made her appearance at the County Tipperary abbey on a high-lizzy bicycle, and there were gasps from the hundreds of onlookers gathered outside the grounds as Dolores alighted from the cart, displaying a wedding ensemble which consisted of a crown, encrusted with small beads, a see-through

lace hipster hugger trousers, an ivory chiffon mini-top, fastened at the back with ribbons, a pair of knee-high beige boots and a flowing lace veil.

Dolores was met at the church entrance by her mother, Eileen, and father, Terence, before entering the historic abbey where Fr. McNamara, a former parish priest of Ballybricken, awaited them at the altar.

Dolores' mother, Eileen, sang the responsorial hymn during the wedding Mass, while the ceremony ended with Dolores going to the lectern where she sang Panis Angelicus, accompanied by Moira Gray on the organ and the Laurel Hill Coláiste choir.

As the newly-weds left the church, hand-in-hand, a large crowd of well-wishers surged forward.

But there was no delay for Dolores and Don, as they mounted the horse-led cart and left the scene almost immediately for the reception in the Aherlaw House Hotel in Tipperary.

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