

Committee: Stansted Airport Advisory Panel
Date: 14 October 2004
Agenda Item No: 3
Title: Night flight restrictions
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Summary

- 1 The Panel and subsequently Environment Committee have previously considered reports on this issue. The Council's response to Department for Transport on the Stage 1 Consultation needs to be submitted by 29 October. This report advises the Panel of the recommendation to the LGA Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group Chairman's Advisory Group and recommends that the Panel considers whether it endorses those views. The Environment Committee agreed that the Council's response incorporate Member's detailed comments and be finalised by officers in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Environment Committee.

SASIG's views

- 2 The report to SASIG is appended. There would be clear benefit if it were possible to achieve a consensus view within the local government sector. Hertfordshire's response is likely to be based on the SASIG report. The report to the EERA Regional Planning Panel on this issue will also be available by the date of the STAAP meeting.

RECOMMENDED that
STAAP endorses the views in the report to SASIG.

Background Papers: Report to SASIG CAG



STRATEGIC AVIATION SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP
of the Local Government Association

ITEM 4: NIGHT FLYING RESTRICTIONS AT HEATHROW, GATWICK AND STANSTED

Summary

The Department for Transport has consulted a very large number of organisations, including SASIG and many of its member authorities, on a stage one report about future levels of night flights at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted. Comments are required by 29 October. A second stage to the consultation will follow early in 2005.

Suggested comments and responses to the nine specific questions are included within the body of the report and in the conclusions at the end. The report has benefited from the inclusion of views expressed at a meeting of the Technical Officers Group.

Recommendation from CAG to SASIG

- A That a copy of this report be sent to DfT and LGA once the views of the Chairman's Advisory Group and SASIG have been incorporated.
- B That following the meeting of SASIG an approach be made to selected MPs to seek their assistance in furthering the views of SASIG.

Introduction

- 1 On 15 January 2004 the Government announced its decision, in the light of consultation carried out in 2003, to continue the present night restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted until 30 October 2005. In July 2004 a consultation process started about the next night restrictions regime.
- 2 The Government intends that the next night restrictions regime should apply for six years, from 30 October 2005 until the end of the summer season 2011.
- 3 The consultation is being carried out in two stages. The first one covers:
 - the general background to the whole of the consultation;
 - the intended length of the next night restrictions regime;
 - a statement of the DfT's broad aims for the night restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted;
 - an invitation to suggest environmental objectives and specific noise abatement objectives for each of those airports;
 - detailed proposals relating to the classification of aircraft, which is the main focus of this first stage of the consultation;
 - further background information and extended preliminary consultation on some other aspects of the night restrictions regime; and
 - an explanation of how and when the DfT shall carry out assessments to comply with European Directive 2002/30/EC and also a Regulatory Impact Assessment.
- 4 The issues relating to the way aircraft are classified for night restrictions purposes need to be resolved in stage one so that the effects of different options for the length of the night quota period, the size of the noise quotas and movement limits and the ratios between them, can each be assessed properly in stage two.

- 5 In stage two the Government will:
- consult on the length of the Night Quota Period (NQP), particularly as to whether the NQP should remain as it is now (2330 - 0600) or whether it should be extended, perhaps to make it the same as the full night period (2300 - 0700), looking at the three half-hour segments at the beginning and end of the current NQP as follows:
2300 – 2330
0600 – 0630
0630 - 0700;
 - carry out detailed assessments of the number and types of services currently operating during these three half-hour segments in order to give some indication of the impacts of possibly adjusting the NQP (and, if so, what the appropriate movements limits and noise quotas might be);
 - at Heathrow, where the morning shoulder period (0600 - 0700) is particularly important for arrivals, take account of the interface with the Project for the Sustainable Development of Heathrow including the implications for the capacity and operation of the runways;
 - at all three airports, propose new movements limits and noise quotas;
 - consider whether to introduce controls to prevent 'bunching' of flights at any particular time of night, or at either end of the NQP, if we propose to extend it. If controls were needed for each individual time band that might raise transparency and administrative issues;
 - propose further noise insulation schemes in respect of night disturbance. (The new criteria in *The Future of Air Transport* relate to daytime noise only.)
- 6 During the course of the consultation the Government will therefore cover all their outstanding commitments. These are:
- (i) to take account of the responses to the question asked in the consultation on *The Future Development of Air Transport in the United Kingdom: South East* about the length of the night restrictions regime;
 - (ii) to consider the results of the EPNL monitoring in a way consistent with European Directive 2002/30/EC;
 - (iii) to draw on the results of the QC System Review;
 - (iv) in the light of the results of (ii) and (iii) to consider banning aircraft classified as QC/4 from being scheduled to operate 2330 - 0600 hours;
 - (v) to make use of the findings of ERCD Report 0204 on reanalysis of differences between Arrivals and Departures;
 - (vi) to consult on a possible extension of the night quota period (as promised in the decision on Heathrow Terminal 5);
 - (vii) to consult on reducing the departure noise limits that apply in the present night shoulder (2300-2330 and 0600-0700) and night quota period (2330-0600) to an extent consistent with other changes (if any) in the night restrictions; and
 - (viii) to consult on a proposal to install two additional fixed noise monitors at Heathrow.
- 7 Stage one deals with commitments (i) to (v), with stage two intended to deal with commitments (vi) to (viii).

Background

- 8 The first restrictions on night flights were introduced at Heathrow in 1962, at Gatwick in 1971 and at Stansted in 1978, in recognition of the disturbance caused to local people. The Government has always claimed that the underlying principle of restrictions has been to strike a balance between the airline's need to operate services at night, taking

account of the user and economic benefits, and the impact on people living around the airports particularly under the departure and arrival tracks.

- 9 Jet aircraft did not start using Heathrow until 1958 and no night jet services were scheduled until April 1960. In 1962 restrictions were first imposed for the summer season, limiting night flights to 3,000. This grew to 4,800 in 1963 and 5,500 in 1964. Night was defined as 2300 hrs to 0700hrs. From 1965 to 1971 the permitted number of flights was reduced to 3,500 and night was reduced to 2330 hrs to 0600 hrs. In 1974 a movement limit was introduced for the winter season (2330 to 0630) and in 1975 the night period was extended to 0800 hrs on Sundays. In 1978 a new system came into operation with separate movement limits for “noisier” and “quieter” aircraft – overall 3,700 movements in summer and 3,200 in winter but with the “noisier” sub-quota declining over time and the “quieter” sub quota increasing proportionately.
- 10 Specific figures (taken from a paper prepared for the T5 inquiry) are available for Heathrow for the period 1981 to 1987, illustrating this decline/increase exchange.

Season	Actual Quota	Noisier quota	Quieter quota
Winter			
1981/82	3150	1200	1950
1982/3	3150	1000	2150
1983/4	3150	800	2350
1984/5	3150	600	2550
1085/6	3150	400	2750
1986/7	3150	200	2950
Summer			
1982	3650	1200	2450
1983	3650	1000	2650
1984	3650	800	2850
1985	3650	600	3050
1986	3650	400	3250
1987	3650	0	3650

- 11 From 1988 to 1993 the base quota was 2,750 movements in summer and 3,000 movements in winter. Aircraft were classified into 3 groups – NN/A, NN/B, and NN/C, with the noisiest (NN/A) prohibited from normally flying at night. NN/C equated to the current Chapter 3 aircraft. Winter restrictions were from 2330 to 0630, with 0800 on Sundays. Summer restrictions were from 2330 to 0600, with 0800 on Sundays.
- 12 A similar process is thought to have operated at Gatwick – DfT have been asked to confirm.
- 13 New controls were brought in from 1993 introducing the current system of a quota count as well as a movement limit (Note. Initially the Government attempted to use only the quota count and not a movement limit as well but that was challenged in the High Court who found that eliminating the movement limit would be illegal).
- 14 The new controls brought in for the period 1993 to 1999 had the following objectives:
- (a) revise and update the arrangements as appropriate;
 - (b) introduce common arrangements for night restrictions at the three airports;
 - (c) establish further restrictions at Stansted as promised in the 1985 White Paper;

- (d) continue to protect local communities from excessive aircraft noise levels at night;
 - (e) ensure that the competitive influences affecting UK airports and airlines and the wider employment and economic implications are taken into account.
- 15 Further revisions were made for the period 1999 onwards when the objectives became:
- (a) to strike a balance between the need to protect local communities from excessive aircraft noise levels at night and to provide for air services to operate at night where they are of benefit to the local, regional and national economy;
 - (b) to ensure that the competitive factors affecting UK airports and airlines and the wider employment and economic implications are taken into account;
 - (c) to take account of the research into the relationship between aircraft noise and interference with sleep and any health effects;
 - (d) to encourage the use of quieter aircraft at night;
 - (e) to maintain common arrangements for night restrictions at the three airports;
 - (f) for the night quota period (11.30pm to 6.00am), to put in place at Heathrow arrangements which will bring about further improvements in the night noise climate around the airport over time;
 - (g) for the night quota period (11.30pm to 6.00am), to put in place at Gatwick arrangements which will bring about an improvement in the night noise climate around the airport over time;
 - (h) to provide for the planned development of Stansted broadly as envisaged in 1993, but to ensure that airlines are given the necessary incentive to use quieter aircraft in the night quota period; and
 - (i) to update the arrangements as appropriate.
- 16 The consultation document is structured around a series of issues and questions, and the rest of this report takes those individual questions, comments on them and identifies a suggested SASIG response.

The consultation questions

- 17 Chapter 9 of the consultation report picks up nine questions that are explained and included in the earlier chapters. They are each set out below with a commentary and suggested response.

Q1. Are there any other matters that you think we should cover in this consultation in addition to those set out in paragraph 2.4 of this paper?

Commentary

- 18 Its assumed that this question is asking whether there are matters that ought to be covered in the overall consultation process which would therefore need to be identified and evaluated in the second phase of the consultation.
- 19 There are wide range of issues that could help inform the debate and which could, with benefit, have been included in phase1.

- 20 It would also have been preferable to have been given the opportunity to comment on the Night Quota Period in phase one.

SASIG response

- 21 The first and prime topic missing from the consultation is a clear statement on the economic justification for night flights to UK residents and an assessment of the economic, environmental and social costs. The work needs to look separately at the business, leisure and freight demands for night flights to the communities. Until this has been done, by an independent assessor working to a Steering Group of advisors from all sectional interest, then no further policy development can be justified.
- 22 The second main topic is the definition of the Night Quota Period (NQP) which must be a critical element of the policy framework. SASIG takes the view that night is the period when most people want the chance to go to sleep and that controls over aircraft movements should be over a long enough "night" to allow the average person to try to get at least 8 hours sleep. The NQP should be from 2300 hrs to 0700 hrs.
- 23 The other main issues on which further information is needed before any longer term policy can reasonably be justified are:
- i. More information is needed on the results of sleep research studies, both in the UK and elsewhere.
 - ii. More information is needed on annoyance studies, particularly from the current DfT study on "Attitudes to Noise from Aviation Sources in England" (ANASE). Until the results of that work are available, no new long term night restrictions policy should be established.
 - iii. In view of the WHO Guidelines on Community Noise detailed in the report the Government should provide open up the debate around the cost effectiveness and cost benefit analysis of setting targets for improving human health and how this fits with the statement in Clause 3.7, the long term targets of WHO and the time period beyond that of this consultation.
 - iv. Assessments are needed on the impact on other London and UK airports of any restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted (e.g. would flights be transferred from Heathrow to Gatwick, Stansted, Luton or elsewhere).
 - v. If flights were to transfer, would the economic benefits and costs also transfer to other airports?
 - vi. Justification is needed to show that the present number of night flights could not gradually be accommodated at the existing airports by re-scheduling them to the day period.
 - vii. As this consultation is linked to the 30 year time horizon of the White Paper, the opportunity should be taken to set down some guiding principles as to how the policy will be developed in the forthcoming years so as to assist both the industry and those affected by aircraft operations.
 - viii. The Consultation should cover the potential to introduce a charging regime for off track aircraft following PNR's and to introduce banding for noise fines from departure rather than the use of a single number criterion.
 - ix. The Government could use this consultation as an opportunity to open up the debate on the polluter pays principle and to give clarity on fuel taxation as both of these will become significant factors in the years ahead.

Q2. Do you have any comments on the assessments described in Annex B of the consultation document? (see paragraph 4.1)

Commentary

- 24 The present controls are a mixture of a movement limit and a quota count limit, based on the noise profile of individual aircraft. The first table on page 46 shows that the number of movements in the night period at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted has been fixed for the whole of 1999-2005 period:-

Movement Limits

Season	Heathrow	Gatwick	Stansted	Total
Winter	2,550	5,250	5,000	12,800
Summer	3,250	11,200	7,000	21,450
Total	5,800	16,450	12,000	34,250

- 25 However, it is only at Heathrow that the **noise quota** has also been constant (at 4,140 for the winter season and 5,610 for the summer season). In that the number of movements and noise quota at Heathrow has been constant, there has been no policy requirement leading to the introduction of quieter aircraft.
- 26 At Gatwick, the **noise quotas** have required a marginal reduction from 6,820 to 6,640 in the winter and 9,550 to 9,000 in the summer, thus there has in theory at least been some requirement for the introduction of quieter aircraft.
- 27 The position at Stansted is a reversal of this. The **noise quota** has been allowed to grow in the winter season from 3,110 to 3,550 and in the summer season from 4,350 to 4,950. With a constant number of movements (5,000 and 7,000) the noise quota policy has allowed for a considerable increase in the noise profile of the aircraft being used at Stansted.

SASIG response

- 28 It would have been informative for more historical data, over a five-year time period, to have been included. This would enable trends to be identified, and would inform decisions regarding predictions for the future.
- 29 The last table provided in section 1.1 (pg. 38), giving details of air transport movements at major UK airports during the night, should relate to the Winter '02/'03 and Summer '03 period in total, so as to be directly comparable with the breakdown information on Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted shown in the preceding tables.
- 30 Greater detail should have been provided on the actual insulation provisions and whether any cost-sharing or cost limitations were included.
- 31 The footnotes on page 36 referring to the months covered by the seasons should be repeated in the paragraph referring to seasons on page 46.
- 32 The section setting out movements limits and quotas for the 1999-2005 period (page 46) shows a bizarre situation of airlines being allowed to introduce noisier aircraft at Stansted over time in that the noise quota has been increasing with a static limit to the number of movements. However, the tables do not show movements limits and quotas for all airports since the introduction of the night control system dating back to

1962. That historical information needs to be provided so that the impact of controls over time can be better understood.

- 33 In addition the tables on page 46 all need to show the actual number of movements that have taken place and the amount of the quota used so that the effectiveness of the system can be reviewed.
- 34 The section on permitted operations (pg. 47) should cover the extent to which late departures and early arrivals are treated as dispensations or whether they use up part of the quota. The monitoring information on dispensations should be included.
- 35 Details should have been included in the section on noise limits (pg. 49) to qualify the extent to which breaches of the limits have occurred, the fines imposed and if possible the projects to which the fines have been allocated.
- 36 It was not possible to fully interpret the position of fixed noise monitors (pg. 49) without the provision of a plan. The location could be shown on the aerial photographs included in Annex C.

Q3. Do you have any comments on the presentation of the noise contours and other information in Annex C? (see paragraph 4.2 - 4.13 of the consultation report)

Commentary

- 37 The noise contours are shown on air photographs rather than, as conventionally, on Ordnance Survey maps. It is debateable if this is the most easily understood presentation.
- 38 The table shows that for several of the departure routes the gross area of the 90dBA SEL footprint is larger for the QC/4 (2-engine) than for the QC/4 (4-engine) yet the population count is smaller. This factor should be explained.
- 39 The tables on pages 58, 59 and 60, showing forecasts without new measures, illustrate that there is no capacity for any significant increase in flights during the night quota period at Heathrow. At Gatwick and Stansted there is scope for some increase, particularly in winter, but only up to the limit of the movements and noise quota published.
- 40 The DfT note that should the night restrictions be withdrawn there would be an increase in noise around all three airports.
- 41 Were the maximum movement limit and noise quota to be utilised at Gatwick, there would be a significant increase in the area (sq km) and population affected. This situation would be similar at Stansted but not to the same extent.
- 42 At the end of Annex C, DfT comment that the number of night flights at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted cannot increase much if the restrictions continue unchanged, unlike the situation at some other European airports. No data on this topic is provided, in particular no information is provided on the number of people affected by night noise at other airports.

SASIG response

- 43 The use of air photographs for the various noise contours makes it more difficult, rather than easier, to identify the extent of contours and relate them to known geographical features such as roads, towns and villages. The maps should be re-issued in part two of the consultation process using traditional maps as the base data.
- 44 The UK government has consistently refused to produce night noise contours and thus historical information about changes in the size and shape of the contours over time is not available. The opportunity should be taken to rectify that by producing contours for a few typical historic years.
- 45 It is not possible to accurately compare the figures provided in sections 1 and 2 of Annex C (pg. 51-54) due to the disparity in the reporting periods selected.
- 46 It would have been helpful if the table in section 3 covering Heathrow departures (pg. 55) had a footnote explaining why there is no data for runway 09L.
- 47 A full assessment of the data in the tables in section 3 (pg. 55-56) was not possible due to the unexplained factor in the relationship between the gross area of the 90dBA SEL footprint and the population/household count in that footprint.
- 48 It would appear that QC/4 2-engine planes create a larger 90 dBA SEL footprint than QC/4 4-engine planes; whilst this may be factually correct an explanation for this needs to be provided.
- 49 The description of airport development is too brief and does not provide similar levels of information for the three airports. As a minimum, information for each airport should be provided about:
- historical growth;
 - current throughput;
 - future throughput as specified in the ATWP;
 - controls over size of noise contour or number of movements;
 - ATWP proposals for runways; and
 - types of operation (e.g. low cost, freight, charter, scheduled)
- 50 Data on the historical and likely future growth in night movements at other European airports should be included in Annex C, together with population estimates of those affected so as to compare the impact with that at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted.

Q4. a) Do you have any comments or suggestions for environmental objectives and specific noise abatement objectives for each airport? (see paragraph 6.6 of the consultation report)

b) If so, please state for each objective the base case indicator against which it should be assessed.

Commentary

- 51 The objectives have changed over time, and have generally become more lenient. The DfT should at least explain why this has been happening and take this opportunity to tighten them up. Overnight freight has become a way of working for many businesses and is particularly used as part of the “just-in-time” culture. The arguments of the leisure industry are that they need night movements to ensure that expensive aeroplanes are used round the clock and achieve three return trips to Europe. Thus

residents are affected at night to keep down the prices of holidays – this is not acceptable.

- 52 The DfT are suggesting setting environmental objectives and noise abatement objectives for each airport (i.e. Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted).

SASIG response

- 53 The overriding objective should be to phase out all but the essential movements between 11.00pm and 7.00pm. The second phase consultation should provide enough information to help identify those movements that are essential, albeit at this stage it seems to SASIG that freight (and scheduled business services if a business case can be made) has greater economic importance than leisure.
- 54 There is little point in suggesting specific objectives for each airport until better information has been provided to enable the performance of the 1998/9 objectives to be evaluated, as well as the earlier objectives.
- 55 The concept of specific objectives for each airport is also difficult to understand when there seems to be general support for “common arrangements”. It would seem better also to have “common objectives”.
- 56 If and when new objectives are set, then that should be accompanied by a policy that sets penalties for non-compliance.

Q5. Are you content that we should retain the QC system for classifying aircraft? (see paragraph 7.4 of the consultation report)

Commentary

- 57 The QC system replaced an earlier system for differentiating between the noisiest and quieter aircraft. It has been working in tandem with a movement limit in such a way that neither the movement or quota limit can be exceeded.
- 58 Research has shown that some aircraft perform above or below the quota count they have been in, based on published performance data. This needs correcting.
- 59 The Aviation White Paper (The Future of Air Transport, December 2003), indicated in paragraph 3.14 the Government’s desire to amend section 78 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 so as to control night movements by noise quotas alone, thus scrapping any movement limit. There is no mention of this in the present consultation.

SASIG response

- 60 The quota system is now understood but as quieter aircraft are coming in to use, the concept of a 0.25 count, perhaps later also needing a 0.125 count is becoming somewhat meaningless. There is a danger that these smaller fractions could lead to pressure for many more movements, leading to increased disturbance if not increased noise. The movement limit should not be increased simply to allow more of the quieter movements.
- 61 As noise measurements have shown that some aircraft do not perform within the limits of the quota count they have been allocated, then this anomaly needs correcting.

- 62 The quota system is however on an acceptable control process when coupled with a movement limit, particularly now that smaller fractions are being suggested. The second part of the consultation process needs to provide continuity by maintaining a movement limit. It will also be necessary at that time to clarify the Government's intentions over any future legislation.

Q6. Do you have any comments on the proposals to:

- a) remove the weight limit for jet aircraft able to qualify as exempt but, at the same time, to extend the QC system downwards by a further band to QC/0.25 (84 - 86.9 EPNdB)?**
b) retain the minus 9EPNdB adjustment for arrivals?
c) prohibit QC/4 aircraft from operating between 2330 hours and 0600 hours (see paragraphs 7.5-7.23 of the consultation report)?

Commentary

- 63 On (a), at present some of the lighter/less noisy aircraft are exempt from the controls. The DfT contend that by creating a QC 0.25 band, then there would be an incentive to use quieter aircraft. This seems reasonable.
- 64 On (b), arrivals and departures are measured at different distances from the airport. The minus 9EPNdB is intended to make that adjustment so that the impact arrivals and departures is equalised. However, the largest numbers of movements are arrivals and their landing profile causes increased annoyance and disturbance. It may be more equitable if the movement limit and quota count are split between landings and departures. A recent has shown that the 9 EPNdB is probably correct whereas in the past it had been assumed that the figure may be 11, but 9 was used as a cautionary level. It could perhaps now be argued that the 2 EPNdB reduction should still be used so that 9 is reduced to 7.
- 65 On (c), there is currently a voluntary ban on QC4 aircraft operating in the night quota period. In that such aircraft are big users of the quota points it is not surprising that this voluntary ban has been successful such that very few QCV4 aircraft fly in the period. The success of the voluntary ban on scheduling QC/4 aircraft in the NQP may mean that there is only a small improvement in the noise climate to be achieved. However, the proposed ban does go further than the existing situation, and is another step towards improving the night noise climate. Monitoring information on actual numbers should be provided.

SASIG response

- 66 (a) It would seem sensible to create a QC 0.25 for the lighter aircraft that are currently exempt.
- (b) As the original reduction of 9EPNdB was a calculated figure of 11 minus 2, then that 2 EPNdB should be maintained, thereby reducing the 9 to 7. In addition separate quotas for departures and arrivals should be considered, bearing in mind the intrusive nature of landings.
- (c) The proposal to prohibit QC4 aircraft in the night quota period is welcomed but 2330 to 0600 is still a very short night and consideration should be given to banning QC4 aircraft at night (1100hrs to 0700hrs).

Q7. Do you have any comments on:

- a) the value of there being common arrangements at the three airports?**

b) retaining the same night quota period at the three airports (see paragraphs 8.1-8.11 of the consultation report)

Commentary

67 Common arrangements at all three airports have been used for some time. This results in aircraft classification and restrictive hours being the same. SASIG has accepted this as sensible in the past and there seems no reason to change that view now.

SASIG response

- 68 (a) Common arrangements seem sensible to aid the general understanding of the issue, albeit specific quotas should obviously take account of the suitability of that airport to accommodate night flights, if any.
- (b) The night quota period should be the same at each airport – and should be from 11.00pm to 7.00am, but divided into three sectors so that the central period is the same as the current quota period.

Q8.

(a) Points relating to density of population and ambient noise seem more germane to issues concerning the size of the noise quotas and the number of movements permitted, rather than to the length of the night quota period: do you disagree?

(b) Are you aware of any reason why we should not take account of the comment in the WHO *Guidelines* that responses to aircraft noise are less likely to be influenced by ambient noise than are some other types of noise? (see paragraphs 8.12-8.13 of the consultation report)

Commentary

69 The Dft report that in previous consultations some people have suggested a lower level of night flights at Heathrow because of the size of the population affected whereas others have suggested lower levels at Stansted because of the lower ambient noise level. Whilst the DfT are correct that this issue relates to the size of the quota rather than the length of the night, they do need to realise that, in both case, it is a desire for fewer flights, irrespective of the reason.

SASIG response

- 70 (a) The night quota period should be the same length at each airport, irrespective of the population count. But the different reasons for seeking lower a level of movements at all airports show just how objectionable night flights are. This needs to be taken into account in setting future limits.
- (b) The WHO comment should be ignored as those who live in a quiet area are affected for a longer time period as each aircraft passes overhead than those living in areas of higher ambient noise. Further information about the consideration of ambient noise is required, particularly some indication of how much aircraft noise exceeds ambient levels in the areas around the three airport.

Q9. Do you have any suggestions for further controls on movements during the night quota period if it is extended? (see paragraph 8.14 - 8.17 of the consultation report)

Commentary

- 71 DfT acknowledge that extending the NQP to cover the shoulder periods brings with it the danger that movements might be spread in a different pattern to that currently used.

SASIG response

- 72 The night quota period should be extended but needs shoulder periods so that movements currently either side of the NQP cannot be moved to an even more undesirable time of night. SASIG does not have specific suggestions on the actual number of movements there should be in each of these time sectors but the overall objective should be to gradually reduce the noise nuisance. This can be achieved by reducing the number of movements and/or the quota count. Ultimately there should be a very low number of movements at any airport where disturbance is caused.
- 73 The present controls allow, in theory at least, for a very large number of movements to take place on any single night or indeed in any shorter time period. This is a result of the quotas relating to a season. Consideration should be given to setting a maximum number of movements per hour and per night – perhaps related to a figure which is no bigger than double the average.

Other general comments-

- 74 The data should have been provided in either the Winter '02/Summer '03 format or for the full 2003 calendar year.
- 75 Paragraph 7.12 of the consultation report requests airlines and others to provide financial information. This should already have been provided by the DfT at this stage. One of the key arguments for night flights has been their supposed economic importance – yet no such justification has been seen. This must be rectified in the second stage. Due to the lack of this information it has not been possible to consider night restrictions in the context of sustainable development principles.
- 76 SASIG feels that there is a danger that this issue of night flight controls is getting overly complex. The eventual policy should be based on a “common sense approach” that night must equate to achieving 8 hours sleep and that present levels of disturbance are so unacceptable that they need reducing. In many ways this is illustrated by the results of a market research study carried out for APC in 1993. The study sought qualitative information amongst residents living near Heathrow and Gatwick airports about their perception of sleep disturbance caused by aircraft. The independent consultants reported that the noise of flying at night had more intermittent effects than day-time flying but nevertheless did:
- prevent people from going off to sleep at night before 11.30pm or midnight
 - wake people from sleep
 - prevent them from going back to sleep
 - mean that people slept more restlessly than would otherwise be the case
 - wake people early in the morning (i.e. from 4.00am onwards)
 - prevent them from falling deeply asleep again once woken early
- 77 The report contains a large number of quotes from people interviewed. In respect of night flights a typical comment was:

"I don't find I get woken during the night, but you think of 'the night' as from 11.30pm to about 5.30am. It would be no good living here if you liked to turn in about 10.30pm and sleep through to 7 or 8am."

- 78 SASIG would like to make one final and overall point. It is difficult to determine whether the policies that result from this consultation will produce an improving environment when compared to the situation that already exists. The Government should obtain an independent cost benefit analysis of the policy proposals. This will need to show by what degree the environmental improvements that the residents around major airports so keenly seek are, in reality, achieved.

Overall conclusion and future action

- 79 Night flights are a very contentious issue and, once the quotas are suggested in phase 2 of the consultation, there will be an even bigger concern amongst residents. This might be on of those topics on which SASIG should seek to hold a meeting with MPs around the three airports.

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Committee: Stansted Airport Advisory Panel
Date: 14 October 2004
Agenda Item No: 4
Title: Additional Noise Insulation and Assistance Schemes
Author: Will Cockerell (01799) 510581

Summary

- 1 Stansted Airport have recently issued a consultation document for two further schemes to address current airport noise for communities close to the airport.
- 2 The schemes address noise insulation for schools and hospitals exposed to high levels of noise, and provide relocation assistance for home owners exposed to very high noise levels.

Background

- 3 The first scheme is for public and private schools and hospitals within the 63dBA_{leq} 2002 noise contour, and there appear to be no such buildings within this contour. The scheme will be reviewed in 2007 when the 2006 contours are published and it is possible that schools in Great and Little Hallingbury may become eligible.
- 4 The second scheme is for home owners within the 69dBA_{leq} 2002 contour and includes part of Start Hill and a very few isolated houses to the north east of the airport. The proposed scheme provides a lump sum of £2 500 plus 1.5% of the sale value subject to a maximum of £10 000. There are a number of eligibility criteria designed to prevent property speculators benefiting from the scheme.

Comment

- 5 Both schemes use the noise exposure contours produced for the Department for Transport by the Civil Aviation Authority and employ the method of calculating the average noise levels over a 16 hour day between 16th June and 15th September and in apportioning aircraft movement to the long term modal split, currently 74:26 (the actual split in 2002 was 64:36). The effect of this methodology is to produce a contour which is useful for comparing year on year changes but is little use for assessing noise nuisance which is experienced on an hourly basis rather than over 91 days. Criticism of the use of this metric have been made in response to other consultations and it has been suggested by officers that a composite of 100% operation on runways 05 and 23 would provide a more realistic contour, and would include many more properties.

- 6 In view of the limited effect of these schemes it is suggested that any response to the consultation document be restricted to the inadequacy of using the 'standard' contours to define the boundaries of the schemes.

RECOMMENDED that the views of the Panel be reported to the Environment Committee to enable a response before the 21st December 2004 closing date.

Background Papers: BAA Stansted 'Protecting against airport noise'
www.baa.com/stanstednoise

Committee: Stansted Airport Advisory Panel
Date: 14 October 2004
Agenda Item No: 5
Title: Home Owner Support Scheme
Author: Will Cockerell (01799) 510581

Summary

- 1 This report advises Members that Stansted Airport Ltd (STAL) finalised its voluntary initiative on 20 September. Its scheme will come into effect on 4 January 2005.

Background

- 2 STAL consulted on its proposals from February to the end of May this year. It said its scheme aimed to enable those owners who qualify, and who live within a defined boundary, to sell their homes or commercial properties without financial penalty (because of generalised blight) and to move, if they need or want to, before the runway opens. The consultation sought preferences for either a property value protection scheme or assisted relocation.
- 3 The Council raised several concerns in its response to consultation. These included the sole use of the 66 dBA Leq contour to define the scheme area based on the long term modal split for runway use of 75:25, rather than on a 100:100 basis; the 66dBA level; the lack of consideration of nighttime contours; the resulting arbitrary boundaries on the ground; and the focus on owner occupiers.

The finalised scheme

- 4 Key features of the final scheme are:

Scheme Boundary

The predicted 66dBA leq in 2030 remains as the definition of the boundary of the scheme. If the position of the predicted contour changes in the future to include additional properties they will also be eligible.

Noise

The use of the 66dBA leq is designed to reflect the extent of generalised blight. Noise impacts would be addressed in the future through, for example, noise insulation schemes.

Type of Scheme

Both Property Protection and Assisted Relocation will be offered to the owners of property constructed before 16 December 2003 but on different terms.

Property Protection

This scheme agrees a valuation of the property before the White Paper announcement and index links it to the Land Registry house price data for Essex (banded in to types of property). The agreement is that once BAA has announced its intention to build the runway, and before it comes into operation, the company will buy the property at that index-linked price. In the mean time the option agreement can be transferred to any subsequent purchaser.

Assisted Relocation

This scheme will help owners of property that have fallen in value by at least 15% below the index linked price. If the owner can show the 15% reduction in value and that they have been actively marketing the property for a specified time (varying from 6 months for houses below £250,000 to 12 months for houses in excess of £750,000) the option to require BAA to buy the property can be exercised before any announcement is made on the intention to build the runway.

Early Moving Contribution

For those owners within the boundary of the scheme that are unable to show that their property has been devalued by over 15%, BAA have introduced an Early Moving Contribution equivalent to 1% of the sale price plus stamp duty, up to a maximum of 5% of the sale price.

Properties within the boundary but constructed after the 16 December 2003 will also benefit from the scheme but the initial valuation will be the actual purchase price paid.

FOR INFORMATION

Background Papers: Correspondence from Stansted Airport Ltd dated 20 September 2004 and HOSS booklet