



Minutes

Meeting of Noise & Track Sub Committee

Monday 3 September 2007 - 14.00hrs. Putteridge Bury Conference Centre

Attendees

Mr J Bailey	-	LLACC Chairman
Mr A Burke	-	NATS
Mr J Charles	-	Bickerdike Allen & Partners
Mrs K Goodman	-	LLAO (Airfield Environment Officer)
Mr R Hiscock	-	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Mr P Hunt	-	LADACAN (substitute)
Ms R Jones	-	Buckinghamshire County Council
Mr A Judge	-	LLAO Operations Director;
Mr R Koller	-	Bedfordshire County Council
Mr R Monck	-	Hertfordshire County Council (substitute)
Cllr M Muir	-	North Hertfordshire District Council
Mr M Nidd	-	LLATVCC (substitute)
Cllr Dr I Reay	-	Dacorum Borough Council
Ms W Rousell	-	Luton Borough Council (Planning)
Cllr P Swaisland	-	Bedfordshire County Council
Mr N Thompson	-	LLAO (Airspace & Airfield Environment Manager)
Mr S Turner	-	Bureau Veritas (Consultant to L.L.A.O)
Mr G Twiss	-	P.A.I.N

1 Apologies for absence and substitution.

Apologies for absence were received from:

Mr S Bailes	-	Hertfordshire County Council (substituted by Mr R Monck)
Cllr N Brook	-	LLACC Vice Chairman - Hertfordshire County Council
Mr M Burlyn	-	NATS
Dr J Davis	-	LADACAN (substituted by Mr P Hunt)
Cllr D Rowlands	-	Buckinghamshire County Council
Cllr Sir Beville Stanier	-	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Mr B Webb	-	LLATVCC (substituted by Mr M Nidd)

2 Minutes and matters arising from NTSC meeting 21 May 2007

i. Item 2.i. Further clarification and confirmation was given by LLAO that cargo operators are informed of complaints that relate to their particular operation. Noise monitoring does take place on all aircraft movements and if any anomalies are found these are taken up with the operator concerned whether they are cargo, commercial or GA.

ii. Item 2.v. The Committee were informed that it is intended to assess the affects of track dispersal on the summer noise contours in both INM Version 7 and Version 6. This will assist in the comparison of results and trends. It is hoped that the information will be available for the end of 2007.

ST

iii Item 3.x. It was noted by the Committee that although NATS have agreed to a 220 knots speed trial on westerly Brookmans Park departures, it is unlikely that NATS will be in a position to carry out the trial within the next 6 months due to a number of other priorities, the main one being the NATS move to Swanwick. NT agreed to keep the Committee informed of progress with this item.

NT

iv Comment was made regarding the discussion at the last meeting on the area increase in night noise contours. LLAO clarified that this was partially covered under item 3iii in the previous minutes. It was noted that during the previous meeting it was acknowledged that there was an increase in the size of the night noise contour and the number of complaints.

v Item 6 iv. LBC clarified that that the number of spaces at the Airparks Slip End site is correct, however clarification is awaited on the area of land being used. LBC agreed to report further at the next LLACC committee meeting.

LBC

vii Item 7 ii. The Chairman made reference to correspondence he had received from a member of the LLACC regarding aircraft that appeared to be joining the approach route late and whether such aircraft are included within the CDA compliance statistics that are reported. The Committee were informed that aircraft were only included in CDA reports if they follow the correct criteria for CDA which requires a section of level flight no greater than 2.5Nm following the descent from 5000ft altitude.

viii NATS gave a further explanation of the CDA profile and explained that as there is no defined fixed route that needs to be followed, some people may find the CDA principle a little confusing. NATS stated that there is only a fixed amount of airspace available to them and, with the further limitations around Leighton Buzzard combined with minimum joining of the final approach, sometimes aircraft will join the CDA on a tighter turn. It was noted that pilots do try and make a CDA approach as often as possible and that airline operators are very interested in the compliance reports that are produced by LLAO.

ix It was **agreed** that the sample flight tracks that are shown to the rear of the Environment Report would be expanded, on occasions, to show more of the “straight-in” easterly approaches.

NT

x Noise abatement procedures were also referred to in the correspondence to the Chairman, particularly low power/low drag aircraft configurations and whether these are associated with 3 degree approaches.

xi NATS advised that usually aircraft are kept as clean as possible for as long as possible. Arrival speeds are used to complement CDAs, however on infrequent occasions either the pilot or ATC may misjudge an approach. A large amount of information is contained within the Arrivals Code of Practice and ATC will give as much notice to pilots as possible so that they can manage their descent profiles and speed control.

xii It was suggested that pilots, on occasion, adopt sloppy practice and lower their undercarriage to slow the aircraft down. The Committee were informed that pilots slow their aircraft down by using flaps and spoilers and not by lowering the undercarriage. Everyone is trying to achieve CDA, and, everyone is trying to fly low power/low drag, however this cannot always be achieved for a variety of operational reasons. All pilots want to fly as cleanly as possible and use CDA approaches for the environmental and fuel saving benefits.

3 Working Party Update – LLACC/NTSC Technical Discussions

i The Chairman informed the committee that following the Working Party Meeting on the 31st July various recommendations are being to LLACC. It is hoped that these will give better clarity and advice on the best way forward to achieve the optimum level of technical discussion at NTSC and to ensure that LLACC considers appropriate topics. LLACC has a role to represent communities and other interested parties in both the benefits that the business of the airport provides as well as the environmental dis-benefits, so that any growth takes place in a sustainable manner.

ii The Chairman suggested that many of the recommendations for NTSC could be put in place with immediate effect as a practical demonstration to LLACC of what is being suggested.

- iii The recommendations relevant to the work of NTSC were *(with NTSC comments in italics)*:
- a) The deliberations of the NTSC would be helped if a Luton-based airline pilot were invited to sit on the NTSC to give a pilot's perspective on the topics discussed. *It was **agreed** that NT should action this, and any constitutional impact to be resolved at the AGM in September. NT has started discussions and is speaking to easyJet regarding representation.*
 - b) Technical officers generally have a greater understanding of the more technical issues and content of NTSC meetings. It was therefore suggested that local authority members should encourage their technical officer to take more part in the discussions at NTSC. *It was **agreed** that everyone at NTSC should feel able to take a full part in all discussions.*
 - c) NTSC minutes should continue to be included in draft format on the LLACC Agenda. These minutes should be specific enough to avoid the need for a further debate on the details of the Quarterly Environment Report. **Agreed.**
 - d) The quarterly Environment Report should be considered by LLACC with the draft minutes of the NTSC. The NTSC minutes should be drafted so as to clearly provide comments on each relevant section of the Environment Report and to be in the form of advice to the LLACC (possibly as bullet points) and these points should be the focus of the LLACC meeting. **Agreed.**
 - e) At the end of the debate on each agenda item, a summary of the issues and the agreed action points should be provided to assist with the accuracy of minutes. **Agreed.**
 - f) Minutes of NTSC meetings should record the range of views expressed, without being attributable to a specific named person i.e. if it is an airline point of view this is likely to be seen from the content. **Agreed.**
 - g) The quarterly Environment Report should be distributed by email (or put on the web site once it has been updated) to all LLACC and NTSC members prior to NTSC meetings. This will provide non-NTSC members an opportunity to raise any specific issues through an appropriate NTSC member. Members of the NTSC **agreed** this would be very useful to members of the LLACC and that the report should still be included on the CD version of papers as it is felt that it is a good reference document that can be readily available to members if required.
 - h) The reports for NTSC should continue to be produced by the Airfield Environment team, although the LLACC Noise Consultant and other NTSC members may also be expected to contribute reports on certain topics. **Agreed.**

NT

4 LLAO Quarterly Environment Report – April, May, June 2007

- i To implement the advice of the Working Party detailed in item 3 above, NTSC undertook to provide a summary and commentary on the main sections in the Environment Report. This is set out below.
- ii 1. INTRODUCTION.
No comment.
- iii 2. AIRCRAFT MOVEMENTS/PASSENGERS. Key points to note are:
Paras 2.1 & 2.2
 - A 5% increase of movements and passengers compared to the same period last year, but also to note that the figures were influenced by night closures for runway resurfacing during 2006.
 - Over a 2 year period (2005-2007) it was pointed out that there has been a 12% increase in movements.
 - LLAO **agreed** to include a comparison with the 4th quarter 2005 as well as 4th quarter 2006 (when that report is being compiled) so as to see a comparison without any runway closures.

NT

Para 2.3

- Runway Usage: 56% easterly operations in April has been the highest figure ever recorded for easterly operations during a month.

Para 2.6

- It was pointed out that the CDA achievement rate is between 15 - 16% higher during the daytime than at night time, and the CDA achievement rate for runway 26 is less than for runway 08. Also, from other documents, CDA achievement rates at the designated London airports are higher than at LLA.

In response NATS advised that the airspace associated with approaches to Runway 08 was designed for CDA approaches. The airspace associated with Runway 26 approaches has a lot more interaction with Stansted traffic making CDAs harder to achieve. The movements sample for the night period was also much smaller than the day sample resulting in a more dramatic shift with percentage figures.

NATS also stated that if the Stansted CDA figures are separated from the other designated London airports it will be seen that their performance and compliance is better during the day than at night. Also, it was noted that both Gatwick and Stansted figures indicated lower achievement percentages during the early period of the introduction of CDAs.

NATS will continue to monitor performance and seek improvements.

- **LLACC should note** that overall compliance with CDA continues to be good albeit that compliance at night is less than during the day
- LLAO have been advised that NATS will be discussing the night time differentials with airlines. The current figures are only the first set of figures that have been produced and would need to be compared with future year on year figures. It was noted that quarter on quarter comparisons would not give clear indications due to seasonal variations. It was asked that as the data became available, that it be made available to the committee although it was accepted that it should not be compared with the previous quarter. LLAO informed the committee that the figures will be reported in the Annual Monitoring Report but agreed to provide a breakdown on CDAs for the next meeting. LLAO stated that Luton is one of the first airports in the country to report CDA for both daytime and night time from both ends of the runway.
- **LLACC should note** that it was **agreed** that LLAO would report to the next NTSC on the night/day anomaly.

NT

iv 3. NOISE MONITORING DATA. Key points to note are:

Paras 3.1 & 3.2

- **LLACC should note** that there had been one day time noise exceedance during the period and one night noise exceedance. The night time exceedance was captured within the lowered night noise level of 85dB(A) that was brought in with the new Night Noise Policy in April 2007. The operators concerned have been contacted.
- The Night Noise Policy is proving effective and the lowering of the noise exceedance level has been accepted by aircraft operators.

v 4. COMPLAINTS. Key points to note are:

Para 4.1.5

- 14 complaints received during the quarter about a deviation from standard procedures. On investigation 8 were shown to be due to weather avoidance. The remaining 6 had flown outside the stipulated swathes below the vectoring altitude and details had been discussed with the operators and in some cases the pilot. It was noted that operators are extremely concerned to discover that they may be doing something wrong and actively seek to rectify the situation.

Para 4.3.2

- The Chairman made reference to correspondence he had received from an LLACC member regarding the provision of radar tracks for specific flights or intervals and it was suggested that this would enhance communication and community relations. Heathrow and Gatwick both have WebTrack monitoring systems in place and it was asked if Luton could consider using the same system.
- **LLACC should note** that LLAO consider the full picture and do not just look at the track. They often discuss events with NATS and the aircraft operators and investigate fully and where relevant radar track plots are also provided. Whilst, LLAO keeps in

touch with other airports and monitors progress with the WebTrack system, it was noted that this system is not compatible with the Topsonic system in place at Luton.

Para 4.3

- From additional information supplied, **LLACC should note** that the general public have become more sensitive to night movements when comparing previous year on year quarters. In 2005 there was 1 complaint for every 73 night movements but this has increased to 1 in 42 by 2007.

Para 4.4

- **LLACC should note** that 25% of complaints received come from Harpenden area and relate to helicopter movements. The new VRP' (considered at item 5 below) should help resolve this problem. It was also noted that in relation to helicopters, complaints have increased although the number of movements has remained the same.

vi 5. COMPLAINTS ADMINISTRATION. Key points to note are:

No comments.

vii 6. COMMUNITY RELATIONS

No comments.

viii **Night Noise Contours**

Para 1.

- **LLACC should note** a progressive increase and that the area now covered by the contours is as high as in 2001. It was questioned whether any issues could be identified to ensure that it does not go any higher. It was noted that the planning consent imposes certain levels of noise control and that the current contour size is nowhere near the consented levels.
- It was noted that with the exclusion of Chapter II aircraft in April 2002 the contours reduced and therefore a comparison could also be made with the number movements and noise levels at that time.

Paras 2, 3 & 4.

- The contours are derived from an increase in movements in 2007 over 2006. For the same period last year movements were not typical and therefore there was a need to compare 2005 and 2007
- It was noted that night movements have increased overall but that most of the change was contained within in last hour of night movements, 06:00 and 07:00 hours.
- The increase in growth has been primarily in 737-700 series aircraft.

5. **Helicopter Routing Draft Informative Papers**

- i DAP have advised that LLAO do not need to consult on the proposed additional Visual Reporting points (VRPs). LLAO intend to issue a Question and Answer document together with an informative letter once the implementation date has been set. The document will be circulated to Local Authorities including Parish Councils and all LLACC members. It is anticipated that the changes will be published in the next AIRAC cycle in October.
- ii It is noted that it depends upon where a helicopter is transiting to/from which VRPs they will be directed to, either the A1 or M1. Helicopters navigate by using clearly defined points on the ground and both weather and other aircraft need to be considered.
- iii It was **agreed** that information that does not relate to helicopters and the new VRPs be minimised on the diagram accompanying the Q&A document and that a key be added. It was also **agreed** that an explanation of the routes be given in the covering letter as well as in the Q&A document. **NT**
- iv Concerns were raised regarding the flight of helicopters in opposite directions. The "right-hand rule" was explained whereby aircraft visually fly to the right-hand side of a navigation feature (such as the M1) and avoiding conflict with opposite direction traffic.

6 **AMR 2007 Update – employment Survey / Executive Summary**

- i LBC informed that this year's employment survey was sent out on the 1st August and that so far 38% of firms have responded. LBC will pursue outstanding responses within the next few **LBC**

weeks.

- ii It was **agreed** that the LLACC Noise Consultant should again write the Executive Summary, to give a degree of independence to the interpretation of the information. **JC**

7 DEFRA Contours / Action Plan

- i The Committee was informed that the Airport has fulfilled its obligation under the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006, regarding noise mapping and submitted their data to the DfT. The Airport has been told informally that the results have been checked and found to comply with the requirements of the regulations. Formal notification is expected later this month.

- ii It is understood that Defra plan to publish L Den and L night contours sometime later this month and it is expected that Defra will provide guidance on how the action plan process may evolve in due course.

- iii Defra will publish information about the area enclosed by the various contours, including the population exposed in time to report the results to the EU. It is hoped that the Airport will be able to provide the results of the noise mapping to the NTSC at the next meeting. **NT/ST**

8 Any Other Business

- i Interest was expressed in a press release from Harrods Aviation regarding slot co-ordination by ACL. LLAO informed the Committee that Luton's commercial traffic has been coordinated by ACL for a number of years. ACL have just made the agreement formal for GA traffic.

- ii Slot allocation makes runway usage more efficient and reduces problems from ad-hoc GA flights. It was noted that events such as Silverstone can operate their flight activities on slot allocation basis.

9 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 19 November 2007 at 2.00pm