

Minutes

Meeting of Noise & Track Sub Committee

Monday 21 May 2007 - 14.00hrs. Putteridge Bury Conference Centre

Attendees

Mr J Bailey	-	LLACC Chairman
Mr N Brook	-	LLACC Vice Chairman - Hertfordshire County Council
Mr A Burke	-	NATS
Mr J Charles	-	Bickerdike Allen & Partners
Mrs K Goodman	-	L.L.A.O (Airfield Environment Officer)
Mr R Hiscock	-	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Mr P Hunt	-	LADACAN (substitute)
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 D Rowlands	-	Buckinghamshire County Council
Cllr P Swaisland	-	Bedfordshire County Council
Mr N Thompson	-	L.L.A.O (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 R Berry	-	South Beds District Council
Mr M Burlyn	-	NATS
Dr J Davis	-	LADACAN (substituted by Mr P Hunt)
Mr A Judge	-	LLAO Operations Director;
Mr B Webb	-	LLATVCC (substituted by Mr M Nidd)

2 Minutes and matters arising from NTSC meeting 19th February 2007

- i. Comment was made again about the high number of night noise complaints between October and December 2006 even though the runway was closed to night operations. NT clarified that many of the aircraft which were scheduled to arrive after the closure period were arriving prior to its closure period, giving an unusual concentration of traffic for that time of night.
- ii. NT confirmed that Cargo Operators have been made aware of complaints that relate to their particular operation. Any plans for improvement will be reported to the next meeting. **NT**
- iii. The Committee were informed that the April AIP update will include the revised wording for CDA, which is in line with the other major London Airports and conforms with the Arrivals Code of Practice.
- iv. CDA compliance was debated by the Committee. NT stated that a reporting mechanism has been in place for a year and that airline operators are very interested in receiving the reports produced. Andrew Burke, the CDA controller at Terminal Control, stated that compliance is currently very good and it is therefore hard to know where targets should be set for comparison with other airports within the UK. Suggestion was made that as compliance is

already good for Luton, targets should be set higher than those for the other London airports. It was appreciated, however, that these were new procedures for Luton and that it may be more appropriate to continue with the current monitoring and identify targets in the future.

- v. ST will report to the NTSC on the affects of track dispersal on the noise contours when the new release of INM V7 is available. It is widely expected that the new version will give closer results with the ANCON noise model. It was suggested that, once available, the noise consultants familiarise themselves with the new noise model and then integrate it into future contour production. It was **agreed** that Version 7 and Version 6 should be run in parallel for a time to enable results and trends to be compared. ST
 - vi. A suggestion was made that the 2006 contours may not accurately reflect the routes flown. Following further debate the Committee were advised that contour production is validated with actual radar plot data of the flown tracks and are calibrated yearly incorporating track dispersal. It was recognised that there will be changes between version 6 and version 7 of the INM Model and it was suggested that this item is revisited once version 7 is in place and fully functional.
 - vii. A question was raised enquiring how far a departing aircraft should be following the SID even if above the vectoring altitude. The Committee were advised that if an aircraft is not vectored it will follow the route as prescribed on the published departure SID plate. If an aircraft is vectored it will be following the route headings that it is given.
 - viii. Following the request from DEFRA for the production of contours, in line with the new Environmental Noise Directive, the Committee were informed that Bureau Veritas have now completed the data input and have a draft report ready for submission. The Committee will be updated at the next meeting, by which time the DEFRA advice on the production of Action Plans may be available. NT/ST
 - ix. Further explanation was given regarding intersection departures (less time at the hold position and less time back-tracking on the runway), and clarification that the decision to depart from the intersection on the runway was made solely by the pilot of the aircraft. It was also noted that most airports within the UK have the ability to use intersection departures.
 - x. The minutes from 19 March 2007 were approved.
- 3 LLAO Quarterly Environment Report – January, February March 2007**
- i. During the period January to March westerly operations were dominant on average 77% of the time for the quarter.
 - ii. Table 2.1 showed a significant increase in cargo operations. It was noted that the increase was predominantly in the daytime rather than night time. It was further highlighted that the general increase in movements was attributable to general aviation operations rather than cargo operations.
 - iii. It was noted and concerns were raised regarding a 22% increase in night movements. LLAO outlined that this amounted to an average 4 additional movements per night compared to the same period last year and that 69% of total night movements related to arrivals, many landing back at the airport in the shoulder period 23:00 hrs until midnight. It was highlighted that if complaints are received concerning aircraft night movements, this usually refers to movements during the middle of the night rather than in the shoulder periods.
 - iv. It was felt by some members of the Committee that airport charges were not acting as much of a deterrent for airlines operating during the night time periods as numbers were still increasing.
 - v. The Committee were advised that LLAO have a 24hour operating license and that charges and penalties are discussed with any new operator wishing to operate from Luton; these charges include security charges, landing charges and ATC charges. The Committee were further advised that currently LLAO are nearing aircraft parking capacity at night and are

currently looking to fill gaps during daytime operations. It was further noted that in order to get high load factors operators need to operate a timetable that is favourable with passengers, which is generally after 06.00hrs in the morning.

- vi. The route analysis showed compliance with CDA was high, albeit varies between runways. It was **agreed** that future reports would show percentage CDA compliance for day and night. **NT**
- vii. The decrease in the night noise violation limit was welcomed by the Committee and a suggestion was made that the daytime noise limit should also be lowered to 92 dB(A) rather 94dBb(A). LLAO stated that this could be a consideration as part of a future planning process.
- viii. It was noted that the table showings night time departures and noise levels now reflected the lower level that came into operation in April. An adjustment will be made to the columns so that they are all 3dB differences (i.e. 88 – 91 and 91 to 94). **NT**
- ix. It was noted by the Committee that after helicopter activity, the A300 is the one specific aircraft type accounting for most complaints (11% of total complaints). It was highlighted that this is now probably the noisiest aircraft operating out of Luton in comparison to the modern, quieter and more usual easyJet and Ryanair fleets.
- x. The Committee were informed that track-keeping on westerly Brookmans Park departures was discussed with NATS and DAP after the last meeting. A trial, where speed is restricted to 220 knots, is planned so that monitoring can demonstrate if track keeping can be improved. It was **agreed** that LLAO will update the Committee as the trial progresses. **NT**

4 **Complaints Analysis**

- i. The complaints analysis presented was self explanatory, being an updated version of the Complaints Analysis Report presented to members in May 2006.
- ii. It was noted by a member that the analysis demonstrated an increase in complaints over the last three years. LLAO stated that the increased frequency of aircraft movements would have been a contributory factor, along with the publication of the London Luton Airport Draft Master Plan and a number of public exhibitions that took place within the local communities regarding the Project 2030 proposals. These would have all increased people's awareness of aircraft noise and related issues would have contributed to the increase in the number of complaints.
- iii. It was further noted that increased helicopter movements, recognition of the heightened awareness along with unusually lengthy periods of easterly operations have resulted in the general public reporting disturbance on a more regular basis. It has also become much easier and quicker for the general public to send in complaints now via e mail, fax and telephone.
- iv. It is recognised that the general public like to know that things are not out of control and that systems are in place to monitor and take action on any violations. Once they have received information and understand what is happening this seems to satisfy most people, although this does not mean they are more or less bothered by what is happening but just that they understand the situation better. To assist with this, an information pack is sent to first-time complainants.
- v. The uncertainty of the Master Plan is also causing people to complain more and this is likely to continue until a final outcome has been published.

5 **Helicopter Activity**

- i. NT explained that a study of helicopter routing had been undertaken to see if it was possible to take action to reduce the number of complaints, particularly about overflying Harpenden.

- ii. A number of meetings have taken place between DAP and NATS resulting in additional Visual Reference Points (VRPs) being identified for LLA helicopter traffic which will hopefully resolve many of the concerns and complaints that are currently being received from the local communities. The aim would be to encourage helicopters to fly along the route of the A1 and M1.
- iii. The Committee were advised that consultation is not required to set up new VRPs but that an informative letter will be sent out to the relevant local authorities and community representatives, including LLACC members.. However it is estimated that there will be 35,000 people less affected following introduction of the new VRPs. It is anticipated that the new procedures will be in place for the summer.
- iv. Once the VRPs have been adopted they will be published and available to all VFR pilots. It was, however, noted that VRPs cannot be imposed as helicopters need to fly visually and it is the pilot's discretion as to what routing they take. It was further noted that the current North and South Lanes will still be available for use.

6 AMR 2006 Feedback

- i. The Committee felt that the Executive Summary produced by the LLACC Noise consultant was a very useful synopsis and that the AMR has become a very well presented and informative document.
- ii. It was noted that page 36 refers to the contours area for night time based on 1999 forecast which is relevant for the planning consent and predicted on ANCON.
- iii. The employment data, based on a survey that was sent to employers in and around the airport, had a response rate of 64%, marginally better than the last full survey but still considered to be low. It was recognised that there are huge problems in getting responses from employers to the survey for the AMR. The Chairman suggested that other airports are contacted to ascertain how they gather their data. LLAO / LBC are open to any suggestions to improve responses. LLAO/LBC
- iv. LBC **agreed** to seek further clarification regarding the allocation of space per car from Airparks at Slip End. The information received direct from Airparks currently suggests 5m sq per car. LBC

7 Arrivals Code of Practice/NATS TC Operations

- i. Andrew Burke from NATS gave a presentation on the Arrivals Code of Practice and NATS Terminal Control Operations in relation to Luton. This showed the complexity of air space around London and demonstrated the care NATS take to minimise problems.
- ii. The initial Arrivals Code of Practice was first published in 2002 for the 3 London airports and has now been adopted for any airport and included the benefits for CDA and fuel savings. It has also been adopted as a reference guide worldwide.
- iii. Debate and discussion ensued on detailed aspects of the presentation.
- iv. The Chairman thanked Andrew for an informative and very useful presentation which helped the Committee to understand how Luton fits within wider control areas..

8 Date of Next Meeting

- i. Monday 3 September 2007 at 2.00pm.