

Heathrow Community Noise Forum - Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Heathrow Community Noise Forum has been set up to:

- Keep community representatives and local authority stakeholders informed and seek their input in preparing for and consulting on future airspace modernisation as part of the Government's Airspace Modernisation Strategy and airspace changes associated with Heathrow expansion;
- Improve understanding of industry and Government representatives of the key concerns of communities living around Heathrow and use these to influence Government aviation policy and guidance to the CAA;
- Keep members abreast of all airspace trials and procedural changes that are being planned by NATS and Heathrow where they are expected to have a discernible impact on the ground;
- Be a key channel through which Heathrow and NATS will communicate with communities and stakeholders on actions being taken to address community concerns about aircraft noise;
- Be a means by which Heathrow communities affected by noise from the airport's operations provide feedback to the airport's management, the DfT, CAA, NATS and the airlines on problems they are experiencing;
- Be a focal point for stakeholder involvement in the planning, consultation and communication of the modernisation and use of Heathrow's future airspace.

Objectives

The Heathrow Community Noise Forum will:

- Seek to understand the impact of noise on residential communities of aviation operations around Heathrow and consider ways in which these impacts can be minimised or avoided, including communities which have experienced a deterioration in the noise environment, delivered through an annual action plan;
- Improve understanding of members on Heathrow's operations and airspace issues through workshops and familiarisation sessions;
- Communicate and clarify the role and responsibilities of the organisations involved in the management of aircraft noise and noise policy;
- Agree relevant studies and analysis to be carried out to establish historic changes to flight patterns;
- Review and propose recommendations for Heathrow's communications approach for future airspace trials and public consultations related to the wider airspace modernisation programme and Heathrow's future airspace;
- Keep the Heathrow Community Engagement Board (HCEB) aware of proceedings by circulating minutes to members.

Principles

All Members are expected to:

- Recognise Heathrow's legal right to exist and operate within its current cap of 480,000 air traffic movements per year and to be compliant with Government aviation policy and guidance;
- Seek to balance the environmental rights of the communities affected, or potentially affected, by Heathrow's operations (including minimising the health and noise impacts of aircraft) against the commercial and safety imperatives of the airport and its customers and to challenge and amend policies and procedures to achieve this balance;
- Seek to understand and respect the views of other Forum members and work through consensus where that is possible;
- Consider the wider views of the stakeholder group that they represent, establish mechanisms to gather those views where necessary, and present them in a balanced way;
- At all times act with honesty, integrity and transparency.

Topics

The topics that will be discussed by the Heathrow Community Noise Forum will usually fall into one of the following categories although this list is not exhaustive and members can request other relevant topics.

- Heathrow's operations
- Management of aircraft noise
- Airspace modernisation
- Airspace changes associated with Heathrow expansion
- Airspace trials
- Data verification and analysis
- Noise modelling and monitoring
- Communications/complaints handling and other non-acoustic measures

An individual meeting will not aim to cover each of these categories, but will focus on specific issues agreed by members. It is envisaged that the Forum's work will focus initially on the independent verification of data and scoping studies required to establish historic changes to flight patterns.

Membership

The Chair and secretariat are provided by Heathrow.

Membership of the forum is made up of representatives from local authorities and community groups around Heathrow, NATS, DfT, CAA, British Airways, Virgin Atlantic and Heathrow. Members can appoint a deputy.

Consultants will be brought in from time to time with agreement from members where a specific and technical piece of work is required.

Meetings

The meetings will be held every 2 months.

Members (and/or their deputies) are expected to attend all the meetings. Where a member (or deputy) does not attend two consecutive meetings, Heathrow reserves the right to invite an alternative member to represent the interests of the relevant stakeholder group.

Working group(s) to be set up with agreement from forum members to undertake specific tasks and to deliver aspects of the action plan.

Meetings will generally be held at one of Heathrow Airport Limited's offices, though may on occasion be held in other locations where relevant to the group's work.

HCNF meetings are open to members of the public to observe the proceedings. The Chair has the right to require the exclusion of individuals from the Forum's proceedings in the event of inappropriate or disruptive behaviour.

HCNF members will have the opportunity to propose items for inclusion on agendas.

Papers will be circulated before the meetings where possible.

Meeting notes will be made available two weeks after each meeting. Presentations will be made available immediately afterwards where they are not circulated in advance.

Meetings notes and presentations will be made available on the Heathrow noise website at www.heathrow.com/noise.

Outputs

An annual time bound action plan should be agreed and kept under review.

Amendments to the Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference may be amended after consultation and agreement by members of the Forum.

Updated: October 2018