

Introduction to Night Flights





Night Flights

Night flights are an important part of operations at airports around the world. The time differences in an inter-connected global transport system mean that it is difficult to avoid night flights.

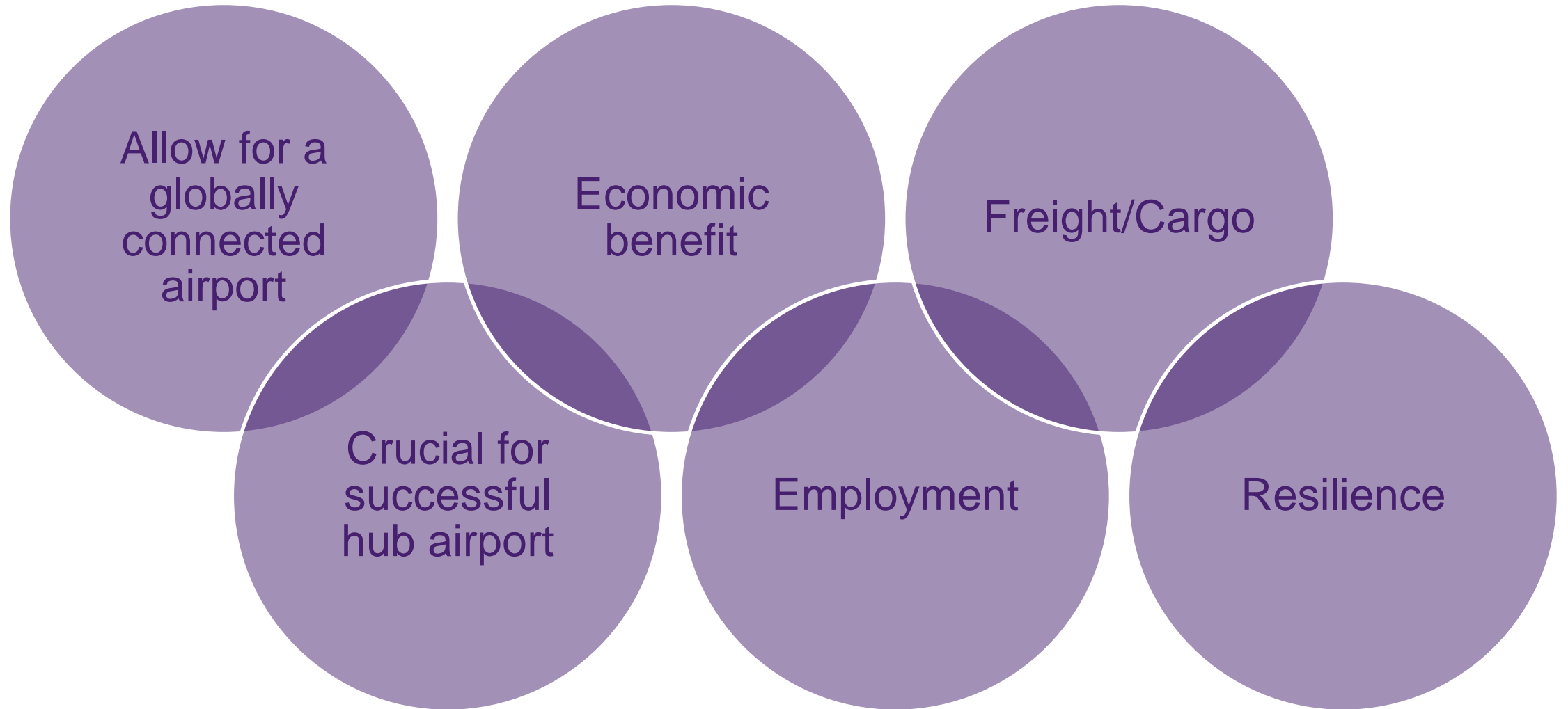
Night flights bring significant economic benefit to the UK and help ensure that Heathrow is well connected.

However, noise created by aircraft at night may cause more disturbance to some people because there is less background noise from other sources and the majority of people will be trying to sleep.

Similarly, night noise may appear worse in the summer because people tend to sleep with windows open more frequently.

Heathrow NAP Objective: 10% reduction in sleep disturbance by 2030 compared to 2019

The role of night flights



Night flight restrictions

Is there a ban on night flights at LHR?

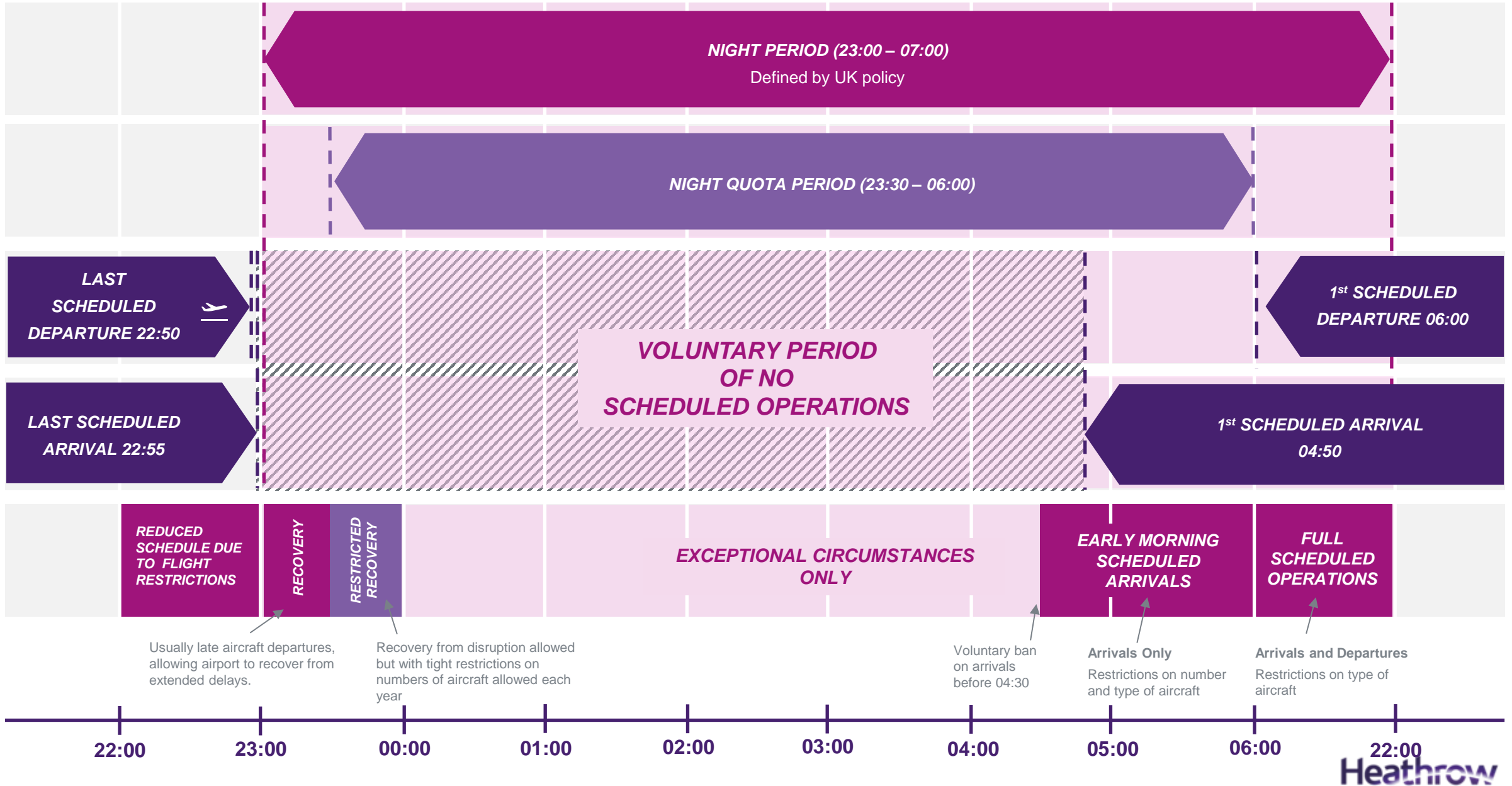
- Heathrow has always been a 24-hour operation airport - **no formal night-time ban**
- Government has placed restrictions and rules regarding night flights.

Who defines and monitors the restrictions at LHR?

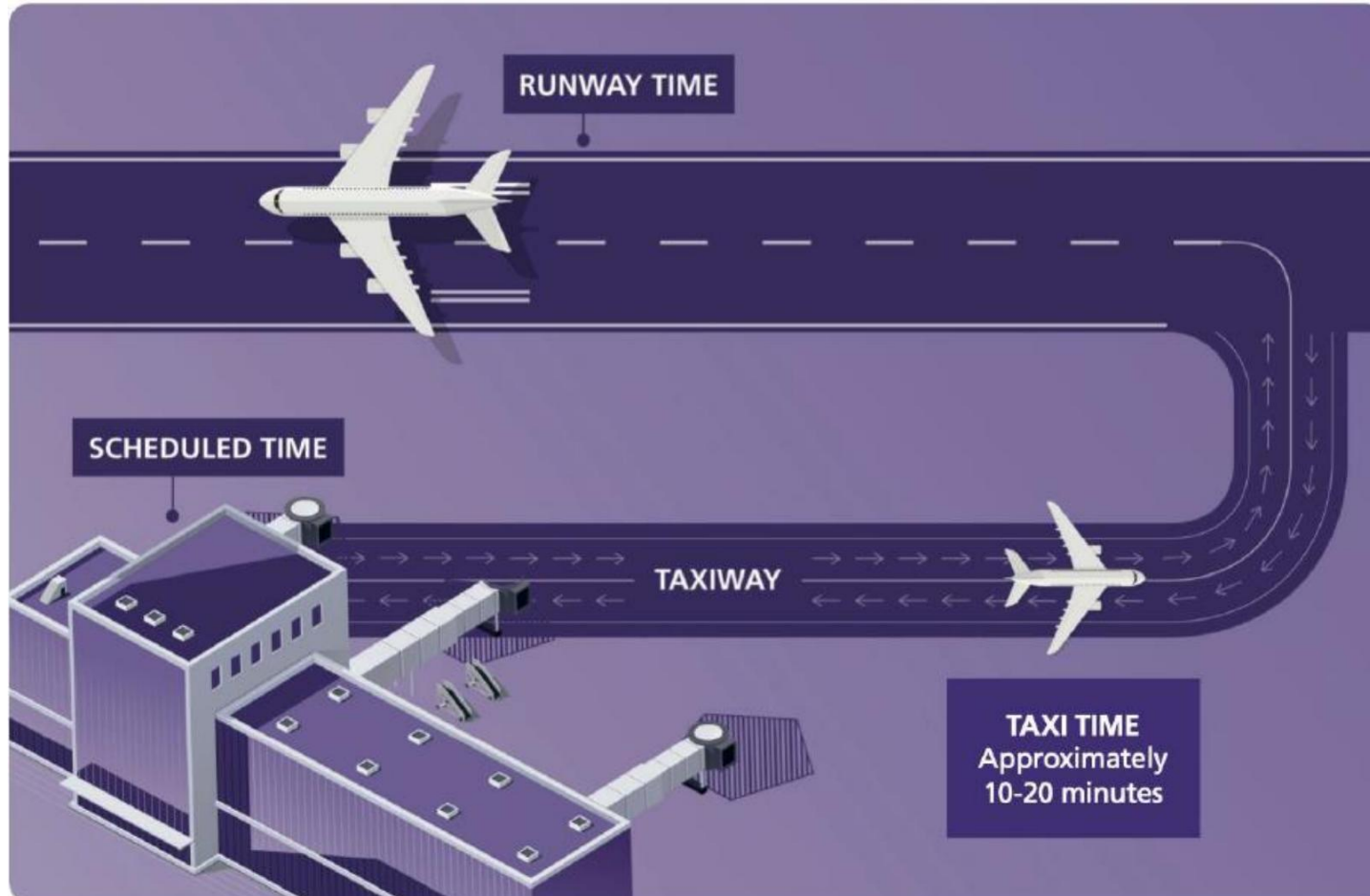
- The Government sets night-time operating restrictions at designated airports (under the Civil Aviation Act 1982)
- Department for Transport (DfT) defines restrictions on the types of aircraft that can be scheduled to fly at night
- Aim has been to maintain a balance between the need to protect local communities from too much aircraft noise at night and the operation of services where they provide economic benefits
- Heathrow does not set the rules
- Heathrow strictly monitors compliance with all Government restrictions in force
- Heathrow reports regularly to the DfT and the Council for the Independent Scrutiny of Heathrow Airport (CISHA)

Restrictions summary

Classification: Public



Scheduled vs runway time



For arrivals;

- The scheduled time of an arrival is the time that the plane reaches the airport stand (when the plane stops at the terminal gate and you get off).
- The runway time is the time the plane touches down on the runway.

It is the same for departures;

- the scheduled time is the time the plane will push back from the gate
- and the runway time will be approximately 15 minutes later when it takes off.

Movement and noise quota limits

Night flying restrictions are divided into seasons

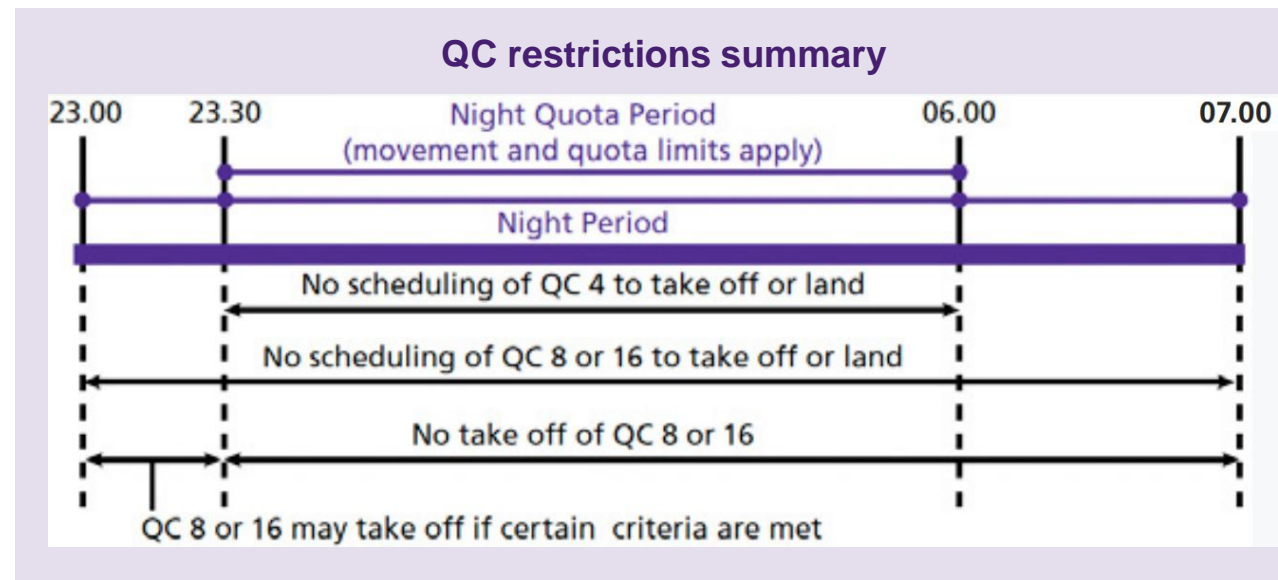


Based on daylight savings time

Night Quota period (23:30 – 06:00)



Each season there are two types of limit



	2005/ 06	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25
Winter movements	2550	2550	2550	2550	2550
Winter QC	4141	2415	2415	2415	2415
Summer movements	3250	3250	3250	3250	3250
Summer QC	5610	2735	2735	2735	2735

Night flight regime review

- The government periodically reviews the night flight restrictions it imposes upon the designated airports (Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted).
- The current regime will be ending this year (October 2025)
- The DfT launched a consultation on 22 February 2024 regarding the regime at the designated airports from October 2025.
- The outputs of this review:

“We propose a bridging night flight regime of 3-years that will cover October 2025 to October 2028. This is because we are awaiting evidence from the ANNE study and also from the aviation noise attitudes survey. This survey is being conducted by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and it is anticipated to be published in 2025 to 2026.

We believe the existing restrictions on night flights are sufficient to meet the new night-time noise abatement objective. Therefore, while we await further evidence, we now propose to keep movement limits and noise quota limits the same for the next regime.”

	2005/ 06	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	2025/ 26	2026/ 27	2027/ 28
Winter movements	2550	2550	2550	2550	2550	2550	2550	2550
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Heathrow