



Environmental Noise Directive Noise Action Plan 2013-2018

Executive summary – Revised draft submitted in January 2014

Adopted and approved by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – August 2014

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Introduction

In meeting our obligations as the competent authority for producing a draft noise action plan for Heathrow airport we have produced the following suite of documents:

- Heathrow Airport Environmental Noise Directive Action Plan: Executive summary.
- Heathrow Airport Environmental Noise Directive Action Plan: The action plan.
- Heathrow Airport Environmental Noise Directive Action Plan: Supporting annexes.

This document provides an Executive summary of Heathrow Airport Limited's action plan to manage aircraft noise impacts over the five year period 2013 – 2018. The actions contained within the plan are kept under review. If appropriate and agreed with the Heathrow Noise Forum, we will update or amend these on an annual basis.

It is important to note that the action plan relates to limiting and where possible reducing noise associated with the current two runway airport.

Airports bring a range of economic, social and environmental impacts, both positive and negative. Airports are important economic generators, providing jobs, encouraging inward investment and boosting tourism. However, there are also some negative impacts for those communities that live and work around airports. Noise remains a significant issue for people living or working close to airports or under flight paths.

Limiting and where possible, reducing this noise is a long standing commitment within Heathrow's sustainability agenda. The action plan contains a number of industry acronyms and terms and so a glossary of terms to aid understanding is provided in Annex 1.

The Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 require airport operators to develop Action Plans designed to manage noise issues and effects arising from aircraft departing from and arriving at their airport, including reduction if necessary.

More specifically the guidance provides details on the general requirements for action plans, expected content (see Annex 2), considerations in determining actions and the process for public consultation, adoption and publication. In helping airports to determine what actions may be necessary the guidance points to two key pieces of information. These are:

- the current noise impact of their operations as shown by the results of the strategic noise mapping; and
- the current control measures they have in place.

In 2013, DEFRA published updated guidance for airport operators to produce noise action plans, including information on what is required for updating an existing plan. An Airport Noise Action Planning Data Pack was also provided - the information within this was based on strategic noise mapping of Heathrow Airport completed in 2012, showing the situation in 2011. Data is provided on estimated population and dwelling statistics for various noise level indicators and associated noise level contour maps.

This guidance required that after the plan is revised, it should be presented to Heathrow Airport's Consultative Committee (HACC) and all comments and related responses should be described in the published Action Plan. It must then be sent to the Secretary of State for Defra for approval, then revised or adopted as necessary.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has direct control over noise policy at Heathrow and over many years has established a range of operational controls and statutory objectives to manage and where possible reduce noise.

Summary of the Action Plan



Heathrow Airport Limited has also had a detailed noise management strategy for a number of years which has further enhanced the approach set by the DfT. Consequently we believe we have a comprehensive and effective approach to aircraft noise management.

In considering the strategic noise maps we noted that the areas identified were consistent with those we identified in our experience of managing aircraft noise impacts over the past 20 years. The production of annual 57dB Leq 16h summer day contours has been a consistent feature during this period. Traditionally our approach to noise management has contained actions aimed at addressing areas beyond these contours and additionally, ground noise. In the absence of further guidance to identify important areas within specific contour bands the actions contained within this plan continue to support this wider approach.

The action plan and accompanying text aims to:

- demonstrate our continuing commitment to managing aircraft noise impacts associated with Heathrow airport's operations. Heathrow Airport Limited has identified this issue as one of the key priorities for its Responsible Heathrow 2020 programme.
- allow us to engage with communities affected by aircraft noise and better understand their concerns and priorities, so that we can ensure our airport noise strategies and action plans are well informed.

- enable us to make progress towards our long term statutory and voluntary aircraft noise objectives.
- enable us, in our role as the competent authority for Heathrow airport's noise action plan, to meet the requirements of the Environmental Noise Directive 2002/49/EU and The Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 SI (2006) 2238.

Over the following paragraphs we have set out the key aspects of sections 2 to 9 of the noise action plan and the supporting annexes.

Section 2 sets out the purpose and scope of the noise action plan. The purpose is to manage and where possible reduce the impact of noise from aircraft operating at Heathrow over the five year period 2013-2018. The scope of the noise action plan is extended beyond the areas identified by the strategic noise mapping to include ground noise issues and actions that impact on areas outside the noise contours. The section also points out that responsibilities for noise management do not always fall to the airport operator but to the DfT, NATS and/or the CAA. In such cases the airport operator can only recommend proposed changes. It is also highlighted that final approval and adoption of the noise action plan rests with the Secretary of State for the Department of Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

Section 3 provides a description of Heathrow airport and comments briefly on future development of the airport.





Section 4 introduces the issue of aircraft noise and details the legal context in which Heathrow airport operates.

Over the past 30 years aircraft have got progressively quieter whilst the number of movements has increased significantly. This is illustrated by the fact that between 1974 and 2006 the number of people living within the 57dB Leq 16h summer day noise contour (57 decibels averaged over 16 hours) has fallen from two million to around 239,600 during which time runway movements have increased annually from around 265,000 to 475,000.

Within the text it is also acknowledged that noise contours are not the only way to describe the community impacts of aircraft noise. This section highlights some of the effects of noise. It also briefly discusses the interdependencies between noise and emissions, and working with agglomerations to ensure compatibility between action plans.

The governance structure for noise within which Heathrow operates is complex. The role of International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) in setting international noise certification standards is detailed as well as its role in setting International Standards, Recommended Practices and Procedures in relation to aircraft noise. Reference is also made to the requirement for Member States to adopt a “balanced approach” to noise management. At the European level some detail is provided on some key European Union Directives which relate to aircraft noise including the phase out of older Chapter 2 aircraft in 2002.

In March 2013 the Government published its Aviation Policy Framework (APF) which sets out the Government’s objectives and principles to guide plans and decisions at the local and regional level. This replaces the 2003 Air Transport White Paper as Government policy on aviation. It is underpinned by the two core principles of collaboration and transparency. It aims for all stakeholders to work together to develop workable solutions based on clear and accessible information,

With respect to noise, the overall objective is to limit and where possible reduce the number of people in the UK significantly affected by aircraft noise. The APF also promotes cooperation with the objective to encourage the aviation industry and local stakeholders to strengthen and streamline the way in which they work together.

We fully support this framework and regard it as a foundation on which Heathrow’s actions can be based. We often go above and beyond the requirements set by Government, and are committed to working with them and with local communities to address the noise issue.

The Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) was also published and forms part of the overall framework of national planning policy, and should be a material consideration in decisions on planning applications. It promotes the policy of sustainable aviation. The National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) came in to force in March 2012 sets out the Governments planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

At a national level a number of significant Acts of Parliament and regulations exist. These include the Civil Aviation Acts 1982 and 2006 which grant the government powers to introduce noise control measures at designated airports (Heathrow, Stansted and Gatwick). The text introduces the UK Aeronautical Information Publication (UK AIP) which contains a range of noise controls relating directly to aircraft operations. This section also refers to the 2013 publication of UK government’s Aviation Policy Framework.

Section 5 outlines our strategic approach to aircraft noise management framed around our long term objective To limit and where possible reduce aircraft noise impacts.

Our commitments on noise fall under the following five headings:

- 1. Quieter planes**
- 2. Quieter procedures**
- 3. Noise mitigation and land-use planning**
- 4. Operating restrictions**
- 5. Working with local communities**

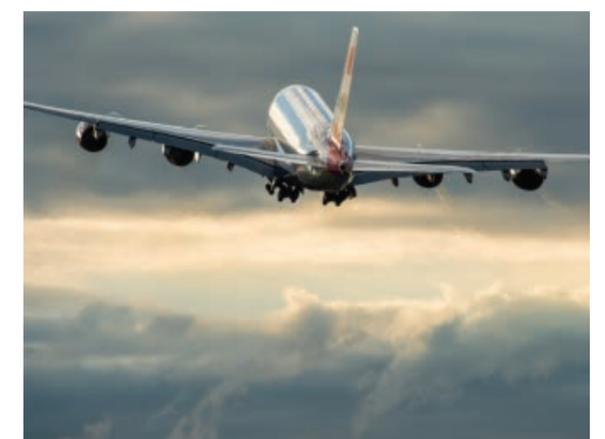
All of our actions have been developed within the framework set out in the ICAO Balanced Approach to Aircraft Noise Management which represents the global approach to tackling noise adopted by governments around the world in recognition of the shared challenge of noise. The UK Government recently confirmed its support for the ‘balanced approach’ in its Aviation Policy Framework.



The text goes on to describe the current measures in place to manage noise at Heathrow airport under each of the above headings. This is a very detailed section of the noise action plan and is an indication of the wide range of the statutory and voluntary noise management controls already in place. Supplementary information is given where appropriate in the Annexes.

Section 6 summarises the results of the 2011 noise mapping and is supported by the maps in Annex 3. In order to provide some context, data from the London Agglomeration strategic noise maps for road and rail is provided. This shows that an estimated 766,000 people were within the 55dB L_{den} Heathrow air noise contour for 2011. This compares with over 2.4 million exposed to similar levels of road noise and around 525,000 by rail noise sources. At all other L_{den} contour bandings (i.e. >60dB L_{den}) the population exposed to air noise is lowest. For the L_{night} contours the pattern is very similar except that there are no contour bandings where the numbers exposed to air noise exceed road or rail exposure numbers. It also highlights the importance of comparing like for like data by providing population and dwelling numbers for 2006 and 2012 using the same datasets, highlighting how the population and dwellings have increased even though the noise contours have reduced.

Section 7 sets out our approach to developing the action plan. It sets out how we used the strategic noise mapping (Annex 3), and other data sources, including community feedback from complaint and polling data (Annex 13) to identify the noise issues around Heathrow. It describes the updated guidance from Defra on preparing the noise action plans. The light touch consultation is described with supplementary information given in annexes.



Summary of the Action Plan

Ref	KPI	Associated target/goal
Minimising Noise Impact: To reduce overall impact		
Key END Summary Statistics		
KP 1	Area of noise contours for annual average 55dBA Lden, 55 dBA Lnight (8 hours), summer average day 57 dBA Leq (16 hour) and 69 dBA Leq (16 hour)	To reduce area within the Annual Lnight and Lden contours over the course of the action plan.
Quieter Planes: Measures of Fleet Mix		
KP 2	Moving annual percentage of Fleet Mix within the charging categories.	No Chapter 3 high by 2015, 97% Chapter 4 by 2015, 100% Chapter 4 by 2020.
Quieter Procedures: Measures of Adherence to Procedures		
KP 3	Number of airlines achieving minimum AIP performance standards.	Maintain or improve performance against AIP minimum performance standards year on year.
Land-use and Mitigation: Measure of Implementation of Schemes		
KP 4	Number of eligible households/noise sensitive buildings registered for noise insulation schemes (includes CBNIS, Day and Night).	100% of registrations passed onto our supplier within 2 weeks.
KP 5	Report of overall satisfaction with insulation scheme.	Overall satisfaction rated as high more than 90% for all respondents.
Operating Restrictions: Measure of Adherence		
KP 6	QC and movement usage statistics.	Once the new Night Flight limits have been set by the DfT, to ensure compliance (action 4.1).
Working with communities		
KP 7	Public perception as rated by polling.	To increase the percentage of the local community who consider that we are doing all we reasonably can to manage the noise impact of our operations over the course of this action plan.
KP 8	Complaint Response Time.	To respond to 100% of complaints within 5 working days.
KP 9	Biennial ranking in operational noise management.	To be considered by independent professional consultants to be the leading airport operator against comparable major airports for operational noise management by 2014, and repeated every 2 years.
General NAP process		
KP 10	Percentage of actions on track.	At least 90 per cent of actions to be considered on track.

Key performance indicators

Section 8 is the list of actions. There are a total of 44 actions detailed within the document which is around a third less than our original plan. This is the result of the review and response to feedback from a variety of sources over the past two years. Some previous actions have been completed, others amalgamated and some were no longer relevant. We have also added 19 new or significantly amended actions to our plan which include:

- developing our Fly Quiet Programme (action 2.1)
- working with stakeholders to trial new approaches to reduce noise impacts (action 2.7)
- engaging with Local Authorities with the aim of agreeing local planning policy guidance to minimise new residential development in noise sensitive areas (action 3.7)
- establishing the Heathrow Strategic Noise Advisory Group (action 5.1)
- conducting annual polling of local residents (action 5.5) and
- introducing new functionality (My Neighbourhood) on our website to enable residents and other stakeholders easier and more transparent access to information about aircraft operations in their area (action 5.6).

Section 9 discusses how we intend to evaluate the success and ongoing delivery of the noise action plan. It defines terminology such as performance indicator, goal and annual target from a Heathrow Airport Limited perspective and reiterates the commitment to use the annual reporting and audit verification process to assess progress.

It also details a number of key performance indicators and associated targets which we will use to provide a more concise assessment of progress against the plan. These are set out opposite.

The action plan is supplemented by a number of Annexes which provide key data and analysis. These are detailed below:

- Annex 1** Glossary of terms
- Annex 2** Annex V of original DEFRA Guidance and extract from Defra's action plan guidance for airport operators 2013
- Annex 3** Strategic noise maps for Heathrow Airport
- Annex 4** Limit values in place at Heathrow
- Annex 5** Typical daily flight paths for arriving and departing aircraft
- Annex 6** AIP Noise Abatement procedures Heathrow
- Annex 7** Airfield map
- Annex 8** Planning Conditions for Terminal 4 and Terminal 5
- Annex 9** Noise mitigation schemes boundary map
- Annex 10** Night restrictions
- Annex 11** 2006 mapping outputs
- Annex 12** Extracts from Independent 2012 audit report
- Annex 13** Community response to noise
- Annex 14** Light touch consultation
- Annex 15** Key changes in actions and KPIs from first Action Plan
- Annex 16** Forecast 2018 Lden contours and results
- Annex 17** Financial information

