

# **STANSTED AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

## **Government consultations**

Note by the Secretary and Technical Adviser

### **Introduction**

Since the last meeting of the Committee, the Government has issued a number of aviation related consultations. These are listed below.

### **Night flights consultation**

The Government has published a consultation on night flight restrictions at the three London designated airports (ie Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted)

The current restrictions expire in October of this year and the consultation details the DfT's proposals for the restrictions that should replace them. It is proposed that these restrictions last for five years, and they are therefore separate to Heathrow expansion proposals.

The consultation restates the Government's acknowledgement that noise at night represents the least acceptable form of aircraft noise, however night flights are important to the economy - they create extra choice for passengers and are crucial for operation of the time-sensitive freight sector. The proposals in the DfT's consultation seeks to ensure that these competing interests are balanced for the next set of restrictions.

The DfT are proposing a cap set at existing levels for the number of night flights from Heathrow and Gatwick, and will end exemptions for almost 1700 night flights operating out of Stansted by including these in a new cap. This will be a strict limit which the airport cannot exceed. The consultation will also examine options for how the DfT can incentivise the use of quieter aircraft by reducing the noise each airport can make during the night.

EIG will prepare a draft response to the consultation.

### **Noise Exposure Contours for 2015**

The DfT has also published its annual noise exposure contours. In summary these show an increase in the day time actual contour of 9% to 23.6 km<sup>2</sup> (2014: 21.6 km<sup>2</sup>). This resulted from a 9% rise in total movements over the 2015 summer day period. The population enclosed within the 2015 day actual 57 dBA Leq contour was 1,650, the same as in 2014. There were significant changes to the contour shape following the major shift in the runway modal split in 2015 to a more typical percentage of south-westerly operations.

The year 2015 day standard modal split (72% south-west / 28% north-east) 57 dBA Leq contour area increased by 8% to 23.5 km<sup>2</sup> (2014: 21.8 km<sup>2</sup>). This area remained within the 33.9 km<sup>2</sup> contour area limit imposed by the Stansted Planning Condition AN1. The population count within the 2015 day standard 57 dBA contour of 1,750 was 17% higher than the previous year (2014: 1,500). The rise in total movements caused the contour to extend over some populated areas. The 2015 population database update also contributed to the higher population count.

Night-time Leq contours have also been produced. The 2015 night actual modal split (73% south-west / 27% north-east) 48 dBA Leq contour enclosed an area of 57.2 km<sup>2</sup>, which was 2% higher than the previous year (2014: 56.3 km<sup>2</sup>). Despite a 0.4% reduction in night movements in 2015, changes to the fleet mix and noise updates to some of the ANCON aircraft types led to the small area increase. The 48 dBA contour population of 6,950 was 5% higher than in the previous year (2014: 6,650). This was largely due to the 2015 update to the population database. The 23% higher proportion of south-westerly operations in 2015 produced significant changes in the shape of the night contours.

EIG will consider the contour report in further detail.

### **CAA review of issues affecting passengers' access to UK airports**

The CAA published its final report on the review of issues affecting passengers' access to UK airports. You may recall that UEG responded to the consultation t

The two main areas under examination were the market structure for surface access, in particular how competitive conditions for road and forecourt access affect the outcomes for consumers and whether transparent information was in place to ensure consumers were well informed about the options they had to access UK airports and the charges they face when using surface access services (including car parks). The review concluded that the range of choice available to passengers varies considerably by airport and that overall the sector appears to have a variety of businesses active in providing surface access services of different types to passengers. There were however areas for particular airports to address.

The CAA in its concluding remarks of its advisory letter asked airports, surface access operators and relevant trade associations to review their behaviours and agreements. UEG responded to the consultation and will consider the CAA report at its next meeting.

## **DfT consultation on drones**

The DfT has issued its consultation on new measures to ensure the successful uptake of drones is matched by strong safeguards to protect the public. The consultation puts forward a number of proposals to develop the UK's policy and regulatory framework which include:

- mandatory registration of new drones
- tougher penalties for illegal flying near no-fly zones and new signs for no-fly zones at sensitive sites such as airports and prisons
- making drones electronically identifiable so the owner's details can be passed to police if they are spotted breaking the law

The consultation will also consider whether there is a need for a new criminal offence for misuse of drones.

EIG will consider the consultation at its next meeting and decide whether it should respond to the consultation.

## **DfT consultation on the modernisation of UK airspace**

The DfT is expected to issue shortly its consultation proposals for the modernisation of UK airspace. It is understood that the proposals may also cover the issue of the independent noise authority which was recommended by the Airports Commission.

In conjunction with the consultation the DfT is setting up a new aircraft noise and engagement group (ANEG) which will first meet before the publication of the airspace modernisation consultation proposals. The purpose of the ANEG is to maintain a formal channel of communication between the DfT and their external airspace and noise stakeholders. It will include within the scope of discussions all aspects of national airspace and noise policy development and will be used as a sounding board to identify, discuss and, where possible, resolve any issues in relation to these areas that impact on the work of the DfT. The group's discussions will be at a strategic policy level, and it will not debate or attempt to resolve individual, local issues.

ANEG will also be an open forum for members to share with the DfT relevant airspace and noise projects from their own organisations. The Secretary and Technical Adviser has been invited to sit on this Group.

## **CAA Guidance on a revised airspace change process**

Following its consultation on the proposals for a revised airspace change process last year, it is understood that the CAA will shortly consult on the draft guidance.

The CAA has also announced that it will be holding a number of Information Sessions as part of its commitment to ongoing engagement to help deliver a new airspace change process. The sessions will be an opportunity to hear from the CAA as they develop the guidance which will support the new airspace change process when it comes into effect, providing an update on CAA thinking in advance of the formal consultation process. The Secretary and Technical Adviser has been invited to attend one of the sessions.

## **DfT consultation on a draft National Policy Statement (NPS) on Heathrow**

This consultation is due for publication in late January or early February. Although it will be focussed on Heathrow, it is understood that it is likely to cover domestic connectivity between the London area and the regions as part of the expansion proposals.

## **New Aviation Strategy**

It is understood that the DfT will be issuing a series of discussion papers throughout 2017 leading to a new Aviation Policy Framework. The scope of the work is likely to cover the growth of other airports.

## **CAA guidelines to airports on how to support people with hidden disabilities**

The CAA has issued guidance to airports on helping to improve journeys for those with conditions including dementia, autism, mental health problems, hearing loss and visual impairment. The CAA has asked the 30 largest UK airports to make the necessary improvements to their special assistance service and has said that it will publish a report on the changes made next year. UEG will consider further.

## **Stansted Airport Consultative Committee January 2017**