

An Easy-to-Read Guide

Airports Commission

Discussion Paper 05: Aviation Noise

This guide is intended for people who might want to submit short, non-technical responses to the discussion paper.

How to respond

The Airports Commission, which the Government appointed to look at airport capacity, has issued a discussion paper on noise. Anybody can respond. Closing date: 6th September. Submissions of evidence should be no longer than 15 pages and should be emailed to Noise.paper@airports.gsi.gov.uk, clearly marked as a response to the ‘Aviation Noise discussion paper’.

You can read the full discussion paper here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210877/airports-commission-noise.pdf

Note: your response might be published on the Commission’s web unless you indicate you don’t want it to be.

Chapter One

It summarizes what is in the rest of the paper

Chapter Two

It looks at how many people are affected by aircraft noise and its impacts on people.

It recognizes that Heathrow is in a league of its own:

Airport	Population within the 55L _{den} contour
London Heathrow	725,500
Frankfurt	238,700
Paris Charles de Gaulle	170,000
Paris Orly	110,000
Brussels	49,700
Amsterdam	43,700
Madrid	43,300

This chapter is your chance to describe to what it is like to live under the flight path

It also wants to hear about how your health, sleep and children’s education may be affected by aircraft noise.

It would be a bonus if you are able to back up what your say with any statistics or reports

Many residents feel that both noise levels and the number of planes passing overhead already are too high. It is worth saying that.

Chapters Three and Four

These discuss the best way to measure noise.

Noise is usually averaged out. That is controversial because it includes the quiet periods of the day and the quiet days of the year, so it can underestimate the noise people actually hear.

Table 3.3: Common LAeq indicators

Most common uses (in Europe)	
L_{Aeq16h}	The A-weighted average sound level over the 16 hour period of 0700-2300, on an average summer day.
L_{Aeq8h}	The A-weighted average sound level over the 8 hour period of 2300-0700, on an average summer night.
L_{den}	L_{den} is a composite of the L_{day} (L_{Aeq} 0700-1900 hours) $L_{evening}$ (L_{Aeq} 1900-2300 hours) and L_{night} (L_{Aeq} 2300-0700 hours) levels but with a five dB(A) weighting being added to the $L_{evening}$ value and 10 dB(A) weighting being added to the L_{night} value, on an annual average day.
Other uses	
L_{DNL}	An L_{Aeq} with a 10dB penalty added to night operations, used predominantly in America.

Source: Airports Commission, based on table in Draft Aviation Policy Framework (2012)

Chapter Five

It looks at ways of reducing noise.

It asks for your views on – you don't need to be an expert to respond; just give your thoughts based on your own experience:

- less noisy planes;
- aircraft landing and taking off at steeper angles;
- heavier fines for noisy planes;
- the idea of spreading the noise around in order to give everybody some respite;
- night flights – there is a separate Government consultation coming out in the autumn, but it is worth also stating your views on night flights here;
- more money being put into sound insulation.

Remember to submit your views by 6th September

The UK currently uses the L_{Aeq16h} method. That means that the noise is averaged out over a 16 hour period. The method concentrates on the noise made by each individual aircraft, not the number of planes. It assumes annoyance levels will remain the same if the number of aircraft operations are doubled so long as the individual aircraft noise levels are reduced. **Is this your experience?**

The UK argues that it only when noise averages out at 57 decibels or above across the 16 hour period that people start to get annoyed. But that so-called 57 decibel contour just extends as far as Barnes. It excludes places like Putney, Fulham and Ealing! **Is this your experience?**