



BAA NOISE ACTION PLAN FOR HEATHROW SETS OUT NO FIRM PLANS TO REDUCE NOISE FROM AIRCRAFT

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BAA admits for the first time that over 700,000 people are affected by noise from Heathrow - more than double its previous estimate. In its Noise Action Plan for Heathrow (1), published yesterday for a 16 week period of public consultation, BAA has been forced to acknowledge for the first time that over 700,000 people are affected by aircraft noise from the airport, more than twice the number it previously admitted to. But the action plan has been described as “deeply disappointing” by the residents’ campaign group HACAN, because it sets out no firm plans to reduce noise from the airport.

The European Union requires all member states to draw up Noise Action Plans for airports with 50,000 movements a year. In a move condemned by campaign groups, DEFRA, the responsible Government Department, asked the airports themselves to draw up the plans for aircraft noise. The plans for road and rail noise are being produced by DEFRA in conjunction with the local authorities. The Heathrow noise action plan is the first one to be published. DEFRA is required to have submitted all its action plans to the European Commission by the end of this year.

Europe has forced BAA to change the way it calculates aircraft noise (2).. As a result, it has found that over 700,000 people are now affected by aircraft noise from aircraft flying in and out of Heathrow. Previously, it argued that less than 300,000 people were affected

But campaign group HACAN has produced evidence to show that even the new figure is an underestimate. It conducted a survey at Vauxhall in South London, over a mile beyond the boundary where BAA claims noise is a nuisance. It found that up to 39 planes flew over within an hour, the vast majority of them over 70 decibels (3).

HACAN Chair John Stewart said, “At long last BAA has been forced to creep into the real world and admit that many more than 300,000 people are affected by aircraft noise. But even this admission is an underestimate. The World Health Organisation estimates that over a million people are affected. Our work at Vauxhall would bear that out.”

Stewart added; “Overall the Noise Action Plan is extremely disappointing. It contains lots of words but absolutely no firm plans to reduce noise. The fault lies more with the Government than with BAA. DEFRA has completely shirked its responsibilities in asking the commercial operator of the airport to draw up the noise action plan.”

Notes for Editors:

(1). [BAA Noise Action Plan for Heathrow](#) On BAA's website

(2). Previously BAA and the UK Government averaged out noise across a 16 hour day (7am — 11pm). It showed that 258,500 people lived inside the '57 decibel contour', i.e. the area where noise averaged out at 57 decibels or more. The Government and BAA claimed that is where people started to get annoyed by the noise. The World Health Organisation claimed people started to get 'severely' annoyed when the noise averaged out at 55 decibels and 'moderately' annoyed at 50 decibels. The EU now requires separate measurements for day, evening and night. These are then required to be combined to get the average over a 24 hour period, known as Lden. When BAA did that the number reached 725,500 for Heathrow. If they had then produced a figure for 50 Lden, the number would have been over a million.

In its Noise Action Plan BAA admits for the first time that over 700,000 people are affected by noise from Heathrow - more than double its previous estimate



**But still denies there is any problem above in Vauxhall
(Credit: Weedon/Hartleben)**

The picture shows the planes – 33 – that went over in one hour. Nearly all over 70 decibels. Yet Vauxhall is 17-20 miles from Heathrow and just a stone throw from the House of Parliament.

In its Noise Action Plan for Heathrow published on 15th June for a 16 week period of public consultation, BAA has been forced to acknowledge for the first time that over 700,000 people

are affected by aircraft noise from the airport, more than twice the number it previously admitted to. But the action plan, which the Government asked BAA to draw up on its behalf, is deeply disappointing by because it sets out no firm plans to reduce noise from the airport. The EU requires all member states to draw up noise action plans.



**COMMENTS FROM CQV
ON SOUND LEVEL METERING BY ADM**

ADM only started collecting decibel readings from the 8 newly installed sound meters in **2002**.

ADM did not have any reliable sound metering system in **1995** while it now claims that only 107 333 citizens were affected by the noise. They used a theoretical mathematical model developed by Transport Canada in the absence of sound metering device, **not used anywhere else in the world**, and they used units (**NEF**) that only a few specialists at the ministry can understand and that makes it impossible to compare with the municipal by-laws and the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendations, on sound regulations that use **decibels**.

ADM only admits since 2006 that it had to replace the theoretical NEF as a means of reporting noise nuisance by actual noise readings; but, instead of reporting crude decibels, they use another unit (average monthly Leq) that cannot be directly compared with the instantaneous decibels prescribed in the municipal noise by-laws;

NEF abandoned? Not quite. **ADM** still uses in 2009 the NEF to brag about the alleged reduction in the number of citizens affected by noise. They now claim they succeeded in reducing the number of affected citizens from 107 333 to 17 902. Given the aforementioned, should these data be trusted?

ADM pretends there is no nuisance or damage below 70 decibels (one of four auto-proclaimed criterias) while the World Health Organisation declares all noise above 50 – 55 decibels are creating a noticeable nuisance. **70 decibels are 4 times louder than 50 decibels**.

BAA IN LONDON AND ADM IN MONTREAL

SAME DISINFORMATION