



Report by the Technical Adviser

Agenda Item:	Reference: HACC. 547
Date : March 7 2009	
Aircraft Noise Monitoring Advisory Committee	

1. In accordance with the recently introduced procedure by the Department for Transport, of issuing summary notes of the discussion to replace the procedure which HACC had observed of distributing the Minutes of these meetings, attached is the summary of the meeting held on 5 February last.

2. Members will note the item dealing with a Technical Review, by Eurocontrol the ATC authority for much of the airspace in Europe, of Arrivals at Gatwick Airport. I did seek to achieve a similar independent review for Arrivals at Heathrow but was unsuccessful in this.

mgh/547



Report by the Technical Adviser

Agenda Item:	Reference: HACC. 548
Date: March 8 2009	
Airport Airside Passes – Criminal Record Checks – Foreign Nationals	

1. Members will recall that in 2008, they were informed of disquiet which had been raised, initially by the Manchester Airport Consultative Committee, about the employment of workers of overseas origin in situations where normally, all airport workers were being required to pass a Criminal Records Check (CRC) in order to allow them to be issued with an airport security pass.

2. Where the worker or potential worker was not a UK national, many were being issued with airport security passes because it has proved to be impossible for airport operators to obtain any records of their past from their country of origin.

3. A letter was sent on behalf of the UK Airport Consultative Committees to the Director of Transport Security expressing concern at the potential for people from overseas with criminal records, or terrorists, to be able to avoid adequate criminal record checks being made about them when UK nationals could not avoid this and might be refused employment as a result.

4. The Department has now published a consultation on "Overseas Criminal Record Checks for Transport staff " which offers four options and about which it invites views.

THE OPTIONS

5. **Option 1 – would involve DfT issuing guidance to industry about how to obtain and assess overseas criminal history information in respect of new staff, but nothing further.** The Department believes that active use of this guidance will reduce the risk of hostile insider action on the UK's transport infrastructure but that the reduction in risk would be less than that achieved for the other three options.

6. **Option 2 – would involve DfT requiring industry to consider overseas criminal history record in respect of all new staff where a UK CRC is currently required.** It would involve a major extension of the current regulations and would mean that all companies which employ staff in areas where a UK CRC is mandatory i.e in the Restricted Zones (RZ) of UK

airports, would also have to check overseas criminal history as provided by prospective employees. It is envisaged that this would apply where the applicant had been resident overseas for 6 continuous months or more in the last 5 years, rather than where the person had any overseas residency. The DfT considers that this would particularly impact on aerodrome managers who, under current regulations, cannot issue a full Restricted Zone pass until the applicant has passed the UK criminal record check. With a requirement to include overseas criminal records, this could add significantly to recruitment timescales with the potential to disrupt airport operations. In order to minimise disruption a time-limited full RZ pass (for example valid for 10 weeks) could be issued provided that the applicant can satisfy the check of identity, 5-year employment history, right to work and UK criminal records and had not been resident overseas for more than, say, 12 continuous months in the last 5 years.

7. DfT considers that this Option would present the second highest benefits in terms of the likelihood of the risk of hostile insider action on the UK's transport infrastructure being reduced. However, the DfT considers that the greatly increased burden on the industry would likely be out of proportion to the reduction in risk.

8. Option 3 – would involve DfT undertaking a check of overseas criminal history for new staff where a UK check is currently required.

This option would involve DfT making regulations to require employers to ensure that new staff in posts where a UK check is already required (ie Restricted Zone pass holders) submit, for DfT consideration, overseas criminal history information.

9. This would have the same conditions as Option 2, the only difference from that Option is that DfT would undertake the checking of overseas criminality information presented by the applicant and not employers and aerodrome managers.

10. The DfT considers that Option 3 represents the highest likelihood of the vulnerability to hostile insider action being reduced, although there would be significant costs involved and focusing all such applications through one point (ie DfT) rather than being spread across each industry facility (e.g airports) would present a higher likelihood of delays in the process albeit that increased consistency in decision making would be more likely. However, this Option would not fit well with the review's broader recommendation that the industry should take greater ownership of its personnel security risks.

11. Option 4 – would involve DfT assessing overseas criminal history checks in respect of all new staff in posts currently subject to National Security Vetting (NSV). This Option would create an additional layer of checking within the NSV process and will supplement the extensive

check of UK criminal records and Security Service records. It is proposed that this would apply to persons who have spent 6 continuous months or more in the last 5 years living outside of the UK. For other posts not subject to NSV, DfT would expect industry employers to make use of the guidance it has issued to enable them to effectively check overseas criminal history for new employees on a risk-assessment basis.

12. It is proposed that applicants would obtain the relevant overseas criminal history information and include it with their NSV application (or that the information would follow shortly afterwards) and that NSV clearance will not be granted until and unless overseas criminal record information (or the acceptable alternative) has been received and assessed by DfT.

13. It is recognised that there is the potential for the NSV process (with or without the addition of an overseas CRC) to restrict the availability of sufficient numbers of staff to undertake security functions. It is therefore proposed that applicants be allowed to undertake security functions where the existing conditions in each modal area are satisfied e.g. that the person has passed all the tests necessary to obtain a RZ pass and has been resident in the UK for the last 5 years.

14. The DfT considers that this Option would offer a very high likelihood of the vulnerability to hostile insider action being reduced to an acceptable level. This would mitigate the risk less than Options 2 and 3, but more than Option 1.

CONCLUSIONS

15. It is already obvious that Heathrow Airport is very reliant upon the employment of people from overseas and that situation is not likely to change with the Government's policy of encouraging immigration and, widely quoted in the Press, some 150,00 persons a year being admitted to reside in the United Kingdom when London is a target destination for many of them.

16. There has been criticism of the fact that UK nationals are subject to greater scrutiny than those from overseas with a higher likelihood of either being delayed in offers of employment or of being refused it. These proposals from Government offer an opportunity to rectify that situation for future intending employees. Of the options offered, the last one, 4 , seems to afford the greatest benefits with the least delays and allows the deployment of the greater resources which government departments have rather than airport managements.

17. One very relevant matter not dealt with in the consultation is the question of costs and, if the DfT is to undertake checks, whether it will

expect to recover costs from airport operators. The Committee should question this in its response and suggest that the costs should be borne by Government as it involves questions of national security and also the Government's immigration policy.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Secretary of State for Transport be informed, as a response to the consultation on "Overseas Criminal Record Checks for Transport Staff", that the Committee favours the adoption of Option 4 as the best way forward and that it believes the costs of the Department undertaking overseas criminal record checks should be borne centrally as they derive from aspects of national security and of the Government's immigration policy.



Agenda Item:	Reference: HACC. 549
Date : March 12 2009	
Disruption to operations at Heathrow Airport due to unusual snowfall	

Report by the Technical Adviser

1. Members will be aware of the widespread disruption to all transport services which occurred following heavy snowfall in February 2009. Heathrow Airport was no exception and, no doubt, the report of the airport management to the meeting of the Committee on 25 March will deal with that circumstance and the measures which the airport took to bring flight services back to normal as quickly as possible.
2. However, the Secretary of State, Geoff Hoon MP, has announced a review of the lessons that can be learnt from February's gritting crisis in order to prevent the widespread chaos happening again. He has instructed the UK Roads Liaison Group (UKLRG) " to review the lessons that can be learnt from recent events and to recommend what steps could be adopted by local highway authorities, trunk road authorities , producers of salt and other stakeholders to ensure the effective treatment of England's road networks in order that we are even better prepared should similar events occur in future years".
3. Although the focus of the review will be on the approach of highway authorities to salt supplies, Mr Hoon did acknowledge that the impact of snow was particularly significant at Heathrow and testified to the creativity and resilience of the airport operator in dealing with the problems.
4. Attached is a copy of a summary of the problems which arose and of the review which is taken from a March edition of the New Civil Engineer, the house magazine of the Institution of Civil Engineers.
5. In recent years, there have been moves away from the use of some traditional materials which have been used in snow and ice clearing on highways and on airport surfaces. Urea has been labelled as a contaminant as has glycol with concerns expressed (or regulated in some cases) about the adverse effect these chemicals have on potable water supplies. Other materials which are much more environmentally acceptable have been developed from the waste residues of food or brewing processes and are increasingly being taken into use.



Agenda Item:	Reference: HACC.550
Date : March 12 2009	

Heathrow Baggage
Problems

Passenger Services Sub-Committee

1. Members will be aware of the problems which have been widely reported in the Press and on television of the handling of passengers baggage at Heathrow Airport. These have been particularly highlighted as affecting the operations of British Airways and those resulting from the opening of Terminal 5 a year ago.
2. Although many of the problems have now been rectified, they continue to attract attention from the Press and passenger representative organisations.
3. They have resulted in a published account of an survey undertaken by an online travel community, WAYN.com (Where Are You Now?) which concluded that 23% of respondents drawn from British travellers, said that Heathrow was most likely to damage bags.
4. A copy of the article of 13 February, provided by Travelmole, is attached at the Appendix for the information of members of the Sub-Committee, in particular those who undertake monitoring exercises at the airport.

mgh/550



Agenda Item:	Reference: HACC. 551
Date : March 10 2009	
Terminal Control North - Update	

Report by the Technical Adviser

- 1 Members will recall that in 2008, the Committee received a presentation from representatives of the National Air Traffic Service about its proposals for a re-organisation of many of the air traffic routes in the South and East of England and the consultation document which had given rise to that.
- 2 The consultation proposed revisions to a number of routes in the London area affecting London City Airport, Biggin Hill Airport and Heathrow Airport. Those departing from Heathrow Airport were restricted to the routes flying generally to the north of the airport.
3. The area covered by the route revision extended as far North as East Anglia, to the east as far as the North Sea but to the West there was little effect past the Reading and Maidenhead areas.
4. The proposals caused widespread concern with some thousands of responses from the several million people who would be overflowed, some of them being relieved of noise and visual intrusion whilst others would experience this for the first time.
5. During discussion by the HACC, there was particular concern expressed about the implications for those areas overflowed close to the Airport on easterly departures.
6. Because of the weight of objection and because of some of the arguments put forward, NATS has decided to conduct a new consultation, on revised proposals to redraw the aircraft route map in the area of South East England known in airspace terms as Terminal Control North (TCN).
7. A copy of the letter to the Chairman explaining this decision is attached to this report. The letter says that the date of the second consultation is yet to be decided. Although no date has been publicised, it is understood that this is unlikely to happen until after July 2009.



Agenda Item:	Reference: HACC. 552
Date : March 12 2009	
Quota Count Classifications of Airbus A.380 compared to B.747	

Report by the Technical Adviser

1. At the Committee meeting on January 26 2009, a request was made that Members should be informed of the relative noisiness of the Airbus A.380, the new very large passenger aircraft now operating in increasing numbers into Heathrow, compared with the much more numerous Boeing B.747.

2. The noise classifications under the Quota Count (QC) system of all passenger aircraft operating into the UK are published and periodically updated by the Department for Transport, in Supplements to the United Kingdom AIP publication. The latest is S8/2009 published on February 26 2009.

3. The text of the Supplement contains information explaining the London Airports Noise Restrictions Notice 2009 which come into operation at 01.00 hours on March 29 2009. This should be of assistance to Members in understanding how the system works and that text is at the Attachment to this report. The list of different aircraft and their engine fit is extensive so a selection has been made to illustrate that relating to the A.380 and the Boeing B.747.400, the most numerous of that latter type using Heathrow.

4. For clarity, the relative comparisons are made as follows:

<u>Aircraft Series</u>	<u>Engine Fit</u>	<u>Quota Count</u>	
		<u>Arrivals</u>	<u>Departures</u>
A.380-841	RR Trent 970	QC/0.5	QC/2
A.380-842	RR Trent 972	QC/0.5	QC/2
B.747-400	RB.211	QC/2	QC/4
B/747-400	Pratt & Whitney(various)	QC/2	QC/4

Note: the 400 series with Pratt and Whitney engines are probably the most numerous to operate into Heathrow but there is a small number with different engine fits which are classified as QC/1 on Arrival.

5. It will be apparent from the official classifications quoted above and

illustrated in the Attachment, that, despite its larger size and weight, the Airbus A.380 is significantly quieter than the B.747..

6. Members might like to note from the Attachment, that the Boeing 777 (a trijet) has taken over some of the long haul routes previously operated by the B.747-400 (four engines), particularly with British Airways, and that the different series of these aircraft have noise characteristics varying between QC/1 and QC/2 on Departure and QC/0.5 and QC/1 on Arrival. Again, these are quieter than the B.747-400 and provide further evidence of the improving noise climate from individual aircraft.

mgh/552.



Agenda Item:	Reference: HACC.553
Date: March 12 2009	
DEFRA: Consultation on further amendments to Environmental Noise(England) Regulations 2006	

BACKGROUND

1. Members will recall that they have considered an original consultation on the application of elements of the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 and have received two presentations from representatives of DEFRA about this during 2008.
2. Now, DEFRA has considered the representations received and is proposing some further amendments to these Regulations which, it says, aim to streamline procedures. The HACC is one of, the many organisations listed as being consulted and responses are invited by 15.50 on May 11 2009. The amendments would come into force in mid-2009.
3. The consultation refers to the need to undertake noise mapping and action planning on a five year rolling programme and says that it has become clear that a number of amendments to the Environmental Noise Regulations need to be undertaken to improve the action plan procedure before DEFRA can formally consult on these draft action plans.
4. In order to provide the public with an idea of how the amendments to the regulations will translate into action planning, DEFRA says that it plans to publish informal draft versions of the action plans around March 2009. These will represent their current thinking and will allow the public to form an opinion on the preparation of the draft action plans, prior to the formal publication expected later in 2009.
5. The responsibility of BAA Heathrow to participate in Noise Action Planning was discussed at meetings of the Noise and Track Keeping Working Group in January and again at the meeting held on 10 March 2009. The DfT representative at that last meeting said that the DEFRA final guidance was expected on 23 March and the Chairman of the Group outlined BAA progress with their draft Noise Action Plan, the final version of which was expected towards the end of 2009; this would be considered by the NTKWG whose conclusions will be passed to the HACC.

THE CURRENT CONSULTATION

6. This consultation seeks comments on four main issues:
 - * Do you agree with the proposed amendment to regulation 13 regarding the identification of quiet areas?
 - * Do you agree with the proposal to revoke the duty as regards consolidated noise maps in regulation (14(2) and to replace this with a power on the Secretary of State to produce consolidated noise maps in respect of any area?
 - * Do you agree with the proposal to revoke the specific duty on the Secretary of State to publish guidance in regulation 14(1) and to replace this with a general power to publish guidance?
 - * Are there any other comments relating to the proposed amendments that you would like to make?
7. The proposed amendments together with discussion of the justification of them, reproduced from the consultation document, is at the Attachment to this report.

CONSIDERATIONS

8. Amendment of regulation 13- Quiet areas. (Question 1)

There has been considerable disquiet expressed about the identification of Quiet Areas, the criteria for which has not been defined despite criticisms of this. Now it is proposed that there should be a duty on the Secretary of State to identify and publish what are regarded as Quiet Areas which should make it simpler and more efficient to consider these and, where necessary, seek amendments to his proposals.

9. The Committee can support the amendment.

10. Amendment of regulation 14(2) – (Question 2)

There is some force in the argument set out about production of consolidated noise maps outside of agglomerations. However, Heathrow Airport is within the Greater London agglomeration with implications from road, rail and air activity the consideration of which would benefit from production of a consolidated noise map rather than several showing different elements.

11. The Committee can support the general intent of the amendment but, in doing so, make it conditional upon an assurance from the Secretary of State that a consolidated noise map will be produced to cover the area of Heathrow Airport.

12. Amendment to regulations 14(1) and (30) (Question 3)

The Committee is recommended to agree this proposal in view of the arguments set out in the ultimate sentence of the "Discussion" regarding " a greater variety of approaches across transport sources and urban areas and provide a more flexible system to support the active planning process".

13. Are there any other comments relating to the proposed amendments (Question 4)

I have no further recommendations to the Committee, some Members may wish to add their own!

RECOMMENDATION

That the Secretary of State be informed in terms of the conclusions set out in para.s 9, 11 and 12 above together with any matters raised in discussion by Members under para.13 above.