

**THE NOISE & TRACK MONITORING ADVISORY GROUP (NaTMAG) Extraordinary Meeting –  
END Noise Action Plan 2019-2024 Mid Term Report Discussion – Thursday 16 September  
2021 (virtual meeting)**

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**IN ATTENDANCE**

Lee Howes (Chair)	Airspace and Environmental Performance Manager
Kimberley Heather	Gatwick Airport Ltd – Airspace Office Analyst and Secretary to NaTMAG
Andy Sinclair	Gatwick Airport Ltd – Head of Noise and Airspace Strategy
Laura Boccadamo	Gatwick Airport Ltd – Noise Mgmt Initiatives Engagement Manager
Goran Jovanovic	Gatwick Airport Ltd – Airspace Change Manager
Mike George	GATCOM
Liz Kitchen	GATCOM
Liz Lockwood	GATCOM
Alan Jones	GATCOM
Malcolm Fillmore	GATCOM
Paula Street	GATCOM Secretariat (Observer)
Adam Dracott	Mid Sussex District Council
David Monk	Independent Technical Advisor to GATCOM
Richard Streatfeild	GACC
Andrew Burke	NATS
Gary Marshall	Department for Transport (DfT)
Victor Gosling	Air Navigation Solutions (ANS)
Jonathan Drew	Noise Management Board Executive Committee (NEX) Chair

**APOLOGIES**

Margot McArthur	GATCOM
Ian Greene	Department for Transport (DfT)
Robin Clarke	NATS
Matthew Hadden	NATS
Henry Game	Air Navigation Solutions (ANS)
Leon Hibbs	Reigate and Banstead Borough Council

**GENERAL COMMENTS**

- The END Noise Action Plan mid-term report draft was issued to NaTMAG members in August for comment ahead of this meeting. The Airspace Office received pre-meet notes from members who attended the pre-meet and separate notes were received from GACC which have all been considered.
- The format of this mid-term report was to include as much detail regarding the progress in implementing action plan actions during the period 2019 to September 2021 – the ‘reporting period’. This report makes references to the documents reviewed when detailing progress and includes weblinks for further reference. NaTMAG members expressed their appreciation of the time taken to produce such a comprehensive document.
- It was suggested that the next NaTMAG meeting will be used to agree a date for the next END Noise Action Plan 2019-2024 update review in 2022.

## COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC ACTIONS

Note: All Action Plan Actions were discussed in order, however those updates that have been agreed at the meeting as 'no change required' have not been listed below. Only Action Plan Action updates which were commented on have been included.

### **Action 1: We will maintain a charging differential in our published airport charges which incentivises the use of aircraft with the best in class noise performance.**

- The term 'expiring' was used in the wording for this Action Plan Action and there was confusion about what this meant. It was clarified that the aircraft charging period comes to an end after five years. It will be reviewed and renewed after the period has ended. The word 'expiring' will be amended for clarity.

### **Action 3: We will review the landing fee differential at least every five years.**

- It would be useful to have a date for the next review of the landing fees in the document.
- It was noted that it is for Gatwick to review the monetary terms of the landing fee charges and not for NaTMAG. This is audited as part of the Section 106 legal obligations.

### **Action 4: Gatwick Airport Ltd will consult with its airline partners annually regarding the Airport Charges Structure. The Noise Management Board will also be asked for its feedback.**

- NaTMAG members were invited to an NCF workshop on 11 May 2021 where a briefing on the aircraft noise charges was provided. During the briefing, GAL explained that to the extent that GAL consults on further changes to the structure of aircraft noise charges, GAL undertakes to inform the NMB of such proposals in a transparent manner and would look for any feedback to be channeled through the NMB. Members agreed that the briefing was useful.

### **Action 9: We will implement a voluntary ban on operations of Quota Count 4 aircraft within the core night periods by the end of 2022.**

- As this Action Plan Action will be completed in October, in line with the publication of this mid-term report, it was suggested and agreed to mark as completed.

### **Action 14: We will continue to promote, monitor, seek to improve and report on adherence to the arrival noise abatement procedures detailed in the London Gatwick Aeronautical Information Publication.**

- It was suggested that this Action Plan Action update be changed from 'in progress' to 'ongoing' due to the continuing work of the Airspace Office in monitoring arrival noise abatement procedures.

### **Action 15: In conjunction with Sustainable Aviation, Gatwick Airport will identify a low noise arrival procedure which will capture Low Power Low Drag measures and result in a metric which will supplement Continuous Descent Operations as an additional measurable target.**

- A Low Noise Arrival Metric has been defined and a working group of Sustainable Aviation formed to communicate, operationalise, and establish a monitoring system for the metric. The NEX Chair was unable to be present for this part of the meeting, however the NMB Secretariat read out the following statement on his behalf:
- *"I understand the frustrations of GACC and other CNGs. We too would like to see faster movement on this issue. Unfortunately, as we are all aware the difficulties that arose from NMB1 which led to a hiatus of the NMB, the COVID pandemic, staff redundancies and staff*

*shortages have all affected progress of this. We now face issues with having a sufficient number of guaranteed ATMs to do the right validation this winter. The NMB co-Chairs continue to press SA through GAL for the right action to take place. We are aware that SA is keen to ensure a national regime which will benefit all that suffer from noise on this aspect. The NMB co-Chairs are satisfied that GAL, SA (including other aviation stakeholders involved at SA) are progressing with the right balance of speed and accuracy to ensure an effective and viable result"*

**Action 16: In line with Noise Management Board initiatives and the commitments in the Sustainable Aviation Noise Road Map, we will work with our airlines and air navigation services providers to improve Continuous Descent Operations at Gatwick Airport.**

- The term 'skill fade' needs rewording. It was suggested to use the same wording as in the executive summary of the Airspace Office quarterly report:  
*'Due to the extended period of reduced flying many pilots and air traffic controllers have been getting less time 'in the seat' which can lead to small degradations in the execution of some procedures purely through being 'out of practice'.*

**Action 21: In conjunction with our partners and the Noise Management Board we will adopt a preferred Noise Abatement Departure Procedure (NADP).**

- Unsure of the progress being 'stopped', perhaps change the wording to explain why this Action Plan Action has been stopped. It was suggested that the wording be expanded to include 'as stated in the CAA report' at the end of the sentence in the last paragraph for clarity.

**Action 22: We undertake to explore opportunities to remove the altitude restrictions on departure routes intended to reduce the noise impact of departing aircraft.**

- This Action Plan Action will be undertaken as part of the FASI-S programme which will review airspace designs and new climb profiles. It is important that this Action Plan Action details the mechanism for change.

**Action 23: We undertake to explore the feasibility of introducing an alternative Standard Instrument Departure routes within our Noise Preferential Routes in order to provide dispersions and/or respite.**

- Similar to Action Plan Action 22, this will be undertaken with FASI-S. It was noted that there is a current ACP ongoing with 26LAM/Route 4 as of 25 February 2021.

**Action 24a: We will review and increase the fines currently levelled against airlines which breach departure noise limits with all such monies passed to the Gatwick Airport Community Trust.**

- GACC commented that this should be discussed at the NMB. The recent work undertaken by Egis to review departure noise limits and fines was presented to the Noise Management Board Delivery Group (NDG) in July and to NaTMAG members in August. No departure noise limits have been breached since May 2019.

- As the Preliminary Environmental Impact Report Chapter 14<sup>1</sup> includes proposals following a review of Departure Noise Limits, it was suggested that a weblink to the Northern Runway Consultation documentation<sup>2</sup> be included in this Action Plan Action update.

**Action 25: Through engagement with the Department for Transport, Aircraft Noise Management Advisory Committee and/or through unilateral action review our departure noise limits.**

- It was suggested that as ANMAC (Aviation Noise Monitoring Advisory Committee) has not met recently, this Action Plan Action needs to be split to separate what is ongoing (Departure Noise Limit Review) and what has been paused (ANMAC meetings).

**Action 26: We will work with our airlines and noise governance groups to explore the feasibility of introducing supplementary charges for aircraft departures which persistently fail to operate in accordance with Noise Preferential Routes prescribed for the airport as measured by the noise and track monitoring system operated by Gatwick Airport Ltd, with all such monies passed to the Gatwick Airport Community Trust.**

- The feasibility of introducing departure track keeping fines was paused in 2020 due to COVID-19. Suggestion of a date for resuming this work was raised but is difficult to predict due to low traffic levels.
- This will continue to be reviewed at the NaTMAG meetings what constitutes good track keeping compliance and what does not.

**Action 27: We will continue to provide a vortex-damage repair scheme to repair roofs that have been damaged by aircraft vortices.**

- NaTMAG noted that this Action Plan Action is not well-known or necessarily related to noise. Nevertheless, it is useful to have the scheme in place.

**Action 31: In conjunction with the Noise Management Board we will explore innovative methods to reduce both inbound and outbound aircraft noise levels.**

- Action Plan Action should be marked as 'ongoing' as improvements continue.

**Action 35: We will improve the availability of, and access to, airspace and noise related data.**

- This Action Plan Action is marked as 'completed'; however, it should remain as 'ongoing' as continuous improvements are being made over time. The latest being the upgrade to the Airspace and Noise Performance Dashboard<sup>3</sup> (also known as Insightfull).

**Action 36: We will explore the feasibility of introducing an information service for local communities. This could include updates on airport operations, e.g., scheduled northern runway operations, change in runway direction, meteorological information, scheduled number of aircraft movements during the day and night periods, reported thunderstorm activity etc.**

- This Action Plan Action update should be listed as 'ongoing' as, similar to Action Plan Action updates 31 and 35, this is part of ongoing continuous improvement.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gatwickairport.com/globalassets/company/future-plans/northern-runway/2021/peir/vol1/peir-chapter-14-noise-and-vibration.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gatwickairport.com/business-community/future-plans/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://aircraftnoise.gatwickairport.com/>

**Action 39a: We will aim to reach a measure of consensus with community groups on future airport utilisation relative to noise impacts. In order to achieve this we will conduct a review of Government policy including how Government policy should be interpreted and how that policy has been applied in practice. Following the establishment of a workable policy baseline we will aim to develop new noise metrics and reporting to complement the current noise contours and measure our future noise performance. This work will be used to more precisely describe outcomes to support this END Noise Action Plan.**

- This paused Action Plan Action is captured under the NMB Workplan 'Growth and Noise' activity and there is a commitment in the Workplan to review whether there should be a discussion on this in Q3 2021. This is dependent upon air traffic growth post-COVID-19. As there is no Q3 2021 NEX meeting it is anticipated that this will be reviewed at the NEX in Q4 2021. This information will be added to the mid-term report.

**Action 43: In order to achieve community confidence in the Complaints Handling Policy and provide transparency of information, we will, where appropriate update our procedure relating to the receipt, processing and reporting of aircraft noise complaints.**

- This Action Plan Action is listed as 'completed'; however, members agree that this needs to be listed as 'ongoing'. A concern was raised that there needs to be more public confidence in the complaints handling system. The Airspace Office are currently in the process of updating the complaints handling policy. However, it should be noted that it is not possible to resolve every complaint, and, in most cases, it is more about explaining why the event/s in question has taken place. The number of individuals submitting complaints has been declining each year since 2016.
- A good example of a complaint resolution was the issue of the Airbus A220 'whine' that was identified by a NaTMAG/GATCOM member and brought to the attention of NaTMAG. Since then, Gatwick have been in contact with the DfT, CAA and aircraft manufacturer of this aircraft to identify the issue and to understand what plans were in place to rectify the noise issue.

**Action 47: We will continue to support the existence of, and engage with a Noise Management Board, the workplan and meeting papers, which will be adequately published to our other noise governance groups and online.**

- This Action Plan Action is marked as 'in progress' and it was suggested that this be changed to 'ongoing' as the wording notes 'we will continue'.

**Action 49: In conjunction with the Gatwick Noise Monitoring Group we will commission noise studies to gain an insight into the noise climate in a particular area and holistically across the Gatwick area. We will publish these reports on our website.**

- This Action Plan Action is marked as 'completed' and it was suggested that as more studies need to be commissioned to get a good understanding of the noise climate over time, this should be changed to 'ongoing'.

#### **AOB**

- It was agreed that a section be included at the front of the mid-term report to detail what has been discussed at this meeting, including which Action Plan Action updates have been agreed or need to be amended.
- A suggestion of including a paragraph under each Action Plan Action update for comments received from NaTMAG will be considered.

- The outcomes of this meeting will be shared with the GATCOM Steering Group due to meet the following week for transparency.
- The minutes from this meeting will be included as an appendix to the mid-term report.
- The timings for the next full END Noise Action Plan in 2024 need to be agreed with Defra so that these future meetings can be planned.
- Action Plan Actions selected to focus on during 2022 will be identified by NaTMAG members for the November NaTMAG meeting.

**DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

FLOPSC – Wednesday 29 September 2021, 12:30 to 14:00, via Microsoft Teams.

GNMG – Wednesday 8 December 2021, 10:00 to 12:00, via Microsoft Teams.

NaTMAG – Thursday 4 November 2021 10:00 to 13:00, via Microsoft Teams.