

Noise and Track Sub-Committee

Meeting minutes from Wednesday 4th June 2025 at 2pm

Meeting held virtually on Microsoft Teams

	Attendees		
	Mr Martin Routledge		LLACC Chairman
	Mr David Charles		Bickerdike Allen Partners
	Mr John Wilkinson		BMKALC (substitute)
	Mrs Adriana Grigorean		LLAOL Community Noise Executive
	Mrs Nicole Prior		LLAOL Head of Flight Operations
	Mr Alex Carmen		LLAOL Flight Operations Analyst
	Ms Georgie Abbott		LLAOL Flight Ops
	Mr Neil Bradford		LLAOL Head of Marketing & Communications
	Mr David Gurtler		Luton Borough Council
	Cllr Jane Timmis		Dacorum Borough Council
	Mr Gordon Breeze		PAIN
	Mr Paul Donavon		Hertfordshire County Council
	Mr Nigel Green		STAQS
	Mr Antony Hatch		NATS
	Cllr Ed Moore		St Albans City & District Council
	Mr Andrew Lambourne		LADACAN
1.0	Apologies for absence and substitution		Action
1.1	Mr Neil Thompson - LLAOL Chief Operations Officer Mrs Rachel Webb - BMKALC (substituted by John Wilkinson)		
1.2	The Chairman welcomed members to the June 2025 meeting. Members were reminded of the protocols for the virtual meeting.		

2.0	Minutes and Matters Arising from 12th March Meeting	
2.1	<p>The draft minutes from the 12th March 2025 meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting for comments from members; these had been reviewed by the Chairman and an updated draft had been issued with the meeting papers for approval by members.</p> <p>The minutes of the 12th March 2025 meeting were approved for upload to the web site, subject to a minor grammatical change and typo.</p>	Admin
2.2	<p>Matters arising that were not being discussed elsewhere under the agenda included:</p> <p>Item 2.2 - Item 4.3 Noise Monitoring Schedule 2025 - LLAOL advised they were about to contact a councillor in Jersey Farm to arrange monitoring at the same location used previously.</p> <p>Item 2.2 - Item 5.1 NTSC Projects – NDAs - The NDAs required for the sharing of data could not be completed, so an alternative approach to the projects was being considered.</p> <p>Item 3.4 QMR Key Monitoring Indicator 24hr CDA - LLAOL advised the indicator had been corrected to show the 24hr CDA performance as decreasing.</p> <p>Item 3.4 Noise Comparison LLAOL Presentation - LLAOL had revised the entries at the bottom of the Noise Comparison page of their presentation to confirm that they related to the sample size (number of events) the graphs were based on.</p> <p>Item 4.1 NMT3 Relocation - LLAOL advised that noise monitoring was planned at the new location prior to the switch. The monitoring had been delayed by a prolonged period of easterly operations but was now imminent.</p> <p>Item 4.3 Dispensation Process - easyJet had provided dates for the visit to their Operations Centre and these would be circulated to those NTSC members who indicated they would like to attend the visit.</p>	
3.0	Quarterly Monitoring Report Q1 2025	
3.1	<p>Total passenger numbers had increased by 9% and total traffic movements by 5%. The total movements in the night period, 23.00-06.59, were 2% fewer when compared with the same quarter last year. The early morning, 06.00-06.59, movements were 5% higher than those in the same quarter last year.</p>	
3.2	<p>The noise monitor results showed most departures still produced noise levels in the range 70-76 dB L_{Amax}. In this period (2025 Q1), two daytime departures but no night-time departures were registered at greater than 80 dB. Last year (2024 Q1), the comparable counts were six and one.</p> <p>Members noted that the airlines had achieved Continuous Descent Approaches (CDA), for 93% of all arrivals; this was 1% higher than the first quarter in 2024.</p>	

	<p>There were two noise violations during the daytime and one during the night-time. LLAOL continued to work closely with the operators to reduce violations.</p> <p>The night-time noise contour area had decreased by 8% compared with the same quarter in 2024. It was noted that there were nine track violations in this quarter due to poor track keeping.</p> <p>The number of complaints had decreased from 1,268 in the last first quarter to 586 for the same period in 2025. The number of complainants was 43, down from 64 in 2024. The number of new complainants was 6, down from 11. Complaints regarding westerly operations formed the largest percentage of complaints.</p> <p>For this quarter, runway usage had been 60% westerly operations.</p>	
3.3	<p>Regarding the limit on early morning shoulder activity (12-month movements), the total for the preceding 12 months was 5,818 which was below the limit of 7,000.</p> <p>With respect to the limit on night quota activity (23.30-06.00) (12-month movements), the total for the preceding 12 months was 7,547 which was also below the limit of 9,650.</p>	
3.4	<p>The sub-committee discussed the QMR.</p> <p>The number of track violations for the period was raised as a concern. LLAOL informed that in terms of the number of violations this was not unusual and was lower than in the equivalent quarter in 2024. The aircraft causing the violations were mostly privately owned aircraft. LLAOL informed that to try and reduce occurrences due to unfamiliarity they had a departure briefing which the handling agents provided to private jet crews. The procedures were also detailed in the AIP. It was confirmed that private jets operated under the same rules as the main airlines and were operating within controlled airspace; they were being monitored and directed by air traffic control.</p> <p>In terms of CDA, it was noted that the main airlines were performing well, but others were bringing the average down. These included El Al, although they had improved significantly, and Israir who were new to the Airport. LLAOL advised they were focussing on private operators whose performance was also below the average.</p> <p>The top reasons for go-arounds were discussed. LLAOL advised that the main reason in the quarter was 'Unstable approach'. This related to the operational state of the aircraft and to continue an approach certain criteria, such as aircraft speed, must be met by a specific point before touchdown. The specific criteria depends on the aircraft type, pilot capability and individual airline procedures. The other top reasons were 'Weather' and surface monitoring radar 'SMR'. The remaining reasons each occurred infrequently and so were grouped under 'Other'; however, due to there being many other reasons further discussion ensued and LLAOL agreed to provide a further breakdown of the 'Other' reasons.</p>	LLAOL

	<p>The night noise contours were discussed. It was noted that in terms of area for 2024 Q1 had changed from those reported in the associated QMR. This has arisen as the validation of the contour methodology gets updated each year, but often not until after the Q1 contours are produced. Consequently, the Q1 contours were often updated. The area for 2024 Q1 in the 2025 Q1 QMR was the relevant (comparable) one to use. LLAOL agreed to look at including text in the QMR to advise of the potential for changes.</p> <p>Comparing the contours between 2024 Q1 and 2025 Q1 the changes in the relative sizes of the three lobes were discussed. In particular, while there was some reduction in the latest contours to the east towards Stevenage, and to the south-west towards Markyate, there was an increase to the west towards Kensworth. The latter was despite the increase in the proportion of modernised (less noisy) aircraft. It was advised that the increase had arisen due to arrivals from the west, and that there was a higher proportion of these in 2025 Q1: 38% as opposed to 25%.</p> <p>Reference was made regarding departing passengers, LLAOL advised that non-EU destinations included Turkey, Israel, North Africa ie. Morocco and some parts of central and eastern European countries.</p> <p>It was noted that there had been no response from Airbus on the Airbus A321neo performance. LLAOL had attended a meeting in April where the DfT pressed the CAA to progress their work on the matter, with a presentation planned for the next ANEG meeting. A member from LADACAN would be in attendance at the forthcoming ANEG and would report back to NTSC. LLAOL were currently monitoring the performance of the Jet2 aircraft as their neo variant had a different engine to those of the WizzAir fleet.</p> <p>LLAOL advised that IATA were planning to introduce a more stringent noise standard for subsonic aircraft. This would affect types seeking certification from 1st January 2029.</p>	<p>LLAOL</p> <p>LADACAN</p>
4.0	Airport Updates	
4.1	<p>Noise Management Plan Review - LLAOL presented a summary of their Noise Management Plan review, which was to be submitted by 30th June - at one year after the implementation of the 19mppa permission. The changes included higher noise and track violation fines and realigning the dispensation policy with the designated airports, as that had recently changed. LLAOL clarified that although they were acting ahead of the January 2028 requirement there was no intention to raise these limits again in the interim period. LLAOL also confirmed that they had no intention to seek to become a 'designated' airport where central government would set the noise policies and limits.</p>	
4.2	<p>Airspace Update - LLAOL advised that the Government had just announced the creation of UKADS (UK Airspace Design Service), a single guiding mind to coordinate and sponsor future airspace changes to deliver the holistic, modernised airspace design envisaged by the Government's Airspace Modernisation Strategy. UKADS would be provided by NATS. It was currently unclear as to the extent that community groups or airports would be able to feed into the process. LLAOL advised that they were supportive of UKADS as they</p>	

	<p>believed airspace change would move more quickly as a result. It was noted that UKADS was expected to be mobilised by the end of 2025.</p> <p>Further discussion continued regarding the original Luton airspace design principles and their grading. LLAOL informed that all the information was on the CAA portal and would be passed to UKADS to inform their decisions. It was noted that all airports were fighting for their own routes and therefore there needed to be an independent decision maker taking account of airports' wishes and the National interest. It was expected that airports will not be involved in the decision making to keep it as independent as possible.</p> <p>Members were advised that LLAOL had submitted further information for the AD6 Post Implementation Review. The subsequent report from the CAA was now expected in 2025 Q3.</p> <p>LLAOL also advised that their submission from 2017 for RNAV approaches was now largely approved. However, it was only being obtained as a contingency and would not change flight tracks over the ground even if used.</p>	
5.0	FLOPSC Feedback	
5.1	The meeting discussed CDA in addition to noise from ground operations, including the use of ground and auxiliary power units. The implications for airlines of movements dropping into the early morning shoulder period were also raised and seemed not to have been fully appreciated by some beforehand.	
6.0	Any Other Business	
6.1	The concern from some residents of South Luton that departures to the west were to the north of the intended track remained. LLAOL had reviewed the tracks in relation to gate coordinates provided by LADACAN and would provide the results of their analysis to aid a response to the residents.	LLAOL
7.0	Dates of forthcoming Meetings in 2025 <p>24th September – via Teams</p> <p>10th December – via Teams</p>	