

Aviation Report – October 2019

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Introduction

Since my June report I have attended the following Gatwick related meetings:

- 27th June – GATCOM Steering Group
- 18th July – GATCOM
- 30th July – NATMAG Pre-meeting
- 31st July – FLOPSC
- 8th August – NATMAG
- 19th September – Special GATCOM Steering Group

GATCOM STEERING GROUP – 27th June 2019

Review of Noise Management Board

The review sub-committees findings were discussed and not accepted at the last NMB meeting by a majority of the members so the NMB is not currently operational. The work programme they had prepared for the forthcoming year will continue. GAL intend to re-instate a new NMB structure along the recommendations of the review group with a two –tiered structure of an NMB Executive Board (NEX) overseeing the implementation/delivery board and linked to a new Noise Community Forum (NCF). The second term will be effective later this year.

Gatwick 2018 Noise Exposure Contours

Noise Exposure Contours are produced annually from data collected automatically at Gatwick Airport and analysed by the CAA.

In the past the 57dBA noise level has been taken as the noise threshold during the daytime and a lower noise level at night. As the industry has recommended that the day threshold should be reduced to 54dBA, both the land area and the population affected were reduced by 9% and 8% respectively from the 2017 figures. If one considers the old 57dBA contour the area and population also reduced by 6% and 31% respectively.

At night the acceptable noise level is regarded as 48dBA and the contours produced land area and population reductions of 9% and 12% respectively.

These improvements could be attributed to the runway modal split that showed an increase for easterly departures but was probably mainly due to the modification of the A320 aircraft and the introduction of the A320NEO.

GATCOM – 18th July 2019

A number of changes of personnel were in evidence at this meeting following the May elections. This included the vice-chairman who had been the representative of Mole Valley and Ken Harwood who had been the Tandridge representative. Both of these members had made a very valuable contribution to GATCOM and its subsidiary committees and their knowledge will be missed. The meeting elected Helen Clack (Surrey CC representative) as the new vice-chairman, Caroline Salmon from Mole Valley and Liz Lockwood from Tandridge. There were other changes but these were the most relevant.

Review of Gatwick Noise Reporting

A presentation was given on the second phase of the new NTK system which was expected to come into operation at the end of August.

Most of the issues of the Steering Group were covered in the presentations at this meeting whilst I also gave written reports back on NATMAG and GACT.

Key messages from this meeting are an attachment to this report for those councillors who wish to have more information.

FLOPSC – 31st July 2019

The Flight Operations and Safety Committee (FLOPSC) is held every other month and one of our NATMAG local authority members attends as an observer and I elected to attend this meeting. The other members of this committee comprise GAL airfield operations managers, Air Traffic control from both Swanwick and Gatwick airport plus a number of airline pilots or senior members.

Whilst a number of acronyms are used that everybody else understands, I do not know them all. However, it is useful from a NATMAG point of view to have a feel for the live problems with which they have to cope. Although attending as observers, the chairman is happy for us to participate. I attach the feedback report I sent to my NATMAG colleagues for your interest.

NATMAG – 8th August 2019

At our pre-meeting on 30th July we discussed our concern that, whilst the new format for the NATMAG meeting was an improvement, not all the issues are included in the agenda so could be missed out. It was important that minutes of meetings that are put into the public arena properly show that we have been carrying out our function to monitor noise issues. We included this concern in our pre-meeting notes that we share with GAL and they took exception to some of the things we said but also suggested that our pre-meeting notes should be included in the minutes. Our pre-meetings allow us to talk freely and feed back to GAL is really a private matter but helps to move the main meeting on more quickly. As a result, I responded to their correspondence on the subject and we were able to clear the air at the main meeting. (Read more of this in attached draft NATMAG minutes)

Whilst the new Noise and Track Keeping (NTK) system has been developed to produce an automated capture of data, the response to complaints has not been good. The target is for 95% of responses from the airport should be within 8 days and this has fallen far short of the target with only 49% achieved. No doubt that the staff resource has been mostly engaged on the new system but it is interesting to note that there have been over 26,000 complaints so far this year compared with 2,700 in 2011. I know that a great number are produced by a small number of individuals so makes the situation far worse than maybe it is. With the new system, the aim is to concentrate on issues and how to overcome them, rather than looking at the number of complaints.

It was announced at this meeting that Matt Brookes, who had been driving forward the new NTK system, will be leaving GAL and taking up a post in Australia. He has only been with GAL a relatively short time, having been previously with HELIOS consultants, so his input will be sorely missed.

SPECIAL GATCOM STEERING GROUP – 19th September 2019

GATCOM Steering Group meetings normally involve a limited number of GATCOM members but this meeting was open to all members. It was an opportunity for Tim Norwood, Director of GAL to give a presentation on where the company has reached and where it intends to go in future. It mainly centred on the Gatwick Master Plan and its future scenarios but he concentrated on Scenario 1 – continued use of one runway but a hint at Scenario 2 where the emergency

runway becomes a second northerly runway. However, reference was made to the Development Consent Order (DCO) that GAL had submitted to operate the two runways together. The Planning Inspectorate had issued a scoping report in three volumes that had been provided to them by GAL for comment by a selected group, mainly of Local Authorities but also Horley TC, Charlwood PC and Burstow PC. The consultation period for this group was 28 days which closed on 1st October and I submitted my comments on behalf of Burstow.

There will be a full consultation on the application sometime next year but it was very helpful to submit some concerns now; and I will register to give evidence if necessary at a later date. A copy of my submission is attached.

Future Meetings

- 9th October – GACT Meeting
- 11th October – Gatwick Transport Forum
- 17th October – GATCOM (all day)
- 6th November – NATMAG Workshop
- 7th November - NATMAG

Attachments

GATCOM Key Messages July 2019

FLOPSC Report to NATMAG Members

Northern Runway DCO Scoping Response

BPC/Aviation Oct19/ 29.09.19