

**DfT STUDY – ATTITUDES TO NOISE FROM AIRCRAFT SOURCES IN ENGLAND
(ANASE)**

Background

1. At its annual meetings in 2003¹ and 2006² Conference received papers outlining the latest developments in this study which aims to research the relationship between reported annoyance and aircraft noise and (hypothetically) how willing people would be to pay to reduce annoyance from aircraft noise. The study, launched in 2001 is described in more detail in the DfT press release reproduced at Annex A. The work is being guided by a steering group on which a wide range of interests is represented.
2. This paper seeks to bring members up date with the current position.

Progress

3. Another year has gone by and the report(s) of the Study have still not been published.
4. By way of explanation we can, perhaps, do no better than to attach (at Annex B) the Department's April 2007 response to a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI).
5. We now understand that provisional findings have been submitted to the Department and that these findings are now being subjected to peer review by independent experts. The Department's current expectations are that the results of this study will be available in the summer.
6. It will also be noted that as yet there has been no consultation on the study. However we are advised as this is an independent study commissioned by the Department; they consider that it would not be appropriate to have any prior consultation in advance of delivery of the study and its recommendations. Once the report is published, the Department would need to consider any implications for Government policy. In this process, the Department would expect to consult key stakeholders and wider. The Department have confirmed that it would include the Airport Consultative Committees in the list of organisations with whom it would formally consult

Conclusion

7. This remains a Study of considerable importance for Consultative Committees not least for the reason given by the applicant for information under the FOI. More widely it revisits research last carried out in the 1980s and will determine whether the current understanding between annoyance and aircraft noise still holds.
8. The Secretariat will keep members fully informed on its progress.

**Stuart Innes
May 2007**

¹ <http://www.ukaccs.info/03almfiles/03noisestudy.doc>

² <http://www.ukaccs.info/06almfiles/06anase.doc>

DTLR NEWS RELEASE - 2001/0269

08 May 2001

Ainsworth unveils new study into aircraft noise

The Government is to commission a major study into aircraft noise during the day and at night, Aviation Minister Bob Ainsworth said today.

The study will research how people **feel** about aircraft noise. It will focus on how people perceive the relationship between noise levels and annoyance, or sleep disturbance at night, and how they would **value** lower noise levels relative to other environmental factors.

The research will look afresh at the major study completed in 1985, the Aircraft Noise Index Study, and on the findings of three recent Government-sponsored studies on sleep disturbance.

Mr Ainsworth said:

"This new study underlines the Government's commitment to underpin our policy on aircraft noise by substantial research that commands the widest possible confidence.

"Our current understanding of the relationship between annoyance and aircraft noise over 24 hours is based primarily on the research that was carried out in the 1980s.

"The conclusions have been broadly confirmed by other studies here and abroad, and we have no reason to doubt their validity. But in the light of our commitment to develop a new air transport policy, of changes to traffic patterns since then, and the general reduction in noise levels of individual aircraft, it is now timely to commission a fresh study.

"We want the aviation industry to meet the external costs it imposes. This new study will give us more information on the **value** people give to relief from noise, and to focus our policies from a broader range of evidence.

"In deciding to commission this further research, I have considered the findings of three recent Government-sponsored studies on sleep disturbance, and the advice of independent experts.

"I have concluded that a new full-scale objective sleep study would be unlikely to add significantly to our understanding, and that the way forward is through concentrating instead on further research into subjective responses to annoyance by night and by day.

"We shall ensure that both environmental and aviation interests can contribute to the oversight of the project. It will last three years, with pilot results planned to be available next year to feed into our White Paper on air transport."

Invitations to tender for the new study will be issued shortly.

Mr Ainsworth announced the new study in answer to a Parliamentary Written Question by Andy King, MP (Rugby and Kenilworth). The full text of his answer is attached.

Notes to Editors

The last major UK study into subjective annoyance and aircraft noise over 24 hours was published in 1985 (*DR Report 8402 United Kingdom Aircraft Noise Index Study: Main Report*, Civil Aviation Authority, January 1985.) It was based on the largest survey yet carried out of public attitudes to aircraft noise and, as a result of this study and subsequent analysis, the Government adopted the Leq (equivalent continuous noise) index as its standard metric for daytime aircraft noise, as it showed a good statistical correlation with annoyance. The Government's consultation document on air transport policy (*The Future of Aviation-the Government's Consultation Document on Air Transport Policy*, DETR, December 2000) acknowledges (paragraph 142) that it would be desirable to carry out a validation study in due course.

The consultation document (paragraph 149) also acknowledges that there may be a need for further research into the monetary valuation of the effects of noise to inform thinking on charging strategies.

When launching the preliminary consultation on night restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted in 1998 (*Press Notice 148 of 27 February 1998*) the Government also announced publication of a report on night noise contours that concluded that there was not enough evidence at present to underpin scientifically robust night contours relating noise to annoyance. (*Night Noise Contours: a Feasibility Study* published by the National Physical Laboratory in 1997). However, one major area that the report identified for further investigation was the effect of sleep disturbance at the beginning and end of the night; in particular, the significance of sleep disturbance in determining annoyance. The Government therefore announced a research trial on sleep disturbance to assess methodology and analytical techniques, to determine whether to proceed to a full scale study of either sleep prevention or total sleep loss. This was subsequently supplemented by a social survey in late 1999/early 2000 to help explore the marked difference between objectively measured and publicly perceived disturbance due to night-time aircraft noise, and a review of existing research in the UK and abroad.

The three recent reports on aircraft noise and sleep are:

- **R&D Report 9964 Adverse Effects of Night-Time Aircraft Noise**, published by Department of Operational Research and Analysis, National Air Traffic Services Ltd, March 2000. It is available at a cost of £15.00 (plus £2.00 postage & packing) from Westward documedia, 37 Windsor Street, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL52 2DG (tel: 01242-235151; fax: 01242- 584139).

- **Aircraft Noise and Sleep - 1999 UK Trial Methodology Study**, 27 November 2000. (Ian Flindell & Andrew Bullmore, Institute of Sound and Vibration Research Consultancy Services, University of Southampton. Karen A Robertson, Nicky A Wright, Claire Turner & Claire Birch, Centre for Human Sciences, Defence Evaluation and Research Agency. Mark Jiggins & Bernard Berry, Centre for Mechanical and Acoustical Metrology, National Physical Laboratory. Martin Davison & Martin Dix, MVA Consultancy). The report may be found on the ISVR Consultancy Services web site at:<http://www.isvr.co.uk/environm/sleep.htm>

- **Perceptions of Aircraft Noise, Sleep and Health, December 2000**. (Ian Diamond, Rob Stephenson & Zoë Sheppard, University of Southampton; Andrew Smith, Sheila Hayward & Sue Heatherley, Cardiff University; Gary Raw, Building Research Establishment; Stephen Stansfeld, Queen Mary and Westfield College.) The report may be found on the Southampton University web site at: <http://www.socstats.soton.ac.uk/> (then visit the News section). Hard copies are available from Kathy Hooper or Anne Owens at the University on 02380 592 527, priced £9.50.

Each report referred to in this news release may be inspected free of charge at the Ashdown House Library and Information Centre at 123 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6DE. An appointment can be made by telephoning to the enquiry desk on 020-7944 3039.

Further information on the Department's sleep research programme will be posted on the Aviation section of DETR website in due course.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Mr Andy King (Lab - Rugby and Kenilworth):

69 To ask the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, what plans he has to carry out a new study to update the Aircraft Noise Index Study of 1985. [160726]

Mr Robert Ainsworth

My Department is to carry out a major study to reassess attitudes to aircraft noise. This new study underlines the Government's commitment to underpin our policy on aircraft noise by substantial research that commands the widest possible confidence.

Our current understanding of the relationship between annoyance and aircraft noise over 24 hours is based primarily on research that was carried out in the 1980s, in particular the Aircraft Noise Index Study published in 1985. That was based on the largest survey yet carried out of public attitudes to aircraft noise and eventually led the Government of the day to adopt the Leq (equivalent continuous noise) index for daytime noise contours.

The conclusions have been broadly confirmed by other studies here and abroad, and we have no reason to doubt their validity. But in the light of our commitment to develop a new air transport policy,

of changes to traffic patterns since then, and the general reduction in noise levels of individual aircraft, it is now timely to commission a fresh study.

We want the aviation industry to meet the external costs it imposes. This new study will give us more information on the value people give to relief from noise, and to focus our policies from a broader range of evidence.

In deciding to commission this further research, I have considered the findings of three recent Government-sponsored studies on sleep disturbance, and the advice of independent experts. I am grateful to those who sat on the steering and technical working groups for their help in shaping those studies.

I have concluded that a new full-scale objective sleep study would be unlikely to add significantly to our understanding; and that the way forward is through concentrating instead on further research into subjective responses to annoyance by night and by day.

I am placing copies of the three reports (Adverse Effects of Night-Time Aircraft Noise, Aircraft Noise and Sleep-UK Trial Methodology Study, and Perceptions of Aircraft Noise Sleep and Health) in the House Library. These have been published by the former Department of Operational Research and Analysis (DORA) of National Air Traffic Services Ltd, and by the Institute of Sound and Vibration Research Consultancy Services and Department of Social Statistics at the University of Southampton, respectively. Further information on government sponsored research into aircraft noise and sleep will shortly be available on the Aviation section of my Department's website.

Invitations to tender for the new study will be issued shortly. We shall ensure that both environmental and aviation interests can contribute to the oversight of the project. It will last three years, with pilot results planned to be available next year to feed into our White Paper on air transport.

ANNEX B

Department for Transport FOI Response – April 2007

10th April 2007

Ref: 47/4/3

Dear XXXX,

Freedom of Information Act - Attitudes to Aircraft Noise

Thank you for your letter of 10 March 2007 which I received on 13 March 2007. I note that this is a follow-up request to your previous FOI request in 2005.

Your letter expresses concern that the consultations on airport development and expansion expected this year will rely on the validity of the Leq system for reflecting community annoyance but that there has been no public information regarding progress on the ANASE study which will re-assess the validity of this relationship. Accordingly you have requested:

1. The final Phase 1 ANASE Report
2. Initial and Progress Reports relating to Phase 2
3. The diary of meetings concerning ANASE since July 2005
4. Minutes of meetings held by the ANASE steering group since July 2005
5. Responses from consultees relating to the Phase 2 Initial and Progress Reports.

I am writing to confirm that the Department has now completed its investigation of the information you requested and I respond to your request below.

It may be helpful at this point for me to clarify that there would need to be a period of consideration and consultation before the study's findings could form the basis of any

changes to government policy.

As was explained in my previous reply to you, the research is being carried out by a consortium led by MVA. It has two phases, with Phase 1 developing a stated preference methodology for valuing attitudes to aircraft noise and Phase 2 applying it and also re-assessing the validity of the Leq family of noise indices as a proxy for relative community annoyance. The stage reached in the study is that it is now undergoing an independent review.

Although your request was made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Initial and Progress Reports relating to Phase 2 and the Final Phase 1 Report contain environmental information. Regulation 12(4) (d) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allows a public authority to withhold material containing environmental information which is in the course of completion. The Department's conclusion is that this exemption applies to your request for the Phase 1 and Initial Phase 2 reports. Further, it is the Department's view that it is in the public interest to await completion of the study, so

that analysis and interpretation of the information contained in these documents can proceed unhindered.

There has been no consultation on these reports and accordingly the Department does not hold the information you have requested regarding the responses from consultees relating to the Phase 2 Initial and Progress Reports.

There have however been progress reports to the steering group and I enclose those that have occurred since July 2005. There has been only one steering group meeting since July 2005. This meeting was held in March 2006 and the draft minutes of this meeting await formal approval by the Steering Group when it next meets. As such, I do not feel able to send you this particular document. However I believe that the information you seek is contained in the more recent progress notes to the steering group, which are enclosed. I also attach the diary of meetings concerning ANASE since July 2005.

Finally, we expect the study to be completed during summer 2007. It is difficult to give a more precise date since it is dependant on completion of the review process.

The information you requested will now be published on our website.

If you are unhappy with the way the Department has handled your request or with the decisions made in relation to your request, you may make a complaint by writing to me at the above address. Please see attached details of DfT's complaints procedure and your right to complain to the Information Commissioner.

Yours sincerely,