



Matt Gorman  
Sustainability and Environment Director  
Heathrow Airport

Aircraft Noise 3 Villages  
Lightwater  
Surrey GU18 5QW

## By Email

14 December 2016

Dear Matt

Further to the recent HCNF, I should like to once again follow up on the matter of actions which are being proposed by the industry to remedy the increase in aircraft noise experienced since the trials of 2014.

In response to the question of what the industry will do to remedy the situation, you stated that you fail to know how many different ways you can say things to make them clearer.

We are aware of the action plan items to which you refer, however, what continues to remain unclear and unanswered is what are the planned outcomes and what is the plan to ensure component steps are achieved?

For example, the Steeper Departure Trial document includes substantial timeline caveats e.g., difficulty in securing sites for monitors, difficulty in agreeing gradients with Airlines, delay in obtaining CAA trial approval etc.

With responsibility for the current noise issues resting firmly on the shoulders of airlines and the industry, it is surely time to insist on firm commitments from all parties to ensure that all the necessary component steps are met in a timely fashion? You are expecting communities to wait until at least Q1 2019 for trial reports but achievement of that date may be frustrated or delayed.

- What reason could airlines give for not wanting to agree gradients and who has the authority to ensure that timely cooperation is ensured or preferably mandated?
- As an attendee of the HCNF since day 1, the CAA is fully aware of the concerns and frustrations of communities - why would it delay?
- As one of the industry's elected actions in response to investigating noise, what contingency plan is in place for alternative actions to address noise if it fails to achieve any steps required to complete the trial?

In two years of talks with HAL and industry partners, not a single aircraft has altered course for the betterment of communities, despite the fact that lower and/or concentrated flight paths have been proved. We are now told that despite the fact we are being subjected to increased aircraft noise



as a result of unintended consequences to previous changes, we must now await further investigations to ensure no further unintended noise consequences. Communities are also expected to accept that the sole reason for the sudden increase in noise is due to incremental changes. That may have been a plausible argument were it not for neighbouring communities of airports up and down the country who are experiencing exactly the same noise issues and perceived stonewalling by the aviation industry and Government. In the meantime, patterns of aircraft continue to alter to the detriment of those beneath an example of which is the recent observations by many of arrival aircraft randomly zigzagging without utilising the Ockham stack.

I therefore consider it both sensible and reasonable to insist that communities are provided with details of outcomes and actions if the industry is expecting them to wait at least a further two years for remedial actions.

HAL's stated imperative is to 'understand the operational and environmental implications of enforcing any procedural change to departure routes'. In terms of the question I have posed on several occasions, let me try to be more explicit. Let us presume the trial completes – then what?

For example, in the case where the trial concludes that noise is improved for the majority of those communities newly affected by noise, what are the specific actions which will then be taken?

Alternatively, what are the outcomes that would prevent remedial action?

The industry must flesh out the details and provide not only the parameters which would trigger (or fail to trigger) change, detail what such changes would be, agree a point to which aircraft would return to pre-trial heights and concentration patterns by outlining the scenarios.

Without set parameters, how can anyone know what we are working towards or what to expect as a conclusion? Addressing noise issues will simply remain an aspiration and given the fury of communities at recent changes, to expect them to commit time and effort in the hope there will be a favourable outcome at some indeterminate point in the future is simply unacceptable.

In simple terms, communities need to know that if x is achieved then the outcome is y.

The issue of concentration is one which can be addressed without the need for further trials or data. It has long been the mantra of the industry that it is simply adhering to government policy. As you are aware, at a recent meeting Lord Ahmad stated that government policy will no longer promote concentration of aircraft and aircraft noise. Please advise what changes are being implemented to reflect this?

Finally, it has not escaped my attention that each time I have raised the question of actions which will be taken by the industry to remedy noise, HAL attempts to frame a context by adding that whilst some members are unhappy with the process, the majority of the HCNF is content. There is no evidence for this and we do not believe it is the case.

Ensuring concerns are addressed is essential to ensure full engagement of every member, particularly given the number of people each represents. It is perhaps no coincidence that the most vocal at the meetings are those representing areas newly affected by increased aircraft noise. Attempting to marginalise views as a minority is counterproductive and, as has been



previously stated, concerns which remain unanswered are concerns which will continue to be raised until they are satisfactorily addressed.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Rosalie'. A thin blue line is drawn underneath the signature.

Rosalie James

**Aircraft Noise 3 Villages**

(Lightwater, Windlesham & Bagshot, Surrey)

cc:

The Rt Hon Theresa May PM

The Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP - Secretary of State for Transport

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport

Isobel Pastor – DfT

The Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP - Chancellor of the Exchequer

The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

John Holland-Kaye – CEO, HAL

Martin Rolfe – CEO, NATS

Andrew Haines – CEO, CAA

Local MPs

HCNF Members