

FACC Questions – June 2020

Meeting in June 2020 was cancelled but questions were still submitted.

From Geoff Marks – FARA - Addressed to Miles Thomas – FAL

The CAA's CAP 1875 CAP defines its proposed minimum requirements for noise modelling. Modelling requirements become more stringent with increases in the number of people exposed to the LOAEL of 51dB.

Can you confirm your process meets the second highest category B standard but would comply with the most stringent Category A standard if the number of fixed monitors were to be increased?

Response from Miles Thomas - FAL

Dear Geoff,

I can confirm that the noise modelling process at Farnborough Airport Ltd (FAL) conforms to the Category B standard as described in the CAA Document "Consultation on CAA Minimum Noise Requirements for Noise Modelling" (CAP1875).

Category A standards for noise monitoring require the number of noise monitors to be "sufficient and appropriately positioned such that track-keeping data can be used to identify noise caused by specific types of aircraft and used to make amendments to data from the ICAO sponsored Aircraft Noise and Performance (ANP) database, to reflect local effects". With only one runway and SIDS and STARS that following the same path for initial departure and final approach, the number and placement of FAL noise monitors is sufficient and appropriate.

It is the specifics of Table 2.1, CAP1875 that identify the relevant and key difference between Category A and Category B approaches to noise modelling. Under Category B, FAL validates the ICAO noise dataset by reference to actual data collected from operations of the major aircraft types (most common 20), these represent the significant majority of movements. Under Cat A, an airport must validate ICAO datasets with reference to ALL aircraft types. Given the huge diversity in types operated in business aviation, combined with the low annual frequency of some types, collection of sufficient noise data to validate the ICAO dataset for all types would not be workable, regardless of the amount of noise monitors.

The CAA also sets out more general guidance on Noise Modelling Requirements in the introduction to CAP1875 and states:

different groups of airports. In general, the CAA will expect the noise analysis to be sufficient for it to carry out its duties but also proportionate to the size and likely noise effects of the airport or the proposal under consideration. In most

Given that very large commercial entities such as Heathrow, Manchester and potentially Birmingham fall within the Category A standard, it would seem the FAL is appropriately placed within Category B.

I hope this assists you in your understanding, if I can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Three Question from Hamish Johnston – Answered by Miles Thomas

About two weekends ago a very large and noisy Military Aircraft, a Boeing C17A Globemaster, flew in and out from Hungary. Why was this not accommodated at an RAF airfield rather than at a Business Airport such as Farnborough?

Any military flights are allowed at the airport under the planning permission. I do not know why the operator chose Farnborough but can say that it was part of the pandemic global operation.

Last Monday Radar 24 showed a Gulfstream Aircraft making six circuits of the Airport and flew low over the whole area. Why did this aircraft - I presume on a proofing flight- not carry out its circuits over open land rather than the built-up areas near the Airport? Are these "proofing flights"? going to be ongoing once Gulfstream concentrates its maintenance at Farnborough?

The aircraft concerned is based at the airport and has been on the ground since lockdown started. The crew have to maintain their flying competency for their licence validity; this mainly involves landing approaches which require tight circuits around the airport. Gulfstream will have no need for crew training flights such as this.

I was interested in the reports of The Farnborough Airport Environmental money for local activities. Does the money per flight come from all the in & out flights for the Airport or only those qualified as Business?

Under clause 7.2 of the Planning Agreement, the community environmental levy applies exclusively to Business Aviation movements.

Six Question from Gareth Saunders - Church Crookham Parish Council Answered by Ian Dickson General Manager ATC – FAL. Answers in Blue.

Navigation - A number of aircraft arriving along the STAR have deviated, with permission according to the report, to avoid conflict with departing aircraft. This has occurred in the reporting period with runway operations in both directions, and I witnessed it again yesterday (full disclosure, the blue dot on the reports almost under the centre line in Church Crookham is my home). Fully understand the need for separation, but - especially in this current environment where there will be no slot restrictions elsewhere - why is there not better coordination between departing and arriving flights? It seems to me delaying the departing aircraft by a matter of minutes would avoid the need for aircraft to be routed off the STAR and to overfly more built-up areas?

With traffic levels as they currently are, there are often opportunities for aircraft to remain on the STAR until it's end when arriving for Runway 24, and doing so will normally result in no conflict with outbound traffic. That said, the ACP created airspace is designed to provide an area within which the Radar controllers have room to manoeuvre aircraft to achieve the most expeditious flow of air traffic in the area, and holding outbound aircraft on the ground for a significant period on the ground is detrimental to various environmental considerations, including local noise levels. Accepting that departure slots are unlikely to be in effect at this time, it is often the case that inbound aircraft arrival times can bunch with outbound traffic for a number of operational reasons, and separating these aircraft purely on the basis of time on the Runway is not a valid ATC traffic management technique. The comment notes that aircraft are taken off the STAR for both Runways. In fact, Runway 06 arrivals will always be taken off the STAR, as to leave them to the end would position them in completely the wrong area and result in more noise for local stakeholders. That very action to take them off the STAR is often not associated with separation against outbound traffic, but just to ensure a stabilised approach to that Runway.

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Can NATS confirm that discussions have been had with London Terminal Control about routings of arriving aircraft (specifically in response to the 17/3 arrival that was directed over an area of Hart that is sensitive when it comes to air traffic)?

Any sub optimal presentation of inbound traffic from London Terminal Control will lead to an Observation being raised between the two units. From these Observations, the Terminal Control Controllers have been issued reminders/guidance on the correct procedures for the presentation of Farnborough inbounds. As controllers return from periods of Furlough, we have on occasion noticed incorrect presentation to Farnborough, whenever this is identified, the controller is immediately advised.

Training flights - I learned in this reporting period that training flights do not appear on WebTrak - feel this should be made aware more generally - although one I reported through the website June 1st (next reporting period, I know, but relevant here) DID appear, so not sure why the inconsistency .

The behaviour of WebTrak is influenced by the transponder code allocated to the flight. Certain training flights are immediately departing via the ATS Route network on completion of their training task and would have already been issued with a code that WebTrak can observe and display. Training flights that are purely remaining with Farnborough would be issued a local transponder code, but these codes are not unique to the flight within UK airspace, resulting in them not being displayable via WebTrak.

Can NATS confirm why training flights are allowed/instructed to follow different routings?

The Standard Instrument Departure procedure is applicable to departures, IFR joining the ATS Route network. Training flights are not joining the network and are not flying on instruments (IFR) but visually out of the window (VFR). As a result, it is not possible to make them fly the SID. What they are obliged to do is fly the noise abatement procedures applicable to the airport, which involve a climb straight ahead for a defined distance (3nm on Runway 24 and 2nm on Runway 06) before a turn into the visual circuit.

On one occasion (May 20) the same aircraft flew the runway heading twice, with no turn on departure to adhere to the SID. Not at all happy with the response from FAL that "it operated two circuits which resulted in two departures from runway 24 in close succession. Training flights that are operating visual circuits do not depart on the SID departure routes (which are designed to channel aircraft up and away from the vicinity of the airport in the most expeditious manner), they operate visually, performing a racetrack pattern. Air Traffic issue different instructions to facilitate this."

The answer from the airport is factually correct.

The circuit could still be achieved with the 15degree left turn once airborne, so I would like to understand why there is a difference. As the father (and sponsor) of a pilot with both PPL and CPL, I do

not need circuits explained to me - I am very familiar with the circuit instructions for Blackbushe which are designed to keep aircraft away from certain areas, so why would aircraft operating at Farnborough be different? If they are indeed operating visually, an early turn would allow them to keep the airfield in sight. Pilots will, generally, fly the routing they are advised (only the one exception from the report that I am personally aware of, very early in the reporting period), so maybe it is the direction they are being given?

The Blackbushe Circuit for fixed wing aircraft is the standard circuit pattern for all airfields, being a rectangle with legs that are parallel to or perpendicular to the extended centreline of the Runway. It achieves avoidance of noise sensitive areas by means of controlling when an aircraft commences their turn of 90 degrees on the individual legs. Farnborough does no different, in terms of ensuring that a turn into the circuit on climb out is done at a specific range. If the airport or other stakeholder wishes to explore amendment to the circuit shape, that would be something that would be subject to CAP1616 consultation requirements.

Further to three questions asked by Hamish Johnston and answered by Miles Thomas – FAL, please see below, two further questions and answers.

Questions two and three have been satisfactorily answered. I have two further questions relating to Question 1 and the Military heavy aircraft using Farnborough Airport.

Military Aircraft can use any airport as needs arrive but is it right that it is part of the Planning Permission?

Secondly, who is the Operator who choose Farnborough - the plane started and finished in Hungary! I presume the MOD was involved along the way?

Since then, the same aircraft has flown into Farnborough on Friday 19th, Monday 22nd and Thursday 25th about 18.08 it mucked up its landing from the west and circle again - not on the correct flight paths - to come in again! It then departed back to Hungary at 18.55.

What are the procedures for Military and Government aircraft using Farnborough? For all these flights I presume previous permission is given and who is to be invoiced and pay for them. I hope it's not just the Operator ringing up to say they are arriving and a price agreed. Surely these landings are not given freely by FAL.

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Answer from Miles Thomas.

Although military movements are excluded from the restrictions of the Section 106 Planning Agreement, all military aircraft are subject to the same rules as any other aircraft using Farnborough. Details of any other arrangements regarding the booking cannot be disclosed.

Three Question from Hamish Johnston – Answered by Miles Thomas – FAL (in blue).

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Further Questions to the Committee - June 2020

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