



Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise
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Robert Courts MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
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30 September 2021

Dear Minister,

I write on behalf of the ICCAN Commissioners to set out our final advice on the most pressing noise issues and how the ICCAN work should be progressed. We have taken account of the ICCAN secretariat's early discussions with DfT and CAA staff; however, these are our recommendations as independent Commissioners.

We have set out our recommendations for each area of work in terms of priority, risks and who best to do it in the annex to this letter.

You will have been made aware of the concerns at the change of approach to aviation noise management from many aviation stakeholders, which appears to have reduced public confidence in both the Department and the Government on aviation noise issues.

ICCAN was set up because the Airports Commission recognised that relationships between parties on aviation noise were fractured and an impediment to aviation growth. That breakdown was simplistically interpreted as an issue between airports and communities, although our work has revealed that there was also a disconnect between Government policy, regulation, industry and community ambitions.

In a very short time ICCAN has identified shared views between airports and communities on the outcomes required. Our Future of Aviation Noise Management report set out the route map to achieve those outcomes. The delivery of this process is the key challenge and risk for Government. In our view, failure to do so will lead to a reversion to previous ways of working and negative behaviour, which will restrain recovery, restrict growth and almost certainly make airspace modernisation undeliverable in any reasonable timescale.

We hope you will look objectively at who is best to carry ICCAN's work forward and we offer our views in good faith. However, for the vast majority of our work it is hard not to conclude that only a body independent of Government and aviation regulation, empowered with sufficient clout by the Government, can deliver a coherent programme for change in how aviation noise is managed.

As independent commissioners we know that much of ICCAN's planned future work is anticipated by both industry and Communities so it is important this is carried on to a conclusion, even if not necessarily in the way we would have delivered it.

Aviation Noise will be a growing issue as aviation recovers, as the interim findings of the ICCAN 2021 Summer Survey demonstrates, with those bothered by aviation noise during the day increasing significantly and those bothered by aviation noise at night more than doubling since 2020.

We have no doubt that the need for a voice independent of Government and industry on aviation noise will continue and we would urge any future consideration of the issue to ensure that successor bodies are given full operational independence.

Yours sincerely,

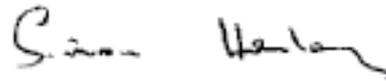
The ICCAN Commissioners



Robert Light
Head Commissioner



Colin Noble
ICCAN Commissioner



Simon Henley
ICCAN Commissioner



Simon Kahn
ICCAN Commissioner

Howard Simmons
ICCAN Commissioner

Annex 1: ICCAN's work programme recommendations

The below table sets out ICCAN's work programme at shutdown, and gives our assessment of how best to proceed with the work. The 'urgency' score (1-3) reflects how quickly decisions/next steps need to be taken; the 'risk' rating (Red, Amber, Green) assesses the impact on more effective noise management of not taking the recommended next step.

Project	Current status	Recommendation	Urgency	Risk
COVID attitudinal summer survey	Contracted to IPSOS Mori. Full dataset and report due by end of November	This valuable piece of repeated survey work will show the impact of the changing number of aircraft in the skies on people's annoyance. It has been of interest to many stakeholders both within the UK and internationally. It should be published by the Government once complete.	1	A
Review of complaint handling and best practice	Initial report intended to be published in November	We are aware that there is demand for more consistency of approach, from communities and airports, which previous Aviation Ministers have echoed. This should be finished and managed by an organisation with professional competencies in complaints handling.	1	A
Aviation Noise Attitude Survey	We have published the design for the next survey and were in the process of planning its procurement.	This is an essential piece of work that must make quick progress, in order to feed into Government policy-making. In the absence of ICCAN, the CAA would be the most appropriate body to lead the survey. However, this is not without risk as CAA managed the last survey which proved contentious with some communities.	1	R
Health	We have published a literature review and conducted a prioritisation exercise with leading academics on future research.	We are not persuaded that it is appropriate for either the Government or CAA to continue this work, and would urge Public Health England and its successor body to take up this research as they have the credibility and skills to manage a long term research programme such as this.	2	A
Planning advice and best practice	Initial stakeholder work, research and project planning conducted.	This is an issue where there is unanimity across the sector for the need for future guidance. Our work is at an early stage but it is hard to see the CAA being the appropriate body to take forward this project. It requires a joined-up approach from multiple Government departments and devolved administrations which DfT may be able to sponsor.	3	A
Metrics best practice and review of Noise Actions Plans	Initial opinion published; project planning and data analysis conducted for follow-up best practice.	We do not see how this work will continue. Our role was to challenge the status quo and propose improvements through doing things differently. While the CAA's ERCD team have the skills and capability to conduct research and analysis on metrics, we do not see which body will commission	N/A	N/A

		them to do the same work we have. This does not detract from the importance of this work or that it is highly anticipated in some quarters.		
Insulation best practice	Initial report on standards published; best practice at initial planning stages.	The Government should identify a suitable body with technical understanding of noise and insulation to take on this work as part of its future aviation strategy.	3	G
Engagement Best Practice	Best practice published; advice given and adopted on individual airport basis; due to be updated annually.	Airports should be urged to use this. We suggest there could be a role for the UK ACC body in overseeing and managing this guidance.	3	G
CAP1616 consultation toolkit	Toolkit published online. Due to be updated annually and in line with CAP1616 update.	This should be hosted and maintained by the CAA as part of its decision-making role on airspace change.	2	A

ICCAN's future work

Our Corporate Strategy 2021-24 also set out crucial future work on changes to operational procedures, future technology, the CAA's information powers, the CAA's post-implementation review process for airspace change decisions, contributing to planning processes, and responding to requests for advice from the Government on called-in airspace change decisions. We also have an ongoing policy work on issues such as the Government's Night Noise consultation, and any replacement to the Aviation Strategy. In common with a number of our conclusions on our open work programme, it is difficult to identify a suitably independent organisation to provide advice on such matters.