

Memo

To: Aircraft Noise Community Consultative Group

From: Jeremy Lo and Kylie Higgs (AIAL)

Date: 11 March 2024

Subject: Annual Review of Noise Complaint Procedures including CASPER system

Background

Under the Terms of Reference ("ToR") set out in Designation 1100 of the Auckland Unitary Plan, the Aircraft Noise Community Consultative Group's purpose is:

"To consider, and where appropriate make recommendations to Auckland International Airport Limited ("AIAL"), on aircraft noise issues and concerns that arise from the operation and activities at Auckland International Airport ("Airport")."

The Group has responsibility for a number of activities, including identifying community concerns regarding aircraft noise, considering how AIAL should respond to community concerns regarding aircraft noise, and in particular under point 4:

"...regularly review the current procedure for handling noise complaints, modify that procedure where necessary and make it publicly available as soon as practicable."

To ensure the above activity is carried out, the ANCCG's Work Plan includes an annual provision for a review of noise complaint procedures to be reported to members for consideration.

Introduction

Auckland Airport is committed to providing timely access to information about aircraft noise. We're using the latest developments in technology to supply a direct public link to aircraft noise information, giving members of the community the ability to monitor and make a complaint/enquiry about specific flights.

Through CASPER, Auckland International Airport Limited (AIAL) acquires noise monitoring equipment and an online flight monitoring system. This platform allows the public to view aircraft details and submit noise-related complaints or inquiries.

The flight monitor at Auckland Airport enables online users to monitor aircraft activity and lodge noise-related complaints. It integrates data from air traffic control radar and the airport's monitoring system to furnish accurate air traffic information. Data becomes available online 25 minutes after flight movements for security and accuracy reasons, accessible for 30 days thereafter.

Current Process

Users can utilise the flight monitor to identify aircraft for complaints and replay specific aircraft movements by selecting the date and time. Hovering over an aircraft icon reveals flight details such as flight number, call sign, origin, destination, altitude, and speed, with further explanation available upon clicking the icon.

To make a noise complaint or inquiry about a specific flight, users can do so either via the Flight Tracker or directly through the complaint form available at this link <https://flighttracking.casper.aero/akl/complaint/index.php>. Alternatively, users can contact us by calling 09 256 8133 or freephone 0800 466473 (0800 4 NOISE).

Upgrades made to the noise complaint system

Reason for Noise Concern list

The table below shows the current Auckland Airport drop-down list when submitting a noise concern.

Reason for Noise Concern – current list
Too Loud
Low Flying
More flights
Noisier flights
Other
Late night
Early morning
Height
Flight path
Noise mitigation packages

Through discussions during the 11 September 2023 meeting, the members decided to retain the current lists of reasons, reorder the current list so 'Other' appears at the bottom of the drop-down list, and add three additional reasons to the current Auckland Airport list, 'Too frequent', 'Vibration' and 'Ground noise'.

Members opted against adding a 'Secondary Cause' of concern as complainants are able to provide further information about their complaint or enquiry in the open field Description text box as before.

There will be a review on the effect of change on the Noise Complaint Form (addition of three categories) and if adding a 'secondary cause' of concern is needed in the 9 December 2024 meeting.

Language options

The primary language utilised in complaint forms across CASPER's client base is English, although some airports, such as Geneva Airport, offer French as the primary language with the option to translate the page into English. Concerns were raised by members regarding the potential barrier posed by having only English on the complaint form for addressing aircraft noise concerns.

Following discussions between AIAL and CASPER, it was proposed that by accessing the complaint form and flight tracking link through Google Chrome and utilising its 'Translate' Plug-in, users would be able to translate the form and tracker into various languages. AIAL has recommended accessing the links via Google Chrome to leverage the 'Translate' plugin on the corporate website.

In conclusion, Auckland Airport remains steadfast in its commitment to transparency and responsiveness regarding aircraft noise concerns within the community. Leveraging advanced technology through CASPER, the airport provides accessible avenues for monitoring flight activities and lodging noise-related complaints or inquiries. The recent enhancements to the noise complaint system, including the addition of new categories and the facilitation of language translation options, underscore Auckland Airport's dedication to addressing community feedback and fostering inclusive engagement. Moving forward, the airport will continue to assess and refine its processes to ensure the effective management of aircraft noise while prioritising public accessibility and communication.