

Leeds Bradford Airport Public Safety Zones Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is a Public Safety Zone (PSZ)?

A: Public Safety Zones are areas of land at the end of runways established at the busiest airports in the UK, within which certain planning restrictions apply. These aim to control the number of people on the ground at risk in the unlikely event of an aircraft accident on take-off or landing.

Q: Is this notification on PSZs connected to any particular development or proposal at the Airport?

A: No. It is Government policy that PSZs should be updated approximately every seven years to ensure that the data underpinning the contours are reliable. It has not been prompted by any new proposals or plans at the Airport.

Q: What is the basic policy objective in establishing the PSZs?

A: The objective is that there should be no increase in the number of people living, working or congregating in PSZs and that, over time, the number should be reduced as circumstances allow (e.g. when any redevelopment takes place).

Q: Who is affected by this change?

A. The updated PSZ contours will not change significantly compared to those currently in place. We would encourage people to look at the maps available at Council offices (large scale), in the notification document or electronically available from: psz@caa.co.uk.

Q. My house or business is within the PSZ. What does that mean for me?

A. Certain planning restrictions may now be relevant to you as set out in the DfT Circular 1/2010¹, which Local Planning Authorities are expected to take into account. But many types of development – such as extensions – are still allowed. Annex C of the document sets out the types of development that are generally permissible.

Q: What is the level of risk associated with a PSZ?

A: The area of a PSZ corresponds to the 1 in 100,000 individual risk contour for that airport. What this means is that any person who lives within this risk contour for a period of a year, or has their normal place of work within this contour, has approximately a 1 in 100,000 chance per year of being killed as a result of an aircraft accident. Compared to other risks we take every day, this is very low.

¹ Department for Transport Circular 1/2010 *Control of Development in Airport Public Safety Zones* available at: [1 DfT Circular 1/2010 Control of Development In Airport Public Safety Zones](#).

Q: How does this risk compare to other risks in daily life?

A: The 1 in 100,000 individual risk associated with a PSZ is actually a low level of risk compared with many other risks that most people encounter in their daily lives. For example, the risk of being killed in a road accident is about 1 in 18,500 - equating to 2,946 deaths.² The risk of being killed in the home is higher still, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) estimates that there are approximately 4,000 deaths as a result of an accident in the home.³

Q: Are PSZs new at the Airport?

A: No. The Department for Transport is revising the existing contours to take account of updated traffic forecasts and aircraft mix at the airport 15 years ahead, to make sure that the contours are as robust as possible.

Q: Has something changed to make it less safe to live around the airport?

A: No. This update of the PSZs is standard DfT policy. Overall, the size and shape of each PSZ will change very little. The risk to those living, working or congregating in PSZs is still very low.

Q: Why are the PSZs at either end of the runway of a different size?

A: The risk assessment underpinning the design of PSZs takes account of the normal direction that aircraft land and take off at an airport. This is because the risks from aircraft taking off and landing are not the same. The direction in which a runway is built and used is largely determined by the prevailing wind direction as aircraft normally land and take off into the wind. As a result it is not unusual for a PSZ at one end of a runway to be generally a little larger than the PSZ at the other end.

Q: Why are PSZs 'straight' and do not follow the take-off route from an airport?

A: Public Safety Zones are areas determined through statistical risk assessments, specific to each airport's unique set of operations. Whilst aircraft follow a number of routes surrounding an airport, it is statistically more likely for an airport-related aircraft incident to occur on landing rather than on take-off. In the UK, the majority of airports use long, straight, arrival routes that follow the extended runway centreline for some distance to guide aircraft to the airport runway; therefore statistically, there is more likelihood that any incident, should it occur, would happen along these straight approach routes instead of the often curved departure routes. As a result, PSZs tend to extend away from the runway in a triangular shape, tapering to a point that usually lies on the extended runway centreline.

Q: When will the new PSZs take effect?

A: The contours have been issued in draft form to allow for a 6-week notification period before they are finalised and put in place. However, given that this policy relates to public safety, we would expect the Local Planning Authorities to take the draft contours into account with immediate effect on receiving any planning applications within the affected area.

² Transport Statistics Great Britain 2008 <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics>

³ Home Safety Facts and Figures
<http://www.rospa.com/HomeSafety/AdviceAndInformation/General/facts-figures.aspx>

Q: Will any properties have to be emptied as a result of the revised PSZs?

A: In cases where there are residential, commercial or industrial properties within the higher risk contour (1 in 10,000 PSZ contour shown in blue in the maps within the notification document), close to the end of a runway, we would expect the airport operator to offer to buy and empty those properties. However, our current information is that there are no such properties in this case, either in the current or proposed new PSZ.

If you are aware of any inhabited properties in the inner contour, please let us know.

Q: How many airports in the UK have PSZs?

A: Currently 31 out of the 129 licensed airports in the UK have PSZs.

Q: How are the boundaries of a PSZ worked out?

A: Public Safety Zones are produced by modelling work carried out using historic aircraft accident data from around the world, together with details of the traffic forecasts and particular aircraft mix at the Airport, to determine the level of risk to people on the ground. This modelling work determines the extent of the Public Safety Zone contours.

Q: Why are they a different shape from noise contours?

A: They are produced from different models which deal with different data. The shape of PSZs reflects the particular risk to those on the ground in the case of an air accident on take-off or landing, taking into account worldwide accident data and the forecasted traffic mix at the airport.