

21 May 2014
FOIA reference: E0001905

Dear XXXX

I am writing in respect of your recent request of 24 April 2014, for the release of information held by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Your request:

1. *“Who calculated and signed off the ground proximity data for the first 5000 feet of climb and what was that data?”*
2. *Who calculated and signed off the population proximity data for the flight path at Rusper and Warnham, the latter with in excess of 2000 persons being a densely populated area by the official definition? What was that data?*
3. *Who calculated and signed off as acceptable the sound levels (db) for Rusper and Warnham? What was that data?*
4. *Who calculated and signed off the approval of a new noise contour from Gatwick on a heading of 238 degrees? What were the db level figures?”*

Our response:

In assessing your request in line with the provisions of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR), we are pleased to be able to provide the information below.

1. Assuming that the reference to ground proximity data refers to obstacle data used for designing the ADNID departure route, the following describes the design process.

All procedure design is subject to internationally agreed criteria contained in the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Doc 8168 OPS/611, Procedures for Air Navigation Services Aircraft Operations, Vol II Construction of Visual and Instrument Flight Procedures, commonly referred to as PANSOPS.

A major factor in procedure design is obstacle clearance and for departures the clearance is based on a nominal climb gradient of 3.3% with an underlying 2.5% surface (the obstacle identification surface), which should not be penetrated by any obstacle. Should the obstacle identification surface be penetrated, the nominal climb gradient is raised until a surface 0.8% below the revised gradient is clear of obstacle penetration.

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Before any turn greater than 15° may be executed, a minimum obstacle clearance of 90 m (295 ft) must be reached. Alternatively, 0.8 per cent of the distance from the departure end of runway may be used, if this value is higher. This minimum obstacle clearance must be maintained during subsequent flight.

NATS PDG, as the Approved Procedure Designer, designed the ADNID departure in accordance with PANSOPS and the route was assessed and approved by an Airspace Regulator (IFP) at the CAA. The CAA's Policy on the validation of instrument flight procedures can be found on the CAA website here:

<http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/2111/20090624ValidationOfIFPForWebsiteV2PolicyStatementV2.pdf>

The data used for the assessment of the design comes from several sources: the aerodrome survey (collected in accordance with Civil Aviation Publication (CAP) 232 www.caa.co.uk/cap232), UK Ministry of Defence Digital Vertical Obstruction File (DVOF) data, Ordnance Survey Terrain 50 digital elevation (DEM) data and Ordnance Survey Vector Map (OSVM) Spot Heights as well as other relevant charts such as Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale charts and 1:250,000 scale military low flying charts.

2. In designing the procedure, NATS would have followed the guidance contained in the Department for Transport's Guidance to the Civil Aviation Authority on Environmental Objectives Relating to the Exercise of its Air Navigation Functions. The document is in the public domain and can be accessed by using the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-navigation-guidance>

Whilst there are numerous references to a densely populated area contained within the Guidance, it does not contain an official definition of what such an area is. However, the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Rural Urban Classification is used to distinguish the difference between rural and urban areas; this defines areas as rural if they fall outside of settlements with more than 10,000 resident population. The 2011 Rural Urban Classification is also available in the public domain and can be accessed by using the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2011-rural-urban-classification>

3. No additional sound level calculations were undertaken for the ADNID trial; these would however, be a requirement of any permanent change (which is not the case in this instance) undertaken in accordance with the Airspace Change Process. NATS considered the noise impact that the trial may have on the ground in accordance with the Guidance to the CAA to the Civil Aviation Authority on Environmental Objectives Relating to the Exercise of its Air Navigation Functions (see above). The final design of the ADNID route affects the fewest number of people whilst still meeting the technical requirements of the trial.
4. There is no 'new noise contour' that has been approved specifically for this trial. Noise Exposure Contours for the three designated airports (Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted) are produced on a yearly basis; they are published in a report (which details the modelling methodology) on the Department for Transport website and can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/noise-exposure-contours-around-london-airports>

If you are not satisfied with how we have dealt with your request in the first instance you should approach the CAA in writing at:-

Mark Stevens
External Response Manager
Civil Aviation Authority
Aviation House
Gatwick Airport South
West Sussex
RH6 0YR

mark.stevens@caa.co.uk

The CAA has a formal internal review process for dealing with appeals or complaints in connection with Freedom of Information requests. The key steps in this process are set in the attachment.

Should you remain dissatisfied with the outcome you have a right under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act to appeal against the decision by contacting the Information Commissioner at:-

Information Commissioner's Office
FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
www.ico.gov.uk/complaints.aspx

Should you wish to make further Freedom of Information requests, please use the e-form at <http://www.caa.co.uk/foi>.

Yours sincerely

Rick Chatfield
Information Rights and Enquiries Officer

CAA INTERNAL REVIEW & COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

- The original case to which the appeal or complaint relates is identified and the case file is made available;
- The appeal or complaint is allocated to an Appeal Manager, the appeal is acknowledged and the details of the Appeal Manager are provided to the applicant;
- The Appeal Manager reviews the case to understand the nature of the appeal or complaint, reviews the actions and decisions taken in connection with the original case and takes account of any new information that may have been received. This will typically require contact with those persons involved in the original case and consultation with the CAA Legal Department;
- The Appeal Manager concludes the review and, after consultation with those involved with the case, and with the CAA Legal Department, agrees on the course of action to be taken;
- The Appeal Manager prepares the necessary response and collates any information to be provided to the applicant;
- The response and any necessary information is sent to the applicant, together with information about further rights of appeal to the Information Commissioners Office, including full contact details.