

DEMAND Campaign

Press Release - Immediate 6th February 2008

Steve Charlsh Chairman of the DEMAND Campaign and a member of the Independent Consultative Committee of East Midlands Airport said 'The weekly EMA press release's about environmental awards, green energy and carefully worded spin, all about the environmental awards and improvements; working towards being the first Carbon Neutral airport with wind turbines, solar panels, with the use of grey water in the toilets etc.. Is completely at odds with the statistical reality that night flights alone have dramatically increased within the past 12 months by nearly 2000 extra night flights. The huge environmental impact of night flights is being blindsided and camouflaged by the East Midlands Airport Management with proactive greenwash of their carbon neutral claims.

The Government within the Civil Aviation Act 2006 gave far reaching autonomous powers to the airports to achieve greater environmental controls, but have been completely ignored by EMA at the cost to the community. EMA now has the ability and the equipment to assess noisy arrivals and fine them, aircraft that produce unreasonable noise levels could and should be fined. In addition since the introduction of the Civil Aviation Act no attempt has been made to stop very noisy old aircraft from flying at night, merely charging them a higher landing fee to which the airport gets greater profits. Such cost premiums are borne by the customer. DC 8's and Lockheed Electras first built in the mid 1960s and late 1950s respectively are amongst the worst offenders, a veritable historic flypast.

The Civil Aviation Act gave the East Midlands Airport management an opportunity to embrace their poor track record of noise controls at the airport and clean up their act but clearly has been completely overridden by fiscal greed.

The Airport Independent Consultative Committee overwhelming voted against and rejected the voluntary noise code by the airport, the so called '10 point plan' in 2006, arguably a set of restrictions with no tangible parameters.

The airport has declared at the last Independent Consultative committee that they have no intention of restricting the numbers of night flights, or stopping noisy aircraft that wish to fly to EMA or set up any restrictions on arrival aircraft who account for about 80% of all noise complaints to the airport. Out of the 20% of departure complaints during 2007 only 10 aircraft were fined.

Out of about 65000 aircraft movements (0.015%) were fined in 2007.

The latest night noise contour chart, that the airport has released claims a reduction in the area exposed to high night noise levels but in fact has increased by a significant margin.

The former aviation minister Charlotte Atkins wrote to Edward Garnier MP stating that the ICC of the airport should hold the airport to account on environmental matters, we as members of the ICC Committee wonder how.

We now look to the government again for a way forward'.

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