**PRESS RELEASE**

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**THIRD RUNWAY NOISE TO HIT OVER 2M PEOPLE**

Over 2 million people could be affected by noise from an expanded Heathrow according to secret documents obtained by campaigners.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling had previously claimed in October 2016 that an expanded Heathrow would be quieter in 2030 than today (1).

This claim was not repeated in the revised draft consultation on the airports national policy statement (NPS) published in October 2017. This predicted that 92,700 additional people in the area around Heathrow would be exposed to noise by 2030 as a consequence of the third runway (2).

Now following an FOI request for the noise data contained in the CAA’s economic analysis, a new figure emerges of 972,957 households who would experience greater noise by 2060. This is the time frame for the full introduction of ‘quieter’ planes (3).

Based on CAA assumptions on household size this figure is equivalent to 2.2 million people.

The third runway, if approved, is expected to be fully open by 2028. At this point it is claimed that a maximum of 90 per cent of the aircraft fleet would have been updated.  This excludes many of the noisier four-engine planes. It is likely therefore that at this point the numbers of people experiencing increased noise would be significantly higher.

The detailed workings obtained from the CAA also show that within this figure there are 420,000 people who already suffer significant noise who would experience a doubling of flights overhead every day.

The 2.2 million figure is a best-case scenario. It relies on a flightpath strategy that aims to minimise the overall numbers affected. A different option which aimed to minimise the numbers newly affected by noise could increase the overall figure by 24 per cent based on CAA calculations (4).

Together with the noise from older planes that had not been replaced this could take the overall numbers affected to 3 million.

People’s real-life experience of noise is not reflected in the figures. The NPS proposes reducing the current half-day’s respite to one third. It also proposes that daytime flights should start every day at 0530 instead of 0600 currently.

The lack of information in the NPS on flight paths and the failure by the CAA to consider alternative flight path strategies makes it impossible for people to know if they will be affected and by how much.

**Paul McGuinness, Chair of the No 3rd Runway Coalition, said:**

*"It has long been clear that the DfT have understated the numbers who will be impacted by an expanded Heathrow's noise. Every analyst has pointed out that – by considering just one, and the most unrealistic flight path scenario - the figures were being massaged.*

*So, it's hardly surprising to learn that these CAA calculations were not presented to the public and parliament. The DfT wish to conceal the true impact of expanding this highly disruptive airport, that sits at the heart of our country's most densely populated region. And news of this concealment simply completes the narrative".*

**John McDonnell MP said:**

*“As the true impact of expanding Heathrow is revealed, the more politicians are realising that it is a political costly and environmental liability for any political party that tries to force it through”*

**Zac Goldsmith MP said:**

*“It is astonishing that even while virtually every argument put forward in the Airports Commission and subsequently by Government to support the third runway has had to be abandoned or significantly revised, the Government’s position on the third runway has not altered one jot.*

*“The Government’s own figures show that Heathrow expansion is the most polluting, most expensive, least economically beneficial, and most difficult to deliver of the options. And now we learn that, disgracefully, the Government has deliberately downplayed the number of people who stand to be affected by noise.”*

The CAA's economic analysis, which uses the DfT's WebTAG appraisal model, was made available on January 31, 2018 following a Freedom of Information request (3).

*ENDS*.

Notes:

1. Chris Grayling, Statement to Parliament, 25 October 2016 <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/airport-capacity>
2. Appraisal of Sustainability, Revised NPS, October 2017 [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/654320/aos-revised-draft-airports-nps-non-technical-summary.pdf p. 22](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/654320/aos-revised-draft-airports-nps-non-technical-summary.pdf%20p.%2022)
3. FOI <https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/aviation_policy_framework_metric_2#incoming-1104762>

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