East Midlands Airport – Noise Action Plan Consultation

31/07/23

About Logistics UK

Logistics UK is one of the country's largest business groups, supporting, shaping and standing up for safe and efficient logistics. We are the only organisation representing the entire logistics sector.

We represent a sector delivering an increasingly innovative, productive and sustainable system of essential national infrastructure. This system ensures the availability of the products that households, businesses and public services rely on every day, and is supporting the UK's transformation for the future. Our membership of over 20,000 includes global, national and regional businesses and SMEs spanning the road, rail, sea and air industries as well as the buyers of freight services, such as retailers and manufacturers.

Response to consultation

Logistics UK welcomes the chance to comment on East Midlands Airport draft 'Noise Action Plan' and its recognition that the East Midlands area and the rest of the UK benefit from the airport's night-time operations in both economic and social terms.

Night flights are essential for many industries, including air cargo, emergency services and medical transport, which operate on a 24-hour basis. Restricting night flights would increase delivery times, disrupt supply chains and ultimately lead to increased costs for consumers and businesses. The aviation industry provides essential services to businesses and individuals and any restrictions on night flights would have a significant impact on the ability of these services to be provided.

The supply chain relies heavily on express air cargo, which enables UK enterprises to transmit and receive just-in-time supplies. To maintain economic development and UK firms' competitiveness in a world economy that operates around-the-clock, express air freight must be safeguarded. Due to customer requests for late afternoon pickups and early morning deliveries, our members can only move export and import freight by air at night.

While we acknowledge the necessity to outlaw some of the noisiest aircraft, we feel that QC4 aircraft should only be subject to scheduling restrictions rather than operational ones. Even though there aren't any QC4 aircraft currently scheduled by Logistics UK members at EMA right now, they want to have the option to do so in case there are any issues with their present fleet of aircraft. Express air cargo is typically used to transport items and shipments that are mission-critical, high value, and time-sensitive. This is especially true for night-time freight flights. The night-time is used to ship commodities whose worth is largely determined by how quickly and/or reliably they will arrive, for which international delivery times must be calculated in hours rather than days, and for which guaranteed delivery times and next business day delivery are required.

In order to secure economic growth both now and in the future, it will be essential to ensure that products can still be flown at night to help UK firms and that there is a framework that promotes growth. As such, our members require the ability to bring in aircraft, for short-term contingency measures only, in order to guarantee efficiency and connection and guarantee that these essential commodities can travel without interruption.

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