



Presentation to
Heathrow Noise &
Airspace Community
Forum
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Our brief

To look at:

- Process
- Concerns
- Monitoring and reporting
- Comparison with best practice
- Mental health effects



About Verita

Verita are specialist in complaint handling and reviews

Our work includes:

- acting as an independent reviewer of complaints
- providing staff training in complaints handling
- reviewing complaints handling processes

We have completed similar reviews for a wide range of private and public sector organisations, so have a wealth of comparable studies to draw on in making our conclusions

What we did

- Interviews
- Meeting with NACF
- Data analysis of 643,000 complaints
- Review of text of sample of complaints
- Review of websites of other airports
- Review of complaints policy documentation
- Review of reporting of complaints

What we found - administration

- Heathrow provides a good opportunity to raise concerns
- Information on Heathrow website is good
- Noise complaints policy is not easy to find and doesn't explain how process works

Recommendation 1

Heathrow should ensure that its complaints policy comprehensively describes how the complaints process works from receipt of complaint to the reporting stage, and make sure that the complaints policy is readily available.

What we found - purpose

We note that many users are unhappy with the complaints process

Aims of process - Heathrow perspective

- To give complainants a forum to be heard
- To exchange information
- To bring about operational change
- To bring about policy change

What we found - expectations

It is important to align expectations of complainants with what can be delivered

The process could be more effective in drawing a distinction between:

- Operational matters (which the airport can control) and
- Policy matters (which others control)

Recommendation 2

Heathrow should consider whether they could do more to explain the range of possible outcomes that can be achieved through the complaints process and those that are outside the immediate scope because they involve decisions by others

What we found - Heathrow's responses

Greater clarity on Heathrow's responses to complaints would be useful

Recommendation 3

Heathrow should consider providing more information about what happens to complaints at the end of the process

Recommendation 4

Heathrow should consider whether it could do more to signpost complainants to the correct decision-maker when complaints raise issues of policy outside their scope of possible actions

What we found - reporting

Reports are well presented and easy to access through Heathrow's website

However, the reports do not say anything about the outcome of complaints or whether any action was taken in response to them

Recommendation 5

Heathrow should do more to report on what its response is to the complaints that it receives and what action has been taken as a result

What we found - mental health

The increase in the number of calls where there are mental health issues was noted with concern by many people we spoke to

Recommendation 6

Those responding to complainants who have mental health issues should be fully briefed and trained to deal with such engagements

Recommendation 7

Heathrow should ensure that it is following best practice in responding to complainants who raise mental health concerns in relation to aircraft noise and consider whether it can offer support to such complainants

Questions

Thank you

Questions?

