

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Commission statement

pursuant to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by the following Members: Ducarme, Sterckx, Ries, Costa and Davies

on behalf of the ELDR Group

on night flights and noise pollution near airports

B5-0334/2000**Resolution on night flights and noise pollution near airports**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Commission communication on “Air transport and the environment” – COM(1999) 640,
 - having regard to the Commission’s Green Paper on “Future noise policy” – COM(1996) 540,
 - having regard to the White Paper on “Fair payment for infrastructure use” – COM(1998) 466,
 - having regard to research undertaken in the context of the Fourth R&TD Framework Programme on external noise from aircraft,
- A. whereas air transport is a fast growing, global industry playing a major part both in international freight transport and in the carriage of passengers,
- B. whereas one of the consequences of this growth is increased noise levels around certain airports in close proximity to urban conurbations and residential areas,
- C. recognising that the primary decisions on land-use are taken at local and regional level, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity,
- D. whereas there is a need for a standard and consistent index and methodology for calculating aircraft noise levels to ensure standards are applied uniformly across the Community, avoiding distortion of competition and enabling the identification of particularly noise sensitive airports,
- E. whereas local residents should not be deprived of sleep by the pressure of commercial operations at airports,
- F. whereas Council Regulation 925/1999 provides for the phasing out of Chapter 2 certified aircraft so as to prevent the current noise situation at many of Europe’s airports deteriorating further,
- G. whereas there is a substantial diversity in noise levels at individual airports related to proximity to residential areas, airport capacity and commercial demand which makes it difficult and inappropriate to introduce uniform rules,
- H. whereas noise levels at airports can be regulated using a variety of means such as better land planning, targeted slot allocation and more efficient charging frameworks,

1. Is concerned about the persistent and increasing noise levels at some airports which can have a serious effect on the health of local residents;
2. Recognises that issues related to land-use planning and operational restrictions at airports are primarily the responsibility of local and national authorities;
3. Underlines the importance of a consistent and coordinated approach at Community level in order to avoid any distortion of competition resulting from unilateral measures;
4. Calls on the Commission to draw up proposals for a Community framework on noise classification with a view to establishing an objective basis for the computation of noise exposure to be used by local and national authorities in their decisions on charging, slot allocation and possible operational restrictions;
5. Points out that noise levels at some airports are exacerbated by congestion and problems related to air traffic management; supports the initiative, in this regard, to make rapid progress in the development of a common European airspace;
6. Strongly supports continued aeronautical research, through the Fifth R&TD Framework Programme, into aircraft and engine design for the further reduction of noise emissions;
7. Considers that airport noise abatement can best be achieved through a combination of the following measures:
 - a more efficient charging framework which provides an incentive to use less noise polluting aircraft and where the revenue raised is channelled into alleviating the effects of noise eg. noise insulation schemes in neighbouring residential areas,
 - a system of slot allocation which takes into consideration environmental criteria such as noise levels at night,
 - measures to relieve congestion at noise-sensitive airports including a better distribution of air traffic between airports forming part of a regional network and encouraging greater use of high speed rail services for travel over shorter distances;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the Committee of the Regions.