

Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign **GACC**

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Press release

Night flights – small improvement welcomed

Under the new rules for the next six years announced today, despite strong pressure from BAA and the Gatwick airlines, there will be no more night flights at Gatwick than at present. But Gatwick will still have twice as many as Heathrow.

GACC is pleased that the noise quotas are to be gradually reduced, to bring about roughly a 10% reduction in the level of noise at night over the next six years.

It is also good news that the government is getting rid of the ‘headroom’ in the quotas which could have allowed a large increase in the number and noise of night flights.

Chairman of GACC, Brendon Sewill, said “The Government has listened to what we have said, and we welcome these improvements.”

We also welcome the decision to ban regular night flights by the noisiest types of aircraft (classified as QC4) but it is disappointing that such flights will still be permitted when a flight is delayed. When the airline is inefficient, the public get woken up.

The announcement today is disappointing in that the numbers of night flights and the noise levels will be higher than originally proposed in the consultation last year. The Government has not lived up to its good intentions.

The new limits on night flights will, of course, apply to BAA under its new foreign ownership. There will be no opportunity to recoup the cost of buying BAA by increasing night flights.

Some people learn to sleep despite being under the flight path but for others night flights cause great disturbance, lack of sleep and anxiety. It is a disgrace that at night the airlines can schedule cheap passenger and cargo flights, paying no fuel tax and no VAT, and no compensation to the people who suffer.