



Agenda Item: 4	Reference: HACC. 502
Date: September 13 2007	
Night Flights at Heathrow- Disregards	

1. At the meeting of the Committee on May 23, in discussion of the statistics supplied by BAA relating to aircraft traffic, concern was expressed by some Members about aspects of the night flights which took place. In particular, it was considered that an excessive number of flights, scheduled to depart during the unregulated hours of operation but which were delayed for various reasons into the night period, were then permitted to be disregarded and not counted against the quotas set to control the number of night movements.
2. The Committee decided that representations should be made to the Secretary of State on the basis that all aircraft movements which take place during the restricted night period should be counted against the quotas, regardless of any reasons why the flight might have been delayed into that period.
3. The Chairman accordingly wrote to the Secretary of State, Ruth Kelly MP, putting the view taken by the Committee and seeking the appropriate action to extend the coverage of the quotas.
4. A reply was received from the Minister for Aviation, Jim Fitzpatrick MP, dated September 9, in which he has rehearsed the arguments for setting the quotas and what they are expected to achieve.
5. Mr Fitzpatrick refers to the "disregard" procedures and the reasons for authorising them and that his Department has regular meetings with BAA to review the disregarded arrangement procedure and ensure that any such aircraft flights are kept to a minimum.
6. He assures the Committee that any aircraft that operates in the Night Quota Period automatically counts against the movements and quota limits unless it qualifies to be disregarded.
7. Although the Minister has provided some explanation for the excessive number of disregarded movements which gave rise to Members concern, he has offered no assurances that any changes would be made to the system to meet that view.
8. Copies of the correspondence are attached as annexures to this report.