

Night flights are not essential

SASIG is calling on the Government to work towards eliminating night flights at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted. At the same time SASIG has told the Department for Transport that no evidence has been produced by it or the aviation industry to justify claims that night flights have an overall economic benefit.

Councillor Richard Worrall has made his position clear. He said; “Most night flights at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted could take off before 11.00pm or land after 7.00am. I am aware that the aviation industry claims a shortage of runway slots in the day – but I blame them for not working with us and others to solve that problem years ago.”

SASIG was responding to the Governments consultation report “Night Flying Restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted”, published in July 2004. In a fair but firm report SASIG member authorities have told the Government that night flights are just not acceptable, and that current controls from 11.30pm to 6.00am need extending to cover the whole night (11.00pm to 7.00am) simply because residents should be able to expect to get 8 hours sleep every night without being woken up several times, particularly with early morning arrivals. SASIG has acknowledged that this change may take some time to implement – but in the meantime has suggested that leisure flights should have a lower priority than essential freight and some business traffic.

Richard Worrall continued, “We are very aware of the advertisements from some airlines offering a few business customers flat beds so that they get a good nights sleep to enable them to work on arrival. We also know that thousands of local residents never get a full nights sleep and therefore can never be expected to do a full days work. This seems anomalous.”

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01 November 2004

NOTE TO EDITORS

For further information about SASIG, including its widespread membership, please visit our web site (www.sasig.org).

Richard Worrall – Chairman of SASIG

