

(Translation)

(Submission from the Aircraft Noise Concern Committee)

28 July 1998

Hon Christine LOH  
Chairman  
Panel on Environmental Affairs  
Legislative Council

Dear Ms LOH,

### **Nuisance Caused by Aircraft Noise**

Since the opening of the new airport at Chek Lap Kok, residents of North Lantau, Tsuen Wan, Tsing Yi, Ma Wan and Shatin have been exposed to the nuisance caused by aircraft noise. During the new airport planning process, the Government has pledged that the level of noise generated from aircraft operation will be within internationally acceptable standards. However, nuisance caused by aircraft noise after the opening of the new airport is very serious. Noise measurements amount to 80 dB are recorded in Ma Wan and noise generated from some aircrafts also reaches the level of 73 dB in the small hours. In some housing estates in Tsing Yi and Shatin, aircraft noise levels recorded are as high as 75 dB. The noise impact arising from aircraft operation is so serious that affected residents have found the noise levels unacceptable and urged the Civil Aviation Department (CAD) to take prompt action to address the problem.

A protest against the noise impact arising from aircraft operation has been made to the SAR Government on 14 July 1998. The Government was asked to address the problem of aircraft noise by changing the existing flight paths. It was suggested that aircrafts should head to the east when taking off from the airport and then turn to the south at Yam O. With the adoption of this flight path, nearly 1 million residents of various districts such as Tsuen Wan, Kwai Chung, Tsing Yi, Shatin would be free from the nuisance caused by aircraft noise. In response to our suggestion, the CAD stated in public that it was not feasible to change the flight paths. We are both indignant at and discontented about the decision of the CAD.

According to residents of Sham Tseng, in the small hours on 16 July 1998, there were aircrafts heading to the east when taking off from the airport at Chek Lap Kok, and then turned and headed to the south near Yam O. By taking such a flight path, the aircrafts have avoided flying over Ma Wan, Tsing Yi, Tsuen Wan and Shatin. There are contradictions between the change of flight paths in the small hours on 16 July and the comments made by the CAD in public which suggest that change of flight paths could not be made. With the CAD adopting such a flight path secretly, it is also proved that it is feasible for aircrafts to take the path and avoid flying over certain districts. This is also contrary to the comments made by the CAD in public.

Furthermore, in the air navigation charts published by the CAD on 4 December 1997 and 25 March 1998, it is clearly pointed out that aircrafts may head to the east when taking off from Chek Lap Kok and then turn to the south in Yam O (annexes 1 & 2). The charts have also been issued to pilots by the CAD. In fact, there has been plan in the CAD to adopt the flight path which requires aircrafts to head to the east when taking off from Chek Lap Kok. It is a regret that the CAD has misled the public and has been withholding the relevant information. As the design of flight paths in the planning process of the airport in Chek Lap Kok are different from the existing paths, there is a significant increase in the number of residents affected by aircraft noise.

We demand that:

1. the existing flight paths be changed in order to reduce the nuisance caused by aircraft noise. The CAD may adopt the recommendations set out in the Consultancy Report on the Environmental Impact Assessment of the New Airport Master Plan published in 1991 (Annexes 3 & 4). Flight path TR11 may be used for landing from the west, and flight paths TR2, TR3, TR8, TR16, TR17, TR21, TR31, TR32 may be used for taking off, followed by a turn near Yam O in the southerly direction. The change can reduce the noise impact arising from aircraft operation on the 1 million residents living in Tsuen Wan, Ma Wan, Kwai Chung, Tsing Yi, Shatin. Departing aircrafts should head to the east when taking off from Chek Lap Kok, while arriving aircrafts should land from the west in order to reduce the nuisance caused to residents of Kwai Chung, Tsuen Wan and Tsing Yi;
2. aircrafts generating a high level of noise be prohibited from taking off or landing between 9:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. in order to reduce the noise impact on affected residents;
3. the relevant legislation be amended to impose penalty such as fines and imprisonment sentences on noise producers who violate the law;
4. a monitoring and recording system on aircraft noise be installed by the Government in areas located within flight paths in order to have a complete record on aircraft noise levels. As a matter of fact, in many other cities such as San Francisco, such a system has been installed for years and has proved effective in monitoring aircraft noise;
5. affected residents who live in areas exposed to high levels of aircraft noise, such as Sha Lo Wan, be relocated and rehoused should their houses lie within the 25 NEF contour.

A comprehensive assessment on the problem of aircraft noise has been completed and a report has been released in 1991 by the consultancy commissioned by the Government. It is a pity that the Administration has not adopted any of the suggestions set out in the report. The designation of flight paths has even been conducted in a secret manner by the CAD, thus exposing the public to the nuisance caused by aircraft noise.

We hope that you can look into the problem of aircraft noise and help to relieve the nuisance caused to the affected residents. We look forward to receiving your reply.

Aircraft Noise Concern Committee

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