



A Pilot view on Noise at Brussels airport

BeCA Position Paper

A chain of court rulings forces Brussels to find a stable and good solution for its future.

BeCA wants to make its position clear on the Noise issue at Brussels airport and hopes the opportunity will be grasped to implement sound and safe procedures according to ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organisation)

regulations (SARPs).

This paper contains our conditions to change operational procedures as well as our recommendations for future ones. These are in line with the position of the international airline pilots associations IFALPA.

BeCA requires to be involved in the development of the new operational procedures at Brussels airport.



Why pilots are concerned with noise ?

Pilots are very well aware of the fact that the environment must be taken into account and that noise abatement must be as efficient as possible. It is very important to them that clear and stable regulations are installed to

enable a sustained growth in aviation, because it is their job, passion, income and future. However safety must have priority, because accidents are an even bigger threat to the future of their company and their job. After all, the pilot has to do the job and carries final responsibility.

What is a noise preferential runway system ?

According to ICAO, as a standard operation, aircraft should land and take off into the wind (DOC 4444, Ch 7.2.2.). Although exceptions are possible for noise

abatement by using runways preferentially above others. ICAO determined that a runway can be noise preferentially used within certain limits of surface conditions, cloud ceiling, horizontal visibility and tailwind and crosswind components up to 5/15 kts GUSTS INCLUDED.

Actual situation at Brussels National

Since spring 2004 political decisions enforced a noise dispersion plan at EBBR (Brussels National airport) implementing preferential runway selection for approach and departure procedures. This means a certain runway is used at a specific time of the day, unless specified complicated wind limits are exceeded.

Conditions to change operational procedures

Any change in aircraft movement procedures must take into account three factors simultaneously :

Safety : compliancy with international standards and aircraft performances (ICAO)

Commercial : guaranteeing optimum capacity and on time performance

Citizenship : reducing the environmental burden as much as possible.

BeCA recommendations

It is BeCA's first priority to assure compliancy with ICAO OPS regulations at all times;

It is physically demonstrated that the aircraft noise emission is significantly reduced when take-off and landings are performed with headwind condition. Any noise abatement plan should incorporate that evidence;

BeCA strongly recommends the use of parallel runways 25R/25L, 07R/07L, respecting the ICAO tailwind and crosswind components of maximum 5/15 kts gusts included. Today the Brussels wind criteria, being 7/20 kts gusts included, are higher than the standard ICAO regulations; The combined use of RWY 20 for takeoff and 25R for landing and secondary take-off does not meet ICAO standards and recommendations and must not be implemented (confirmed by AAC safety case June 2003);

At times of low traffic, when there is no capacity

constraint, BeCA proposes the possibility to abandon the preferential parallel runway system and to use runway 02/20 as a single runway with headwind according to the actual wind direction;

The installation of an ILS 07L and 07R would allow the use of all directions for landing and take-off and therefore accommodate all weather conditions. Landings and take offs on RWY 07L and 07R could substantially decrease noise burden;

Flying over Brussels city does not compromise safety. Turns compromise climb performance, especially during the initial climb phase, when flaps are still extended;

Departure and arrival routes should be implemented logically and as much as possible in a straight line to and from exit and entry points in the Brussels traffic area. Avoiding deviations reduces fuel consumption, noise and flight time.

BeCA wants long term vision and solution to be implemented

During several years airline pilots have known numerous changes in procedures - it is degrading the safety level. BeCA asks to be consulted for the implementation of new procedures and requests them to be mature and thoroughly tested in order to avoid future adjustments or changes. It is the opinion of the Belgian Cockpit Association that the operational aspects of an airport are guarded and established by international rules. Operational rules should not be changed or adapted on a political level. An international airport is part of a global system and operational safety can only be reasonably assured if the globally established rules are applied; Noise procedures should apply to all traffic, including military traffic. Experts from the international pilot community are ready to bring their know-how for finding the best available procedures for noise abatement.

By the BeCA Technical Commission
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BeCA is the Belgian voice of airline pilots, promoting the highest level of aviation safety and providing services, support and representation to the global pilot community in general and to the BeCA Members in particular.

By getting its rights from the State Council, BeCA has the duty to offer to the Citizen, the Government and the Industry the highest available aviation expertise.

BeCA represents not only the airline pilots in Belgium but also the Flight Engineers, expatriates pilots, helicopter pilots, Instructors, job seekers and ATPL students

