

Edinburgh Airport going for a 'flight a minute'



Edinburgh Airport is leading the way with a new departure route to ensure that they have enough capacity for all the routes it plans in the future.

From 25 June, Edinburgh Airport will begin its Airspace Trial supported by air traffic control providers NATS and in line with Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) guidance. This trial will run for approximately six months and will introduce a new Standard Instrument Departure (SID) route for certain aircraft taking off from the airport.

David Wilson, Chief Operating Officer of Edinburgh Airport, said: "As we continue to see more passengers travel through our airport, it's more important than ever to increase airspace capacity above Central Scotland to cater for this growth.

"At the moment, Scotland's aircraft currently fly on a network that was designed in the 1970s. What we're aiming to do is begin upgrading the airspace above Edinburgh Airport and bring it into the 21st century."

Introducing a new SID route will allow aircraft of a certain size to depart in one minute intervals – allowing the airport to encourage and maintain safe and sustainable growth whilst ensuring punctuality is unaffected.

The Airspace Trial will give more modern aircraft the opportunity to take off on a new westerly departure route. The aircraft likely to be using this route are B737s, A319, A320, A321, 787 and A330s.

Edinburgh Airport's new SID route will see aircraft take off in a south westerly direction and turn right towards the River Forth, climbing above water before flying back over land at approximately 13,000ft.

David Wilson continues: "We've taken great care to design this new departure route with the utmost consideration for our neighbours. The route passes over very few populated areas and flies over the river for the bulk of its flight path.

"We've actively contacted various local community councils, groups and politicians and will continue to do this regularly to ensure people understand why we're doing this. This will also help us find out how the new SID route is impacting on them. We'll be placing noise monitors along the flight path so we can collect data on the flights and analyse any spikes in noise."

This is just a trial at the moment and any intention to introduce a new SID permanently would require a statutory change process and involve further public engagement and stakeholder consultation.

To ensure key groups and individuals are kept informed and engaged, Edinburgh Airport has created a dedicated microsite at sid.edinburghairport.com.

As well as explaining about the project, the site features an interactive map showing the exact SID route, estimated minimum altitudes aircraft will be flying at and what level of noise may be generated.

Sandy Legget, General Manager of NATS at Edinburgh, said: "A new departure route would enable sustainable and safe growth at Edinburgh Airport.

"NATS has supported the airport in preparing for this trial, ensuring the design delivers benefits for the airport and airlines and mindful of the airport's commitment to its local

communities.”

Colin Keir, MSP for Edinburgh Western and Convener of the Cross Party Group on Aviation at the Scottish Parliament, said: “I welcome this trial and hope it proves successful in upgrading and improving the flight departure routes.

“The need for this trial surely indicates the success of Edinburgh Airport as a business that is working hard to improve its services while keeping safety and sustainability to the forefront.”