Noisy New Rule for EU Ops: The EASA Environmental Portal

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There's a new rule coming. And it's about noise.

Both foreign and local operators of certain aircraft carrying out Part 91 and 135 operations to airports in the EU will need to register for EASA's new Environmental Portal by the end of March 2022 (extended from Dec 31, 2021). They will need to upload important noise data about their specific aircraft.

Here's a brief guide on what you need to know.

Who does this impact?

All foreign and local Part 91 and 135 operators using airports within the EU, with an aircraft that fits the following categories:

MTOW of 34,000kg (75,000 pounds) *or more.*

OR

An aircraft with 19 passenger seats *or more*. Excluding crew seats. *For this category, it's important to note that EASA looks at the number of passenger seats as per the aircraft type's certified ability, and not the number of seats actually installed on your particular aircraft – i.e. if you've only got 18 pax seats installed, but your aircraft is able to carry more, you'll need to register for the Environmental Portal.*

Yep, that's us. What exactly do we need to do?

Submit this form via email to environmentalportal@easa.europa.eu.

There are two options for the information you'll then need to provide:

Either:

A stand-alone noise certificate issued by a state of registry. It will need to include your aircraft’s reg, its configuration and noise levels.

Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development

AIRCRAFT NOISE CERTIFICATE

The aircraft described hereunder which is registered in Australia has been accepted as complying with the standards in respect of noise expressed in the Annex 16, Volume 1 to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation to be applicable to aircraft of the class to which the aircraft belongs as required by the Air Navigation (Aircraft Noise) Regulations 2018.

1. **Australia**			
2. **Australian Noise Certification Information**			
3. **Document Number:** **NC2018/99**	4. **Nationality and Registration Marks:** **Australia** **«Aircraft_Registration»**	5. **Manufacturer; Manufacturers Designation Of Aircraft (Model/Series):** **«Aircraft_Make»** **«Aircraft_Model»**	6. **Aircraft Serial Number** **«Serial_No»**
7. **Engine** **Manufacturer:** «Engine_Manufacturer» **Model:** «Engine_Model»		8. **Propeller: (If Applicable)** **Manufacturer: «Propeller_Manufacturer»** **Model: «Propeller_Model»**	
9. **Maximum Takeoff Weight/Mass:** «Maximum_Takeoff_Weight»	10. **Maximum Landing Weight/Mass:** «Maximum_Landing_Weight»	11. **Noise Certification Standard:** **«Noise_Certification_Reference»**	
12. **Additional modifications incorporated for the purpose of compliance with the applicable noise certification standards:** «Additional_modifications_which_may_affec»			

13. **Lateral/Full Power Level (If Applicable)**	14. **Approach Noise Level (If Applicable)**	15. **Flyover Noise Level (If Applicable)**	16. **Overflight Noise Level (If Applicable)**	17. **Takeoff Noise Level (If Applicable)**

Remarks:

18. Subject Aircraft Noise Levels:

This noise certificate is issued pursuant to Volume I of Annex 16 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, in respect of the above-mentioned aircraft, which is considered to comply with the indicated noise Standard when maintained and operated in accordance with the relevant requirements and operating limitations.

19. Date DD/MM/YYYY **20. Signature** SIGNATURE

SAMPLE

If your state issues them, a stand-alone noise certificate like this example may be the easiest option.

Or

Get that scanner warmed up. Pages from your aircraft's flight manual which provide the following:

- Registration
- Serial number
- Engine variant
- Both MCTOW and MLW
- Airworthiness certificate
- Noise level data (stage/noise levels)

Isn't this the same thing as the Third Country Operators Portal (TCO)?

Sadly, nope. The info is similar, but this is a separate requirement. The EU has nominated EASA to be the responsible authority tasked with collecting this info in a separate database.

A head's up for 'N'-Reg aircraft.

As the FAA doesn't currently issue stand-alone certificates, that only leaves the second option. Make sure you also carry this information onboard in case you win yourself a ramp check.

What's this all about?

The shortest answer is noise. The slightly longer one is this:

As traffic levels continue to grow at EU airports, noise is becoming more of a problem. The challenge is how to accommodate this growth in harmony with densely populated areas around airports – especially at night.

As the issue of noise grows in the EU, the challenge is on to find a fair answer.

If sweeping noise restrictions were simply decided on a case-by-case basis, they could interfere with commercial competition or make the whole aviation network less efficient by under-utilising precious capacity.

Instead, ICAO suggests what they call a ‘balanced approach’ to noise. Or in other words, using a coherent and consistent method to measure noise across the board. From there they can use the actual data from aircraft operating in the EU to introduce consistent and fair operating restrictions throughout the EU.

The database is a big part of this. It’s about allowing aviation to grow in a sustainable way. Or in other words, without riling up the neighbours.

Who can actually view the data?

It’s not publicly available. Only the following groups will be able to access it:

- Competent authorities (such as CAAs)
- Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs)
- Airport Operators
- Aircraft Operators

They all have to apply for access first too.

Other things to look at (if you’re really keen)

ICAO Resolution A33/7 – a rundown on the idea of a ‘balanced approach’ to noise abatement.

EU Reg No. 598/2014 – skip to article 7. The actual EU regulation.

Speaking of noise – any guesses for the loudest commercial aircraft still in service?

The mighty 727 at 90 decibels. In comparison, when Concorde was flying it would hit 120 decibels – as loud as a clap of thunder.