

16 Feb 2017 email

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to you on behalf of the Geneva Airport Residents Association (ARAG), of which I am the vice-president and Webmaster.

On 14 February 2017 at 23h48, our monitoring system at Geneva Airport detected the takeoff of an EMB-135BJ Legacy 650 jet aeroplane, with aircraft registration D-ALOA and using the call sign AHO748A. We believe that your company is the owner and operator for this jet.

The Swiss regulations for Geneva Airport state that after 22h, and with the exception of flights for medical purposes or reasons of state, only commercial flights are permitted to take off or land.

The regulations furthermore state that aircraft owners or operators should make a great effort to avoid scheduling any movements between 22h and 06h. In consulting the timetables for 2016/2017 it is clear that this regulation is currently adhered to for all of the scheduled flights of the major airlines operating out of Geneva. Thus, any late departures of aircraft of these airlines are almost always due to the type of delays which may occasionally happen (late arrival of the incoming aircraft, last minute technical problems with an aircraft, etc.).

You will certainly appreciate that jet aircraft taking off late at night are particularly disturbing to people living around Geneva airport. Whilst there may be a grudging acceptance for a large jet carrying one hundred or more passengers (except where the jet is exceptionally late or noisy), the same cannot be said for a much smaller jet aircraft, which can create a similar amount of noise but which, on average, carries only a very small number of people.

In the case of the aircraft concerned, we believe that it actually arrived in Geneva two days earlier. It thus appears that either or both of the following two possibilities happened:-

- The departure was scheduled for after 22h.
- There was an unforeseen delay (such as the late arrival of the passengers).

We would appreciate any explanation of this unwelcome late takeoff, as well as an assurance that you will do everything in your power to avoid any similar repetition in the future.

If your company was not responsible for the detailed planning of this departure, but was merely making the aeroplane available to a third party, then we would appreciate you passing on a copy of this letter to the third party concerned.

Yours sincerely,

J. M. Gerard

Dear Mr Gerard,

Safety is the first premise at Air Hamburg and we are working hard on it to maintain the maximum of possible achievable safety standard.

In this described case, I have talked to the Dispatch Department to find the reason for the late departure.

The flight was scheduled with an approved slot, and operated as commercial passenger flight. Therefore the flight has been legally operated according regulation the Geneva Airport Regulations.

Please contact Geneva Airport Regulatory Office to discuss late take offs and given airport regulations.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen / Best regards

i.A. Kathrin Borwig

Dear Ms Borwig,

You are perfectly correct in stating that it is permitted under Geneva airport regulations (it would NOT have been permitted in Zurich!). However, there are many things in life which, although permitted, are highly unwelcome. This business jet, equipped for a small number of well-to-do passengers, taking off so late, is definitely one of those things. Geneva airport is under great pressure to reduce night flights, especially movements after 23h, and your action is adding more pressure.

I would remind you that Geneva is an urban airport, surrounded by a very large resident population, so the noise of this take-off so late by a business jet with few passengers irritates a large number of people. Furthermore, our noise measurement systems indicate that the aircraft was particularly noisy at the start of the take-off. Perhaps you would like to remind your pilot that the SIDs for Geneva are declared as minimum noise routes, and that with a runway of almost 4km he/she can make an effort to minimise the noise!