

# EXPERIENCE AND LESSONS LEARNT FROM LARGE MILITARY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Noise assessment work for military infrastructure can be highly technical. It often requires an in-depth understanding of activities to be gained, along with the development of bespoke criteria, sensitive engagement to build trust with communities whilst respecting the restrictions on what information can be made available through the process. This paper presents a number of considerations and issues that need to be successfully overcome in order to consider noise on military developments.

The paper highlights some of the challenges associated with working on military projects. It illustrates why 'standard' environmental sound assessment criteria can sometimes be unsuitable for certain situations and the importance of early engagement with the local authorities and decision makers. It is demonstrated how working closely with project design teams is important in determining the final choice of noise control measures and highlights that quite often the best control measures can conflict with the requirements of the end users.

The paper aims to share Amec Foster Wheeler's experience in undertaking this type of work on behalf of the armed services and to share lessons learnt in undertaking this type of work in the past.

## 2 EXPERIENCE OF WORKING ON MILITARY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Over the last 10 years, Amec Foster Wheeler (AFW) has undertaken a number of noise assessments for the armed services through Government frameworks. The following sections provide a synopsis of a selection of the projects where the AFW team have undertaken noise assessment work. This provides some background to the lessons learnt that we discuss further in Section 3 below.

### 2.1 Defence Technical College at RAF St Athan

This project involved an Environmental Impact Assessment for a major military infrastructure project in South Wales. The scheme itself entailed a variety of military activities and changes to, and introduction of more conventional infrastructure. Assessments were required for a new access road; a firing range; aircraft engine testing facilities; and numerous military training activities including a platoon training area (including blank firing) and tank/aircraft test aprons. In addition, assessments of the suitability of future sensitive uses such as service accommodation within this changed soundscape were also required. Following the submission of the planning application, additional assessment work was required for the platoon training area, to help further control and mitigate the impacts of blank gunfire noise on the surrounding community areas. The planning application was eventually approved but unfortunately the scheme was cancelled following the Strategic Defence Review.

#### 2.1.1 Defence College of Technical Training (DCTT) at RAF Lyneham

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) prepared a proposal through the planning system to change the role of the former RAF Lyneham (now MOD Lyneham) to a Defence College of Technical Training (DCTT). As well as a high proportion of classroom training facilities the DCTT