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Welsh campaigners pressure Qatargas on silencers

A local pressure group in South Wales is continuing to put pressure on LNG producer Qatargas to fit the large LNG carriers bringing cargoes into the South Hook LNG terminal in the UK with better silencers.

Last week, South Hook LNG Ship Noise published a new list of what it sees as the worst vessel offenders. According to data published on its website, statutory noise -nuisance complaints have been made in relation to seven Q-maxes that have visited the South Hook terminal but five of them have returned again — one of them, the 266,000-cbm *Mekaines* (built 2009), three times — without having the silencers fitted.

Aside from the *Mekaines*, the pressure group details that the 266,000-cbm *Al Mafyar* (built 2009) and 261,700-cbm *Al Ghuwairiya* (built 2008) have been back twice and the 266,000-cbm *Mozah* and *Bu Samra* (both built 2008) both once.

The site details that of two Q-maxes yet to visit the terminal, one of the most recently delivered, the 266,000-cbm *Shagra* (built 2009), is fitted with a silencer, while the 266,000-cbm *Al Mayeda* (built 2009) is not. In addition, eight Q-flexes have had work undertaken on their silencers.

South Hook LNG Ship Noise says the level at which noise constitutes a nuisance is that, in the judgement of independent persons — in this case being Pembrokeshire County Council port health officers — it must spoil the “use” or “enjoyment” of a person’s residence.

Local marine officials watching the LNG traffic say the compressors on the vessels can be “quite noisy” with a low hum audible from the shore.

The pressure group says it has been advised by operator Qatargas that “there may be occasions, due to commercial interests and vessel availability, where it will not always be possible to send only non-problematic vessels”.

By Lucy Hine London

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