

Aircraft Noise Update from SMCCA – 1/16/20

As 2019 comes to a close, Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association would like to update the community on the efforts being made to address aircraft noise from frequent and low-flying aircraft under the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) NextGen program.

Formal Request Made to the FAA that the Flight Paths be pushed further out over the ocean

The AD Hoc Committee of the LAX Community Noise Roundtable sent the FAA a letter requesting that the planes fly further out over the ocean before crossing the coast (thereby bypassing Santa Monica Canyon). However, due to the City of Los Angeles' lawsuit (see below), the FAA has halted all communications regarding the North DownWind Arrivals.

City of Los Angeles Files Suit Against the FAA

In June 2019, the City of Los Angeles filed a lawsuit against the FAA, challenging the FAA's failure to follow its own procedures, when it failed to consider the environmental impacts of new arrival routes published in May 2018. The parties recently took part in a mediation, however, the case did not settle. Briefing on the issues is anticipated in early 2020.

National League of Cities

In November 2019, at the National League of Cities held City Summit, the Board of Directors passed a Resolution to Reduce the Economic, Noise and Health Impacts of Overflights of Cities from Implementation of NextGen's Airspace Redesign.

Updates from the U.S. Senate

The U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations has funded the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020.

To address aircraft noise, the Committee directs the FAA to:

1. Improve the development of flight procedures in ways that will consider public comment and reduce noise through procedure modification and dispersion to reduce the impact on local communities; and
2. Provide a report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations within 90 days of enactment of the FAA Reauthorization Act that details the efforts made by the FAA during the last two fiscal years to comply with Committee's directives on this topic.

Link to the U.S. Senate's Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2020 and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill, 2020 Aircraft Noise Updates - December 2019 2: <https://congress.gov/116/crpt/srpt109/CRPT-116srpt109.pdf>

Additionally, U.S. Senator Kamala Harris sent a letter to the FAA Administrator asking for a timeline on implementation of the provisions in last year's FAA Reauthorization Act. Senator Harris mentions Pacific Palisades as one of the cities that she has heard from on the NextGen issues. (Contact Debbie Warfel for a copy of the document; info. below.)

Updates from the U.S. House of Representatives

The U.S. House of Representatives Committee shares the concerns of communities affected by aircraft noise and has urged the FAA to respond fully and completely to the requirements in the FAA Reauthorization Act pertaining to noise reduction.

The FAA is required to:

1. Study jet aircraft approach and takeoff speeds
2. Review how and when to engage airports and communities in performance based navigation proposals, updating airport noise exposure maps, and a study on the potential health and economic impact of overflight noise;
3. Evaluate alternative metrics to the current Day Night Level (DNL) 65 standard
4. Enter into an agreement with an institution of higher education to conduct a study on the health impacts of aircraft noise exposure;
5. Deploy recently hired regional ombudsmen into communities; and
6. Make noise data as widely and publicly available as practical.

Link to the U.S. House of Representatives' Departments of Transportation, and Housing, and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2020: <https://congress.gov/116/crpt/hrpt106/CRPT-116hrpt106.pdf>

The Co-Chairs of the U.S. House of Representatives Quiet Skies Caucus sent a letter to FAA Administrator Stephen Dickson asking a number of questions on the implementation of last year's FAA Reauthorization Act. (Contact Debbie Warfel for a copy of the document; info. below.)

LAX Community Noise Roundtable

A group of residents from West Adams and Culver City protested in front of Mayor Garcetti's house this summer. At an ensuing meeting with the Mayor, they proposed that the flight paths be pushed "Up Higher and Out Further." The City requested that LAWA analyze whether the proposal is feasible, and LAWA's consultant is finalizing the North Downwind Arrival Proposal Analysis. This item was scheduled for presentation at the January 8, 2020 Regular Roundtable meeting, held at LAX. To learn more, visit the LAX Community Noise Roundtable's website:

<https://www.lawa.org/en/lawa-environment/noise-management/lawa-noise-management-lax/community-noise-roundtable>

For more information or to receive copies of documents referenced above, contact Debbie Warfel of SMCCA: debwarfel@gmail.com.