

SOUTH AIRFIELD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (SAIP) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is the purpose of this project?

A: The primary purpose of the South Airfield Improvement Project (SAIP) is to enhance the safety at the airport by reducing the number of runway incursions at LAX, the vast majority of which occurred on the south airfield. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) defines runway incursions (in part) as “any occurrence at an airport involving an aircraft, vehicle or object on the ground that creates a collision hazard or results in a loss of separation with an aircraft taking off, landing or intending to land.” For the four-year period from 2000 through 2003, LAX experienced the highest number of runway incursions of any U.S. commercial airport. The new runway and center taxiway configuration will help reduce or eliminate runway incursions on the south airfield. The SAIP will improve safety at LAX and will not affect airport capacity in the long-term.

Q: What are the benefits to passengers and the community?

A: Passengers benefit from enhanced safety due to the significant reduction in the number of runway incursions. Benefits to the community include improved air quality levels as the new airfield configuration reduces aircraft idle and taxi time, thereby reducing air emissions. The airfield modifications also improve the ability to efficiently handle the new large aircraft, including the Airbus A380. Currently the FAA has designated A-380 aircraft to use 200-foot-wide runways. The existing 25L-7R runway was the designated A380 runway.

Q: What did construction entail?

A: Completed in March 2007, the first phase of construction was the demolition of the southernmost of LAX’s four runways – 25L/7R – and the relocation of the runway approximately 55 feet south of its original centerline location. Runway 25L/7R re-opened on April 2, 2007. Construction involved the creation of a new parallel taxiway between the two south airfield runways at LAX. Construction also included relocation and replacement of all navigational and visual aids as well as utilities, lighting, signage, grading and drainage.

Q: How does the new south airfield configuration improve safety?

A: With the new configuration, an aircraft arriving on the southernmost runway – 25L/7R – will move onto a center taxiway and then hold until it is cleared by FAA air traffic controllers to cross the adjacent runway and continue to its assigned terminal gate. Use of the center taxiway reduces the likelihood of a pilot inadvertently taxiing across the second, parallel runway. In a joint study with the FAA and NASA Ames Research Center’s FutureFlight Central, air traffic controllers found that the center taxiway offered an effective solution to the primary cause of the most severe types of runway incursions experienced at LAX.

Q: How long did construction take?

A: Construction began on July 29, 2006, with demolition of the original 25L/7R runway. The reconstructed runway reopened to air traffic on April 2, 2007. Construction on the center taxiway was completed June 2008. To meet this schedule, construction crews worked two 10-hour shifts daily, including weekends during various stages of construction.

Q: Were travelers using LAX affected by SAIP construction-related traffic?

A: No. Because all work was conducted on the airfield, roadways in and around LAX were affected. During the airfield work, the taxiway over the Sepulveda Boulevard tunnel underwent a retrofit as part of the modernization process. This construction took place on the taxiway overpass itself, not the tunnel, and did not affect the vehicular traffic below.

Q: How did construction traffic get to and from the construction site?

A: Construction trucks used the I-405 and I-105 freeways to access the LAX area. From westbound I-105 freeway, construction traffic traveled westbound on Imperial Highway, turned right onto northbound Pershing Drive, and then turned right on World Way West to enter the project site. The reverse route was used to travel from the construction site. Construction traffic was restricted during the commuting peak hours of 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Truck deliveries were encouraged to use nighttime hours. Further, employee shift hours were established so that the arrival and departure of construction employees did not coincide with commuter peak hours.

Q: Did LAX need to acquire additional land in the area to accommodate the new runway and taxiway? Were residents forced to move?

A: No. All improvements to the runway and taxiway took place within LAX's existing boundaries.

Q: Why couldn't the existing runway be used for the taxiway?

A: The existing runway did not meet current FAA design standards for taxiways, which require the inclusion of long and gentle spiral curves along the centerlines of the taxiway, as well as "wide-throat" entrances to and from runways. The new center taxiway reflects these standards.

Q: Is the SAIP part of the Master Plan?

A: Yes. The SAIP is the first project within the LAX Master Plan to be proposed and implemented. Airport officials worked closely with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on design development in order to comply with regulations regarding safe, efficient airport layout plans.

Q: What was the environmental impact of the construction?

A: As part of the LAX Master Plan EIR, practices were developed to reduce negative impacts on the surrounding environment. These included: recycling materials from the old runway into the new runway and taxiway; placing concrete mixers and other equipment on-site; reducing the number of trip service vehicles had to take to and from the site; designating specific routes that service vehicles must use when

traveling to and from the site; retrofitting equipment to reduce noise and emissions; and continually dampening the work area to reduce dust. For more information, please visit <http://www.laxmasterplan.org/>.

Q: How did the SAIP construction affect surrounding neighborhoods?

A: Measures were taken to minimize the effects of construction on the neighborhoods surrounding LAX. However, as with any construction project, there was some noticeable activity. For instance, residents closest to Imperial Highway and Pershing Drive noticed an increased number of service vehicles entering and exiting the airport grounds and employee parking areas. Some construction noise was also noticeable to residents closest to the construction area. To help offset potential impacts on neighboring areas, peak times for deliveries and removals, as well as crew arrivals and departures, were scheduled so as not to coincide with the busiest commute peak hours in the area (7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.). Machinery used at the site was also retrofitted to reduce noise and emissions and dust generated from the work area, and dust was reduced by continually watering down the site.

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