



LAX Community Noise Roundtable

Aviation Noise News Update
March 13, 2013

The “AA” is Gone and the Eagle has been Modernized



- **After 45 years, American Airlines has unveiled a new paint scheme for its aircraft as it exits bankruptcy**
- **The new paint scheme features the profile of a sleek eagle, and a tail representative of the U.S. Flag**
 - The unveiling came as American Airlines was deciding whether to merge with US Airways
 - “This look sort of speaks for itself,” said American Chief Executive Tom Horton, “This is, I think, a very powerful image for the new American, whether we proceed with the combination or not.”
- **American Airlines has 550 aircraft on order from Boeing and Airbus and needed to move away from the polished metal look and pick a paint scheme that will be usable on aircraft made of composite materials instead of aluminum**



American, US Airways Agree on Merging



- **The board of directors of American Airlines parent AMR Corp. and US Airways have approved a merger agreement**
- **Key items from the merger include:**
 - The new combined airline will be called American Airlines
 - An equity value of \$11 billion
 - Based at Dallas/Ft. Worth International Airport
 - Expected to generate \$1 billion in annual net synergies by 2015
 - Have more than 1,500 aircraft (additional 600 aircraft on order)
 - Operate 6,700 daily flights to 336 destinations in 56 countries
 - Maintain all current hubs
- **The merger now leaves the U.S. with three full-service (legacy) air carriers, down from six five years ago**

Schiff, Feinstein Reintroduce Bill to Fight Helicopter Noise



- **Senate and House Representatives reintroduce bill to keep the L.A. Residential Helicopter Noise Relief Act in the legislative pipeline**
- **The Bill had to be reintroduced with a new congress in session**
 - Representatives proposing the Bill Include: Adam Schiff, Henry Waxman, Brad Sherman, Barbara Boxer, and Dianne Feinstein
- **The bill would require the FAA to set and implement guidelines on flight routes and height limitations for aircraft such as news helicopters**
- **The bill would not restrict helicopters operated by the L.A. Police Department, or other emergency responders**
 - A report is expected in May with recommendations for height and route restrictions that were a result of meetings held between local communities and the FAA

Lomita Endorses Bills to Reduce Helicopter Noise



- **Lomita has become the first city in the county to endorse both the House and Senate bills to reduce helicopter noise**
 - Lomita City Council voted unanimously to support the bills that would establish helicopter routes and minimum altitudes
 - Lomita is located near the Torrance Municipal Airport which is home to the largest helicopter manufacturer in the world
- **When discussing the noise complaints, City Manager, Michael Rock says, “Every single day one of the council members gets a phone call about it. It’s a big deal. They’re very anxious to get something in place.”**

Airports Across the Country May Feel the Effects of Sequestration



- **The FAA will be forced to cut \$600 million from their budget that could cause flight delays, longer lines, and air traffic control closures at airports in the Los Angeles area**
 - The effects will not take hold until April, giving the President and Congressional leaders time to make a deal
- **The TSA head says lines at security gates could grow longer during peak spring and summer travel seasons**
 - This is a result of having to cut overtime pay for TSA employees, reducing the number of screening officers
- **National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) says the cuts could lead to fewer flights and delays of up to 90 minutes during peak hours**
 - Safety will remain key, and with fewer controllers, fewer airplanes will be allowed in the sky
- **The FAA has plans to shut down towers with less than 150,000 annual operations which would mean the closure of Santa Monica's control tower**
 - Pilots can still use the airport by making radio calls with their intentions



- **The FAA issued Program Guidance Letter (PGL) 13-04 announcing a Pilot Program for Redevelopment of Airport Properties**
 - Up to four eligible airports that have an FAA-approved Part 150 airport noise compatibility program may apply to the agency to receive discretionary Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants up to \$5 million each
 - The funding will be drawn from the AIP noise set-aside under the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012
 - Airports have until January 15, 2015 to submit applications, with final decisions by the FAA being made on September 30, 2015
- **As part of the grant funding, an eligible airport can submit a Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) approval request to fund allowable costs**
 - The FAA will fund 80 percent of the pilot program, the airports must fund the remaining 20 percent, but can use PFC charges for that purpose
- **To be eligible for the pilot program, airports must be working in partnership with a neighboring jurisdiction on their pilot program project**



- **A Task Group of the NextGen Advisory Committee says that it has identified a potential way to comply with the Categorical Exclusion (CatEx) 2 provision**
 - CatEx2 was a provision as a result of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 that seeks to accelerate the introduction of NextGen Performance-based Navigation (PBN) procedures by giving them Categorical Exclusion (CatEx) from environmental review
 - Last September, the FAA told the NAC that it has not been able to identify a “technically sound approach” to measuring reductions in noise on a per flight basis as required to meet the CatEx2 provision using DNL
- **The Task Group is in the process of developing and refining an approach to comply with CatEx2 called “Modified Contour Overlay” still utilizing DNL**
 - “It uses a grid analysis to show what the population exposure to various DNL noise levels would be with and without a PBN procedure.”
 - The Modified Contour Overlay would allow communities to see the number of people that would get increases, decreases, or no change in noise level in 5-dB increments ranging from 45-50 DNL to 75-80 DNL



- **The Task Group told the NAC that the approach for compliance is a two-step process:**
 - 1. Determine the noise-sensitive “area of concern”
 - 2. Determine the “change in contribution to DNL on a per-flight basis”
 - Detailed grid computations, comparing existing procedure to the proposed procedure at noise sensitive locations
- **Four Key Issues Raised:**
 - Requires a noise analysis that takes time and resources to prepare
 - It is possible for one procedure to be found in compliance, while another, or even perhaps the same procedure to a different runway, may be found non-compliant
 - Should existing NEPA significance criteria be applied before CatEx2 and this metric be considered
 - This approach may be difficult to explain to communities

DOT Tells Congress AIP Noise Set-Aside is Vitally Important



- **The Department of Transportation (DOT) defended the Noise Set-Aside in the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) in a recent letter to Congress**
 - This letter was in response to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) report that questioned whether the Noise Set-Aside will remain relevant in the future
 - The GAO found that since 1982, the FAA has provided \$5.8 billion in AIP noise grants to 481 airports, but a number of indicators point to a decline in future demand
- **The DOT response letter to the GAO included the following statements:**
 - “The Noise Set-Aside within the AIP remains a vitally important part of the FAA’s capability to mitigate noise to a level that does not constrain the growth of the nation’s air transportation system,” DOT Assistant Secretary for Administration Brodi Fontenot wrote in the December 12, 2012 letter
 - “While commercial aircraft are significantly quieter..., there are still more than 300,000 people living and going to school within significantly noise-impacted areas...”, Fontenot told Congress
 - “At current funding levels, FAA estimates it will take 15-20 years to mitigate noise for the population of residents and students remaining within significantly-impacted areas”

LA BOAC Authorizes \$9.2 Million to El Segundo For Insulation



- **The Los Angeles Board of Airport Commissioners (BOAC) authorized staff to enter into a Letter of Agreement with the City of El Segundo for its Residential Sound Insulation Grant Program and to release \$9,225,000 for its eligible noise mitigation project**
 - The LAWA grant, along with \$5 million from the FAA, will enable the City of El Segundo to soundproof 329 single and multi-family dwellings
 - Completion of the 329 units will result in the City of El Segundo having treated a total of 1,702 residences
- **The grant is in accordance with the LAX Master Plan Stipulated Settlement Agreement reached in February 2006**
 - The agreement calls for LAWA to provide up to \$22,500,000 annually through 2015 to the Cities of El Segundo, Inglewood, and the County of Los Angeles for noise mitigation projects