



LAX/COMMUNITY NOISE ROUNDTABLE

Recap of the Regular Meeting of September 20, 2010

Roundtable Members Present

Denny Schneider, Chairman, Westchester Neighbors Association
Carl Jacobson, Vice Chairman, Councilman, City of El Segundo
Domingo Orosco, Representing Councilman Bernard Parks
Chad Molnar, Representing Councilman Bill Rosendahl
Beverly Ackerson, PANIC/City of Rancho Palos Verdes
Dennis McLain, Alternate, City of Rancho Palos Verdes
Danna Cope, LAX Area Advisory Committee
Joann Williams, United Homeowners Association
Steve May, FAA Western-Pacific Regional Office
Rolan Morel, FAA LAX Air Traffic Control Tower
Michael Feldman, LAWA
Scott Tatro, LAWA
Kathryn Pantoja, LAWA
David Chan, LAWA
Gene Reindel, Roundtable Facilitator

1. Call to order

Roundtable Chairman Denny Schneider called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the Samuel Greenberg Boardroom at LAX.

2. LAX/Community Noise Roundtable 10th Anniversary Celebration

Mr. David Chan noted the Roundtable's major achievements of reducing aircraft noise in the surrounding communities over the past 10 years. Chairman Denny Schneider recognized the leadership and efforts of the previous Chairman, Mr. John McTaggart for most of those 10 years. LAWA provided cake and refreshments for all attendees to commemorate this special occasion.

3. Update on the RFP Process for Roundtable Facilitator Position

Mr. David Chan reported that the current contract with Harris Miller Miller & Hanson Inc. (HMMH) to provide Roundtable facilitation services expires at the end of November 2010. LAWA is currently in the process of obtaining a new contract. The Request for Proposals (RFP) was posted on LABAVN for 30 days with a due date of August 16, 2010 for interested parties to submit a written proposal. Subsequently, LAWA received four proposals from the following firms:

- HMMH
- ESA Airports
- Wyle
- BridgeNet

All four firms have passed the City's administrative requirements. LAWA is currently reviewing the written proposals and expects to finish the review by the end of September. Oral interviews will be conducted in the middle of October 2010. After the interview process, LAWA will recommend to the BOAC, in December, the best qualified firm for contract award.

4. Work Program Item IA. – Low-Frequency Noise (LFN)

Gene Reindel gave a brief presentation on low-frequency noise with the intent of providing the members a better understanding on the subject. The presentation also includes summaries of HMMH and PARTNER studies on LFN. The PARTNER Low-Frequency Noise Study is available on-line at: <http://web.mit.edu/aeroastro/partner/news/lfn-rpt.html>

The studies revealed the following findings:

- Low-frequency sounds propagate further than high-frequency sounds
- Low-frequency noise can induce “feelable” vibrations in residences
- Residences located near runways can experience high levels of low-frequency noise from aircraft
- Standard sound insulation treatments do not sufficiently reduce low-frequency noise
- C-weighted maximum noise level metric is most effective for screening possible low-frequency problems
- C-weighted noise levels correlate with induced vibrations and resident ratings of annoyance
- C-weighted maximum noise level of 80 dB is recommended for screening threshold of low-frequency noise problems

Mr. Chan described the capabilities of LAWA's new Airport Noise and Operations Monitoring System (ANOMS) to measure and report aircraft low-frequency noise events. He also presented the LFN data received from the system, which include the number of C-weighted noise events obtained during the first three weeks of August 2010 that correlated to aircraft flight tracks at a number of fixed noise monitoring sites near LAX. Initial review of the data seems to indicate monitors that were closer to the aircraft registered more noise events than those that were further out.

Member Danna Cope asked whether noise affecting Mar Vista residents could be related to low-frequency noise from aircraft ground operations. Ms. Kathryn Pantoja stated that the noise affecting that community is likely coming from aircraft arriving from the north and the west that fly over the Santa Monica VOR.

Chairman Schneider mentioned that the presentations raise the question of whether CNEL is the right metric given the high number of C-weighted events outside the noise impact contour.

Member Cope inquired whether LAWA can install a monitor in Ladera Heights to measure low-frequency noise. Mr. Chan indicated that the difficulty would be the ability to differentiate vibration from aircraft operations and other community noise sources such as buses since the proposed monitor is located further out from the airport.

5. Work Program Prioritization

Mr. Reindel mentioned that only four Roundtable members had returned the Work Program prioritization forms as a result from the effort to re-prioritize the work program. Mr. Reindel recommended the Roundtable not update the prioritization at this time until sufficient changes have occurred to warrant the update. Chairman Schneider and the members agreed with Mr. Reindel's recommendation.

6. Aviation Noise News Update

The following is a summary of the news update that Mr. Reindel provided to the Roundtable.

FAA Reauthorization Bill - Congress passed another bill to extend the FAA's operating authority through September 30, 2010. This is the 15th extension since the last full authorization expired in 2007. (Note: Subsequently, Congress passed the 16th extension which will allow the FAA to operate under current authorization until December 31, 2010.) In addition, during the Airport Association of Airport Executives-National Airports Conference opening session on Monday, September 20, 2010, the panel members unanimously responded with a "no" when asked if they believed the Reauthorization Bill would be passed this calendar year. The members also indicated that if the Bill is not passed this year, the legislators will have to restart the process to get the Bill passed next year. The panel included representation from the Federal Aviation Administration, Transportation Security Administration, Air Transportation Association, General Aviation Manufacturers Association, and large and small airports.

Airport Cooperative Research Program - The ACRP Oversight Committee selected three airport noise projects for study for fiscal year 2011, as shown below, one of which was recommended by the Roundtable for research consideration (see 02-35).

02-31: Assessing Acoustical Materials Used in Airport Residential Sound Insulation Programs

02-35: Understanding Public Perceptions of Aircraft Noise and Noise-Induced Sleep Disturbance

02-37: Evaluating the Accuracy of the Integrated Noise Model for General Aviation Jet Aircraft

Panels for managing these projects are being formed at this time. For additional information go to the following website: http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/acrp/acrp_announcement2011.pdf

The ACRP is accepting problem statements for fiscal year 2012 until February 2011.

Airport Noise Program Best Practices - The Vancouver Airport Authority and Wyle prepared a report on "best practices" of airport noise programs. The report categorized noise management program measures into the following:

- Land Use
- Ground Operations
- Flight Procedures
- Monitoring
- Communications

The report is available at the following website:

<http://www.wyle.com/ServicesSolutions/science/EMMA/AcousticandVibrationConsulting/Resource/DocumentLibrary/Documents/NoiseManagementProgramPractices4-10%20Final.pdf>

White House Announcement – President Obama announced a \$50 billion infrastructure program to expand and renew airports, roads and railways. The airport portion of the program will help fund transition to NextGen. The program needs approval from Congress to proceed.

7. Roundtable Member Discussion

Proposed Airspace Classification Change at Long Beach Airport

Member Beverly Ackerson voiced her concerns about the FAA's proposed change of the airspace classification from a Class D to a Class C at Long Beach Airport. Her main concern is that the Class C airspace will cover a larger area and may result in changing the existing aircraft routes that were developed to avoid aircraft flying over the Palos Verdes Peninsula. She added that the proposed change would adversely impact the Peninsula since flight training activities involving small planes and helicopters would also be moved to the Peninsula's coastline resulting in more noise over that area. She is requesting the FAA conduct a "complete study" to determine the potential effects of this change on the various areas including the Peninsula.

Mr. Steve May introduced Mr. Rex MacLean who is from the FAA Air Traffic Organization based in Seattle to address the concerns of this proposed change.

Mr. Michael Feldman asked the FAA to start by describing the difference between Class C and Class D airspace designations.

Mr. MacLean stated that the purpose of the proposed change is to increase safety at Long Beach Airport. Currently, FAA does not provide aircraft separation services for Visual Flight Rules (VFR) aircraft operating in the Class D airspace. Pilots operating under VFR in Class D must rely on their own vision and judgment for aircraft separation. In the Class C airspace, FAA provides separation services for all aircraft. With the proposed change in place, the FAA can then separate traffic and provide safe distances between all aircraft in the airspace.

Scott Tatro inquired if this proposed change will affect LAX operations. Mr. MacLean responded that it "should not."

Member Ackerson stated that the area to the west of the proposed Class C airspace will have more traffic problems as some pilots may fly over that area to avoid communicating with the FAA air traffic controllers in the proposed Class C airspace. Mr. MacLean responded that the cost of fuel would likely prevent pilots from deviating from their prescribed routes.

Chairman Schneider commented that this reclassification of the airspace may change pilot behaviors and asked if the FAA should consider increasing the size of the proposed Class C airspace.

Mr. MacLean stated that the FAA would need to justify the size and that the purpose of this project is to provide better aircraft separation services which would increase safety at Long Beach Airport. He added that comments for this project are due on September 21, 2010 and that the project will result in one of the three options: 1) stop, 2) refine, or 3) present as proposed and proceed to rulemaking.

Member Ackerson stated that she is against this proposed change because it will affect traffic to the west.

Mr. Dennis McLain stated that the City of Rancho Palos Verdes is monitoring this project and will submit a comment letter to the FAA. He suggested that the Roundtable send a letter to the FAA asking them to evaluate the potential impacts of this proposed change.

Chairman Schneider indicated that rather than sending a letter now to meet the deadline, he believes it would be better for members to get involved at the next phase of the project since more resourceful information will be available at that time.

Mr. Gene Reindel raised his concern that this project may be beyond the scope of this Roundtable since it will not affect LAX operations. Chairman Schneider said that the members would want to monitor this project to ensure that it would not affect LAX operations.

Member Ackerson asked if the Roundtable can obtain debriefs of actions, and Mr. MacLean stated that the FAA will publish information on the federal register about the progress of this project.

Recent Issues Regarding the Noise Complaint Hotline

Mr. Chan indicated that Ms. Regina Tennelle from Airport Operations Division is present tonight to address the problems callers have experienced with the noise complaint hotline.

Chairman Schneider stated that he has received complaints from people at a recent neighborhood council meeting about the hotline's voicemail box being full and that it was difficult to reach a live person. Ms. Tennelle indicated that her division may have overlooked some responsibilities due to some recent organizational changes. She agreed to look into this issue. She provided her phone number (424) 646-8255 for members who wish to discuss this issue further.

A member inquired on how many calls were received by a live person as compared to calls received by the voicemail. Ms. Tennelle believes that most calls were received via voicemail. She indicated that she is new at this position and that she plans to work with Mr. Scott Tatro and Ms. Kathryn Pantoja to improve this situation.

Chairman Schneider asked what percent of complaints are registered on the web vs. the hotline. Ms. Pantoja responded that about 80% of the complaints are registered on the web. She added that the number of complaints received is skewed because some individuals put in complaints via the web continuously for aircraft flying over their properties that are one or two minutes apart.

Member Danna Cope expressed her disappointment with the response letters that LAWA provides to the public and suggested that the letters should be more specific. Ms. Tennelle stated that she will advise staff in her division to note all the detailed information from the callers so that LAWA can provide specific responses. Mr. Feldman stated that LAWA will look into enhancing the response letters as discussed.

Members requested LAWA provide an update on the noise complaint hotline issue.

Chairman Schneider asked if the members have any subjects they wish to discuss at the next meeting. No responses were made.

8. Adjournment

Chairman Schneider thanked the FAA for attending the meeting to discuss the proposed airspace change at Long Beach Airport and thanked the Roundtable members for also attending.

The next meeting of the Roundtable will be convened at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 10, 2010 in the Samuel Greenberg Boardroom at LAX.

Chairman Schneider adjourned the September meeting of the Roundtable at 9:07 p.m.