



## **LAX/COMMUNITY NOISE ROUNDTABLE**

Recap of the Regular Meeting of September 11, 2013

### **Roundtable Members Present**

Denny Schneider, Chairman, Westchester Neighbors Association  
Carl Jacobson, Vice Chairman, City of El Segundo  
Beverly Ackerson, PANIC  
Matt Waters, Staff, City of Rancho Palos Verdes  
Jessica Duboff, City of Los Angeles – CD11  
Danna Cope, LAX Area Advisory Committee  
Yvonne Bedford, Ladera Heights Civic Association  
JoAnn Williams, United Homeowners Association  
John Bailey, Southeast Torrance Homeowners' Association  
Martin Rubin, North Westdale Neighborhood Association  
Steve May and Rolan Morel, Federal Aviation Administration  
Michael Feldman, LAWA

### **LAWA and Consultant Staff**

Scott Tatro, LAWA  
Kathryn Pantoja, LAWA  
David Chan, LAWA  
Steve Alverson, Roundtable Facilitator

### **Guest Speakers**

Mike Barnhart, Federal Aviation Administration  
Rob Henry, Federal Aviation Administration

A quorum of the members was present.

### **1. Welcome/Review of the Meeting Format**

Roundtable Facilitator Steve Alverson welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the meeting format. Mr. Alverson indicated that the Roundtable meetings are facilitated in order to stay on topic and on schedule. He added that there would be a period for public comments and the Chair may entertain questions from the audience as time permits.

## **2. Call to order**

Roundtable Chairman Denny Schneider called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm PDT in the Samuel Greenberg Boardroom at LAX. After the Pledge of Allegiance, a moment of silence was observed for the victims of 9/11.

## **3. Comments from the Public**

Chairman Schneider opened the public comment period at a later time than scheduled (between Items 5 and 6). A resident of Mar Vista who lives a few blocks south of the Santa Monica VOR noted that he is noticing more noise from frequent aircraft overflights. He acknowledged that LAWA has conducted an altitude comparison of LAX arrivals over the SMO VOR and found that aircraft are essentially flying at the same altitudes as before. He was wondering if this particular aircraft route can be moved to minimize overflights at his location. LAWA staff member David Chan indicated that the route has been in place for a long time and is difficult to move it. FAA representative Rolan Morel explained that the airspace in the LA Basin is very congested and complex with no room to move the route. Steve Alverson also noted that aircraft noise is typically more noticeable during the summer months when windows are open.

Member Ackerson noted that she has been researching FAA regulations pertaining to the prohibition of aircraft overflights in extreme fire hazard areas such as the Palos Verdes Peninsula. She believes that aircraft should not be flying over the Peninsula because of the fire hazard conditions. David Chan noted that he had asked FAA representatives at the July meeting to determine if such regulations exist. He said FAA representatives indicated that there are no regulations that solely prohibit aircraft from flying over PV. He said that in the event of a major fire, the FAA can issue a temporary flight restriction over an affected area to allow air operations to assist with firefighting activities.

There were no other speakers, so Chairman Schneider closed the public comment period.

## **4. Work Program A1 – Update on FAA Optimization of Airspace and Procedures in the Metroplex (OAPM) process**

Mike Barnhart, National OAPM Program Manager, indicated that the impacts that sequestration had on the Southern California OAPM process are over for the time being and the OAPM process has restarted on August 26<sup>th</sup>. Mike said that he is reviewing the next fiscal year budget in an effort to keep the OAPM program running. He said that Rick Pfahler, who was leading the Southern California OAPM program, had retired from the FAA and introduced Rob Henry who was brought on to lead the program.

Rob Henry said he is glad to be working on the Southern California OAPM project, which had reached the 75 percent milestone mark. He added that the project is scheduled to reach the 100 percent milestone by December 2013. Mr. Henry stated that he had reviewed the Roundtable's letter containing recommendations for the OAPM process and instructed the OAPM team to prepare a response to the letter. He added that the team is aware of all of the issues the Roundtable has raised and is looking for possible solutions for some of the issues.

Chairman Schneider asked if there is a website the Roundtable members can visit. Mr. Ryan Weller, FAA Environmental Specialist, said that the website does not contain specific information at this time, but will contain information about the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the project when it becomes available. Mr. Barnhart added that the FAA does not want to post notional designs of potential new procedures as they can be changed or discarded during the evaluation process. He added the public could become unnecessarily concerned about the notional designs and feels the public would be better served by reviewing final procedure designs when they are evaluated in the EA.

Mr. Tatro asked Mr. Weller to describe the environmental process for the project. Mr. Weller said that in terms of next steps, the FAA will start the EA process about 3 months after reaching 100 percent completion on the designs. He added that it will take about one year to complete the Draft EA. He said he expected to use a public workshop format with several meetings spread throughout Southern California. David Chan asked how many public workshops that the FAA is planning to conduct. Ryan indicated that the exact number of workshops has not been set.

Mr. Barnhart indicated that the OAPM project is focused on optimizing safety and efficiency of the airspace and that the OAPM team is following specific guidelines for the OAPM process. One of the guidelines requires the FAA to only make changes to flight procedures that take place above 3,000 ft. Member Cope asked what FAA would do if there are impacts below 3,000 feet. Mr. Barnhart said those measures are pulled out of the OAPM process.

Mr. Weller said that he understands that the Roundtable members wanted to see the new procedures but urged them to be patient, and commented that the FAA has a good team working on the project. The Roundtable members thanked the FAA representatives in attendance for providing the update.

## **5. Work Program A2 – Update on LAX Part 161 process**

LAWA staff member Scott Tatro provided a brief update on the status of LAWA's Part 161 application for a proposed restriction at LAX that will prohibit aircraft from departing to the east during Over Ocean Operations. Mr. Tatro said that the process was started in 2005 and that LAWA had submitted its application to the FAA in January 2013. In March 2013, the FAA informed LAWA that the application was not complete and asked LAWA to submit supplemental information for further review. LAWA submitted the requested supplemental analysis and information to the FAA in July 2013.

In August 2013, the FAA determined that the application is still incomplete and requested further details pertaining to the supplemental analysis. Mr. Tatro said that LAWA had a conference call with the FAA during which the FAA was explicit about what needed to be changed before resubmission. Mr. Tatro said that LAWA intends to submit the required documents to the FAA. However, he anticipated that the outlook for FAA approval of the proposed restriction doesn't look promising. Mr. Tatro added that should the FAA accept the revised application, the Roundtable and its individual members will have the opportunity to provide comment on the proposed restriction when it is published in the Federal Register.

LAWA representative Michael Feldman explained for the members of the audience who are not be familiar with FAR Part 161, that it is a regulation that resulted from the 1990 Aircraft Noise and Capacity Act (ANCA). He explained that Congress, recognizing that airspace is controlled at the federal level, enacted ANCA to eliminate local noise and access

restrictions. Mr. Feldman said that FAR Part 161 establishes the process that airports must follow if they wish to enact a local noise restriction. He stated that the City of Los Angeles has prepared a draft ordinance that would restrict east departures at night during Over Ocean operations and the City must follow the Part 161 process to obtain FAA's approval to enact the ordinance. Mr. Feldman added that in the 23 years since ANCA was enacted, only one restriction at Naples Airport in Florida has been approved by the FAA, so FAA made this process an uphill climb to obtain approval for a noise restriction. He said that if the FAA accepts the City's application, there is a prescribed timeframe within which they must approve or disapprove the restriction. Mr. Feldman concluded by saying if the FAA accepts the City's application and publishes it in the Federal Register, he would encourage individual member jurisdictions to comment on the proposed restriction.

## **6. Work Program C6 – Review/Approve Letter on ACRP Project 02-48: Assessing Annoyance of Helicopter Noise Compared with Jet Aircraft Noise**

LAWA staff member David Chan commented that ACRP had approved 10 of the 14 problem statements that the Roundtable had recommended for research. He explained that one of the approved research projects is to determine if human annoyance to helicopter noise is significantly different than jet noise. Mr. Chan said that at the last Roundtable meeting, members had discussed submitting a letter to ACRP with recommendation to include the West Pacific Coast Highway Helicopter Route as one of the study areas for the said research. He said he has prepared a letter for the Chairman's signature should the Roundtable members approve the letter. After some discussion, Roundtable members agreed to add the Imperial Helicopter Route to the letter. This route follows the West Imperial Highway from the shoreline to the 110 Freeway. Member Bailey's motion to approve sending the letter to the ACRP with the additional helicopter route was seconded by Member Rubin and unanimously approved by the Roundtable.

FAA representative Steve May suggested that the Roundtable provide a hard copy of the letter to Rebecca (Becky) Contin, Manager of FAA's Noise Program at the Office of Environment and Energy, who will be attending an upcoming helicopter noise meeting in Los Angeles. Note: John Bailey provided the letter to Becky Contin at the helicopter meeting.

## **7. Status Update on Roundtable Facilitator Contract**

LAWA staff member David Chan explained that the current Roundtable Facilitator contract expires at the end of December 2013 and the process of getting a new contract has begun. Mr. Chan explained that LAWA had issued the Request for Proposals (RFP) on August 21<sup>st</sup> to solicit qualified firms or individuals to submit their proposals describing the services that they plan to provide as the Roundtable Facilitator. The proposals are due on September 19<sup>th</sup>. He said that the evaluation panel will begin reviewing the proposals shortly thereafter. The evaluation panel is composed of LAWA staff members Kathryn Pantoja, Rob Freeman, Mike Corlett, and David Chan as well as Roundtable Vice Chairman Jacobson.

Mr. Chan explained that LAWA's procurement policy requires selection panel members be elected officials or staff members representing a city or governmental agency and that the City Attorney had determined a Neighborhood Council, which Chairman Schneider is a member of, does not fall within that requirement. Therefore, LAWA is moving forward with Vice Chairman Jacobson to serve on the evaluation panel. Mr. Chan reminded the

Roundtable that at the July 10, 2013 meeting, the Roundtable approved Vice Chairman Jacobson to serve on the evaluation panel in Chairman Schneider's place.

He concluded by saying that the objective is to select the best qualified firm or individual, bring the recommendation to the Board of Airport Commissioners for approval, and execute a contract with the selected Facilitator prior to January 2014.

## 8. Statistical Update on Aircraft Operations

Mr. Chan provided an overview of LAX's historical aircraft operations and passenger counts. He compared 1994 to 2012 and indicated that passenger levels have increased while aircraft operations have decreased. He said that this occurred because airlines are packing more passengers into each aircraft while reducing the frequency of flights. He added that airlines are using newer and quieter aircraft now than they did in 1994, which resulted in an overall decrease in noise levels. He reminded the Roundtable that trends with the overall operations tend to influence the trends of the specific operations.

### Work Program Item A6: Improperly Flown LOOP Departures

**Description:** The LOOP departure procedure directs aircraft on westerly departures to turn back and re-cross the shoreline at the LAX VOR at or above 10,000 ft. to head to eastern destinations.

Mr. Chan indicated that the annual trend for loop departures below 10,000 feet is declining due to better climb performance of the newer aircraft. He said that these operations tend to increase during the summer months as aircraft normally climb slower due to the warmer weather making it more difficult for some aircraft to reach the 10,000 feet altitude. Mr. Chan noted that most aircraft are at altitudes between 10,000 to 15,000 feet when they re-crossed the shoreline. He also noted loop departures that are below 10,000 feet represent a very small percentage of the total loop operations.

### Work Program Item A7: Extended Downwind Approach

**Description:** Aircraft arriving to LAX from the west and the north utilize an extended downwind approach at times causing aircraft to overfly Monterey Park and neighboring communities at low altitudes. Usually, the greater the number of north arrivals, the greater the need for aircraft to travel further east on the downwind leg. Weather conditions that produce low visibility can also cause this operation to increase as the FAA would need to increase the separation distance between aircraft for safety.

David noted the increase in Monterey Park overflights from 2005 to 2007 was due to the shift of arrival traffic from the south to the north complex because of construction activity occurring on the south that required the closure of one runway. In reviewing the monthly trends, he noted that extended downwind approaches usually increase during the month of June when fog is more prevalent. He also noted that most aircraft are at between 2,400 and 3,000 feet as they pass over Monterey Park. He mentioned that the aircraft operators with the most arrivals from the north usually have the most extended downwind approaches.

### Work Program Item A8: Aircraft Arrivals Outside Regular Approach Paths

**Description:** The short turn procedure relates to jet arrivals on the north downwind leg that turn to base leg and final prior to reaching the Harbor Freeway. This operation usually increases when a high-visibility condition exists and/or when the north arrival traffic is light. Conversely, short turn operations decrease when there is an increase in traffic and/or when there is a low-visibility condition. Short turn is also inversely related to the Extended Downwind Approach.

Mr. Chan indicated that the overall trend of short turn operations has been declining and reached the lowest level in 2012. He pointed out the slight increase in January 2013 is related to good visibility condition that existed during that month, which allowed for more visual approaches leading to more short turns.

When Mr. Chan reviewed the top 10 aircraft operators for short turns, Mr. Alverson observed that American Airlines had much fewer occurrences of short turns than American Eagle despite having more north arrivals. Mr. Chan indicated that it is difficult to draw any conclusion regarding the differences between these two carriers given their relatively low numbers of short turns for a given year.

Member Bailey asked if the short turn reports were shared with the aircraft operators. Ms. Pantoja said that the reports are not provided to the aircraft operators because LAWA cannot say that these operations are not allowed. Chairman Schneider asked if short turns generate a large number of noise complaints. Ms. Pantoja said that they usually do not generate complaints. She added that unusual operations such as east departures generate the most complaints. She said LAWA also receives more complaints during the summer months when windows are open.

The complete presentation on the statistical update on aircraft operations can be found on the Roundtable webpage at <http://www.lawa.org/LAXNoiseRoundTable.aspx>.

## 9. Aviation Noise News Update

Mr. Alverson reviewed several recent aviation noise news items for the Roundtable including:

- An announcement that the FAA is seeking public comment by Sept. 30, 2013 regarding FAA Environmental Order 1050.1F: Policies and Procedures that will replace FAA Order 1050.1E.
- An article noting that the Transportation Research Board released ACRP Report 89: Guidelines for Airport Sound Insulation Programs that updates and expands previous guidance on airport sound insulation programs.
- An article about the U.S. Court of Appeals in the District of Columbia upholding a case (Helicopter Association Intl. vs. FAA) that noise complaints are a valid basis for noise abatement away from the vicinity of an airport.
- An article on the FAA adopting a final rule banning Stage 2 jets under 75,000 lbs. that will go into effect on December 31, 2015.
- Articles updating the progress of NextGen and a report from the Department of Transportation's Inspector General, and the possible effects of budget cuts/sequestration.
- An article about Senator Dianne Feinstein inserting a provision in the Senate's transportation spending bill to address noise and safety issues created by helicopter

traffic over L.A., as well as the California Assembly showing its support for the Los Angeles Residential Helicopter Noise Relief Act of 2013.

- An article on the first Required Navigational Performance (RNP) Standard Instrument Departure (SID) going into effect at ATL that is curved and routes aircraft more efficiently over sparsely-populated areas.

The complete aviation noise news update can be found on the Roundtable webpage at <http://www.lawa.org/LAXNoiseRoundTable.aspx>.

## **10. Roundtable Member Discussion**

Member Rubin noted that due to the departure dependencies between LAX and Santa Monica Airport (SMO), hold times for jets at SMO have increased during the summer and with windows open the smell of exhaust fumes permeates the house. Facilitator Alverson noted that the focus of the LAX Roundtable is noise not air emissions. Member Rubin said that the noise from the holding jets is also an issue. Member Cope asked if the LAX Roundtable could include air emissions as a part of its mission. LAWA representative Feldman said that the Roundtable would have to go to the Board of Airport Commissioners with that request. Mr. Tatro noted that the Southern California OAPM team is examining ways to deconflict LAX and SMO departures. Mr. Rubin indicated that the OAPM could take several years to complete.

Member Rubin asked Steve May if he could look into the change with SMO departure heading that occurred in 1990s that may have initiated the conflict between LAX and SMO departures.

Chairman Schneider welcomed Jessica Duboff representing Los Angeles Council District 11 to the Roundtable.

Mr. Chan noted that the dates and location for the UC Davis Aviation Noise Symposium have been set as February 23-26, 2014 in Palm Springs. He also noted that it is the Roundtable's turn to send one member to the Symposium, which the Roundtable can designate at a future meeting.

## **11. Review of Roundtable Actions**

### **Formal Action Items**

The Roundtable approved sending a letter to the Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP) that offers a suggestion to include two specific helicopter routes as study areas for the research on Assessing Annoyance of Helicopter Noise Compared with Jet Aircraft Noise. The suggested routes include the West Pacific Coast Highway Helicopter Route and the Imperial Helicopter Route. Note: The letter was sent to ACRP on 9/17/2013.

### **Requests from Members**

Member Martin Rubin requested FAA representative Steve May to look into the SMO departure heading change, which he believes to have occurred in the 1990s that initiated the conflict between SMO and LAX departures.

### **13. Adjournment**

LAWA staff member David Chan identified November 13, 2013 as the next Roundtable meeting date. Chairman Schneider adjourned the meeting at 9:02 pm.