

# Aviation Noise Working Group

## MEETING SUMMARY

AUGUST 9, 2021; 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

VIA ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE

### Meeting Objectives:

- Recap of Late-Night Noise Limitation Program
- Refresher on the Airport Noise & Capacity Act (ANCA)
- Review of Third Runway operations and usage
- Resumption of the Ground Noise Study

### Meeting Summary:

- I. Facilitator welcome, introduction, and meeting agenda, *Brian Scott, BDS Planning & Urban Design*
- II. Late-Night Noise Limitation Program/Noise Comment Reporting, *Tom Fagerstrom, Port of Seattle*
  - A. Late-Night Noise Limitation Program
    - Exceedance definition: POS monitors both take-off and landing noise levels at four places near the runways during 12 am – 5 am (late-night hours) to measure single event noise. FedEx Express, China Airlines Cargo, and Asiana Cargo had the most late-night noise exceedances during Q2 2021.
    - POS contacts airlines every quarter to update them on their numbers.
    - A meeting will soon be scheduled with FedEx Express to discuss the program, to review their data, and to address what can be done to lessen their late-night noise exceedances.
    - POS will also be in communication with China Airlines Cargo and Amazon Prime Air to set-up meetings.
    - EVA Air, the airline with the most noise exceedances when the Program began, had 0 noise exceedances out of 86 operations during Q2 2021, showing the success of the Program.
      - A member of the working group suggested that a recognition of EVA Air's achievement should be acknowledged in the form of a joint letter by member cities and POS.
    - Total late-night operations increased in Q2 compared to the previous quarter due to an increase in passenger flights, while cargo operations stayed about the same.
    - In July, on average there were 32 operations per late night (24 passenger vs. 8 cargo).
  - B. Noise Comment Reporting
    - In June, noise complaints increased by 16% over the previous month.
    - 129,246 complaints have been logged between January – June 2021.
      - These numbers reflect total complaints and are not weighted by number of households.
    - Vashon Island had the most complaints followed by Seattle.
      - To address a request brought forward by Vashon residents, POS purchased and installed one portable noise monitor on the island in March to gather data for a one-year period.
    - Most people use third-party app to submit their complaints.
    - The full monthly reports can be found on the [Noise Programs website](#).
- III. The Airport Noise and Capacity Act (ANCA), *Vince Mestre, Consultant*

- A. ANCA was adopted by Congress in 1990 to balance the need for increased airport capacity with noise reduction. These were to be achieved through two Federal Air Regulations.
  - Part 91 required the phaseout of noisier Stage 2 aircraft
  - Part 161 restricted airport's ability to regulate airport access based on noise
- The reality of the legislation was that airlines could install minimally noise reducing hush kits to stage 2 to meet stage 3 limits, resulting in continued high noise levels for airport communities. These hush-kitted aircraft were phased out of fleets many years ago.
- The Part 161 application process to request the imposition of access restrictions and noise limits at an airport are onerous.
  - Approval is based on the cost of restriction versus the noise benefit measured in dollars.
  - No application has ever been approved by the FAA.
  - Jackson Hole's airport avoided a Part 161 through special legislation, but their case was tied to a very unique situation, being entirely within a national park.
  - Only new or revised legislation will rebalance the current imbalance that exists.
    - a. There has not been an attempt to repeal the legislation. A concern about repealing (versus modification) is reverting back to pre-ANCA status which may mean any access restriction airports adopted could be a violation of the interstate commerce clause.
- A city can adopt a rule regulating a commercial airport, but that would be preempted by federal regulations and wouldn't be enforceable.

#### IV. Third Runway Operations & Usage, *Tom Fagerstrom, Port of Seattle*

- A. Runway Backgrounder
  - There are three parallel runways at SEA.
  - The third runway is primarily used for landings. It is used less than 1% of the time for take-offs.
  - Most take-offs occur on the east runway, which is the longest. A portion also take place on the center runway.
  - Direction of operations is determined primarily by the direction of the winds, thereby, SEA averages approximately 65-70% south-flow per year.
- B. Third Runway Usage Through July 2021
  - During the full 24-hour period, 88% of landings to date occurred on the third runway in 2021.
    - In comparison, 87% of landings occurred on the third runway in 2019 total during the full 24-hour period.
  - 81% of landings occurred on the third runway between 9:00 pm – 12:00 am.
  - 9% of landings occurred on the third runway between 12:00 am – 5:00 am.
- C. Runway Use Agreement
  - The informal Runway Use Agreement between the Port of Seattle and the FAA specifies voluntary reduced usage of the third runway (16R/34L) from 12:00 am to 5:00 am.
  - A host of factors are considered by the FAA when determining when to use or not use the third runway during the late-night hours.
  - Between September 2019 - July 2021, an average of 1.2 landings a night occurred on the third runway.
    - Before the agreement, the average landings were 10-12, sometimes as many as 30 on a given night on the third runway.
  - 2021 through July, 0.8 landings a night occurred.
- D. Reasons for third runway use during late night hours (list is examples and not intended to be comprehensive)

- Planned or Unplanned Closures:
  - Lighting & ILS maintenance
  - Rubber removal
  - Vegetation control
  - Pavement inspections
  - Aircraft emergencies
- Anticipated busy period for departures
- Potential for air traffic/runway conflicts
- Adverse weather conditions
- E. Runway assignments
  - They most often occur when an aircraft is as many as 60-70 miles distant from the runway to allow pilots to properly configure the aircraft for landing.

V. Resumption of Ground Noise Study, Stan Shepherd, Port of Seattle

- A. In 2019, POS initiated a ground noise study, developed out of the aviation noise working group, that was put on hold in early 2020 with the start of the pandemic. The study’s goal is to identify sources of airport-related noise that emanate from the airfield.
  - POS will now resume the ground noise study with operations again close to pre-COVID levels.
  - The consultant team is coming out between August 23-27 to monitor noise levels and to identify noise sources on the airfield.

VI. Next Steps

- A. As a recognition of EVA Air’s late-night noise reduction achievement, a joint letter is to be drafted and approved by member cities and POS.

MEMBER	INTEREST REPRESENTED	PRESENT
BILL VADINO	FEDERAL WAY – CITY	✓
BOB LEONARD	DES MOINES – COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE	-
BRIAN WILSON	BURIEN – CITY	✓
CARL COLE	SEATAC – CITY	-
CHRIS HALL	FEDERAL WAY – COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE	✓
DAVE BERGER	FEDERAL WAY – COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE	-
ERIC ZIMMERMANN	NORMANDY PARK – COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE	✓
ERICA POST	TUKWILA – COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE	-
JENNIFER KESTER	SEATAC – CITY	-
LANCE LYTTLE	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
AMY ARRINGTON	NORMANDY PARK – CITY	✓
MICHAEL MATTHIAS	DES MOINES – CITY	✓
ROBERT AKHTAR	SEATAC – COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE	-
SCOTT INGHAM	DELTA AIR LINES	✓
SCOTT KENNEDY	ALASKA AIRLINES	-
STEVEN OSTERDAHL	ALASKA AIRLINES	✓
SUSAN CEZAR	DES MOINES - CITY	-
RESOURCES	TITLE	
ARLYN PURCELL	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
CHRIS SCHAFFER	FAA	✓

CLARE GALLAGHER	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
COLIN RICE	PORT OF SEATTLE	-
DAVE KAPLAN	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
JEFFREY BROWN	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
JUSTIN BIASSOU	FAA	✓
MARCO MILANESE	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
STAN SHEPHERD	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
TIM TOERBER	PORT OF SEATTLE	-
TOM FAGERSTROM	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
CONSULTANT		
BRIAN SCOTT	BDS PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN	✓
DORI KRUPANICS	BDS PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN	✓
VINCE MESTRE	CONSULTANT	✓

*NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 11, 2021- TENTATIVELY 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM*  
*LOCATION: ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE*