



AWG NEWSLETTER

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METROPLEX – FAA NEXGEN FLIGHT PROCEDURES

Most of you follow the John Wayne Airport (SNA) activities and programs fairly closely and hence, are aware of the 2016 Metroplex announcements from the **FAA**. This is clearly one of the most significant aircraft operations changes to come forward in many years and, if implemented as planned, *will*—not may—impact local residents, both on departures and arrivals.

Status as of Dec. 2016

The **FAA** recently released its schedule for rolling out the new arrival and departure procedures / routes for approved GPS-equipped avionics aircraft in Southern California, roughly under the program name Southern California “Metroplex.” The stated purpose of the Metroplex program is to consolidate flights into narrower paths of arrival and departure in order to save airline’s fuel, and therefore money. Metroplex is a national program for GPS-assisted aviation procedures, not just those local to Southern California. The airports in scope for the Southern California Metroplex include Los Angeles, John Wayne, Long Beach, San Diego International and other smaller facilities.

By Federal law, new procedures (i.e., Metroplex in this case) generally cannot be implemented without an environmental review to assess the potential environmental significance. If potential significant impacts are found in the environmental impact review, then a much more detailed study must be conducted and published which would delay or possibly negate use of the new procedures without adequate mitigation. The **FAA** contracted the required review and the report was completed and published for comment

earlier this year. **AWG**, City of Newport Beach and dozens of others filed comments with the **FAA**. Most were critical of the depth and scope of the review, feeling that the new procedures would increase noise in some communities and introduce pollutants in a more concentrated amount in certain areas under the new Metroplex arrival and departure paths. The community comments were addressing citizen issues with an objective of triggering the full assessment.

Very recently, the **FAA** issued its conclusion, with its analysis, in a “Finding of No Significant Impact” (“**FONSI**”) on the local environment of the areas surrounding the many Southern California airports. This finding allowed the **FAA** to avoid the full Environmental Impact Statement (“**EIS**”), a time consuming and expensive step it could be assumed they preferred to avoid. The **FAA** then immediately proceeded with the announcement of the implementation of the new Metroplex arrival and departure procedures for all Southern California airports, including John Wayne.

Without a doubt and with the acknowledgement of the **FAA** in its statements, the consolidation of flight paths introduced by Metroplex over neighborhoods that have never before been consistently overflowed, will impact some residents more than others with both noise and pollutants. There are many new procedures being proposed for John Wayne’s arrival and departure paths. To give some graphical visibility to the issues, review the following 2 proposed departure plans. The solid “white” line is the very precise GPS-enabled new procedures. The blue lines show current tracks as flown today.

Continued on page 2



SNA STREL3 SID RY20; Proposed PIGGN SID



SNA MUSEL7 SID; Proposed FINZZ SID

BALBOA ISLAND COMMUNITY RESIDENT PERSPECTIVE

Balboa Island is situated in the middle of Newport Bay. It comprises approximately 0.2 square miles—1400 residential units and 3000 residents. A bridge and ferry provide access. William S. Collins began the development of the Island in 1906-1908. It was annexed to the City of Newport Beach in 1916 and this year, it is celebrating its centennial anniversary.

Balboa Island is unique among the other islands in Newport Bay. It is the only island with a public boardwalk and beaches around the entire perimeter. It's said that the population of Newport Beach doubles during the summer with domestic and international tourists. It seems that Balboa Island's population more than doubles with seasonal renters and visitors who come to enjoy recreation on the water and at the beach.

Because of the adjacent beaches and bay, Balboa Island living is focused on the outdoors. Islanders eat and sleep in the house, but live on their patios and surrounding beaches and boardwalks. Many homes don't have air conditioning. They open windows and Dutch doors to allow mild breezes

to cool the home. Unfortunately, Balboa Island is directly under the flight path from John Wayne Airport. Residents and visitors alike experience the roar of overhead flights that cause outdoor events and conversations to be temporarily suspended because of the noise. The picture below was taken from the author's back patio directly below the aircraft departure path.



Balboa Island, as well as other affected areas of Newport Beach, are grateful for the efforts of the City, **AWG**, and **SPON** for achieving the Settlement Agreement with the County of Orange that defines maximum commercial passenger capacity limits and noise controls on **JWA**. However, the County controls only airport operations and not the flight path—those are controlled by the **FAA** and airlines. Although **AWG** has limited direct influence with these parties, we continuously

seek consideration from those organizations for adjustments that may lessen the noise impact on communities like Balboa.

By: Craig Page, AWG Board Member

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA METROPLEX (continued from page 1)

Obviously, this graphically displays the crux of the issue. As you can see, the white lines of departure will concentrate aviation activity over a much tighter area than previously. There is widespread belief that the **FAA** study conclusion and its lack of meaningfully addressing legitimate concerns of the cities and community organizations regarding these impacts was hasty and may not be in the best interest of the communities. In response, there have been numerous lawsuits (Newport Beach, Laguna Beach, Culver City...) filed in the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit challenging the sufficiency of the environmental review.

AWG is in concurrence with the positions of the cities contesting the speed of implementing this **FAA** plan without adequate study on the impact on our local communities at the neighborhood level and will work to be both an active advocate and source of information for residents through newsletter communications and on our redesigned website awgoc.com.

Current legal / regulatory status and FAA operational plans

1. As stated in the introduction, any significant change in operations by a Federal government entity that has significant potential impact on the environment must complete an **EIS**.
2. In the case of SoCal Metroplex, the **FAA** performed the required 1st review (some say a minimal evaluation) and determined that there was no measurable environmental impact in the surrounding areas of the airports based on proposed **GPS** arrival and departure procedures and hence, did not complete an **EIS**.
3. Unfortunately, for those of us impacted in Southern California, the **FAA** published a "final" determination affirming that they were moving forward.
4. In a counter response, the City of Newport Beach filed suit in court requesting that the court reverse the **FAA**'s decision and

mandate a full **EIS** for the Metroplex impact on the surrounding areas of **SNA**. Laguna Beach (city) likewise filed a similar suit.

5. **FAA** conducted community meetings to "answer" questions from civic leaders and local citizens and homeowners, initially just on the new arrival procedures. The most recent, reviewing John Wayne changes, was in Orange on Nov. 3rd.
6. The new arrival procedures were to be operational in November.
7. **FAA** community meetings for revised departure procedures are tentatively planned for March/April.

What does this mean and what will **AWG** do going forward regarding Metroplex? With your participation and financial support, **AWG** is able to:

1. Leverage our expertise to help impact the program more favorably to our interests. In our membership, we have a vast amount of aviation experience and knowledge and commitment to the communities impacted by air operations. We will use these assets to the best of our abilities to be involved in appropriate actions and local activities and comprehensively gather information and resources to build cases for change where there is negative impact.
2. Provide a platform and source for information for our community.
3. Evaluate the power of interested party participation among key stakeholders with an objective of finding a reasonable solution for local communities.
4. Support for our local city leaders in their actions.
5. Educate local neighborhoods on the complex issues and timelines going forward by attending neighborhood meetings, etc.

AWG is committed to supporting the communities we serve and keeping you informed of developments and our actions through updates in newsletters and on our web page. Your continued support is solicited.

MEET THE AWG BOARD – JIM DUNLAP, VP

A PERIODIC PERSONAL ARTICLE FROM AN AWG BOARD MEMBER

The October edition of *Consumer Reports'* cover story, "Secrets to Stress-Free Flying," reminded me of one of my first flights as a pilot for Western Airlines. It was the summer of 1973. We were at cruise altitude over the Rocky Mountain West; the Captain turned to us and said, "Fellows, just think, at some point these will be the good old days." For today's airline traveler, the early 1970s *were* the good old days. There was excitement, romance, even glamour associated with airline travel; and Western was particularly well placed. Not only was Western the country's oldest continuously operating airline; it was also headquartered in Los Angeles, the center of both the aviation and entertainment industries. Art Linkletter and Cary Grant were on our Board of Directors; William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, both of *Star Trek* fame, Fred Astaire, and Gene Kelly starred in Western's TV ads. Western flights featured "three feet for your two legs" with 36 inches between rows of seats, unlike today's 30 inches; choice of hot meals for coach travelers and complimentary champagne for every adult passenger. On many flights, 40% of the seats were empty, which provided further passenger comfort. We have made progress in many areas of commercial aviation; but from the passenger's perspective, progress has not meant an improved travel experience.

Today's advances are not nearly as obvious as those advances of the first fifty years of commercial aviation. The move from biplanes to the Boeing 747s was revolutionary. The progress made since my joining Western Airlines has gone mostly unnoticed to those outside the industry. Incremental advances to both engine and airframe design have compounded over time to yield significant savings in fuel, a reduction in pollution, and even a reduction in noise. Integrating the substantial improvements in computer, navigation, and communication systems has led to a more efficient use of airspace and a safer operation. *These technological improvements continue and have the potential to finally benefit*

those community residents who have long suffered the negative impact of airport operations.

Both Boeing and Airbus, the principal producers of commercial aircraft, are introducing aircraft that promise a 15% improvement in fuel economy, similar reduction in carbon emissions, and a 40% reduction in noise footprint. Most of these improvements come from new engines produced by Pratt and Whitney and **CFM**, a 50-50 joint company between **GE** and Safran. The Airbus aircraft are in use now, and so far have met expectations. The Boeing entry, the 737MAX, will be entering service in 2017. The certification process is moving smoothly, and Boeing expects its entry to meet or exceed its performance goals.

What does a 40% reduction in noise footprint mean for those negatively impacted by operations at **JWA**? I haven't been able to find a definitive answer, but we should soon learn. One of the air carriers operating out of **JWA** has informed airport management it will be certifying an Airbus equipped with the new engine option by the end of the year.

Quieter aircraft are not the only dividend we can expect from these technological improvements. Aircraft navigation and computer systems have reached the point that the **FAA** can design arrivals and departures with a specific ground track. We are fortunate to have an uninhabited area on the departure end of **JWA**'s principal runway that provides a path for departing aircraft to minimize the noise impact on our citizens. The **FAA** is in the process of reorganizing the airspace in Southern California—their Metroplex Project. **AWG**, as well as the city of Newport Beach, has made its wishes known—to design both arrivals and departures that use this new technology to minimize the noise impact on our community. While we are hopeful the **FAA** will accommodate our request, we are ready to marshal our resources, both financial and human, to ensure our constituents' concerns are addressed.



Jim was a former pilot with Western and Delta Airlines

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The Airport Working Group of Orange County, Inc.*

**If you would like further information,
visit our website at: www.awgoc.com**

**Report JWA Airplane Noise by Calling:
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Please support the efforts of AWG by making a contribution today.

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If you would like further information or to report any noise complaints, visit our website at: www.awgoc.com

ANNOUNCING OUR NEW AWGOC WEBSITE

After many years, Airport Working Group has been able to update our website to make it more user friendly and to position it as a significant source of information for the community. The weblink address is the same...www.awgoc.com, so your favorites links should work fine, but if there are any problems, just type the address in as shown above.

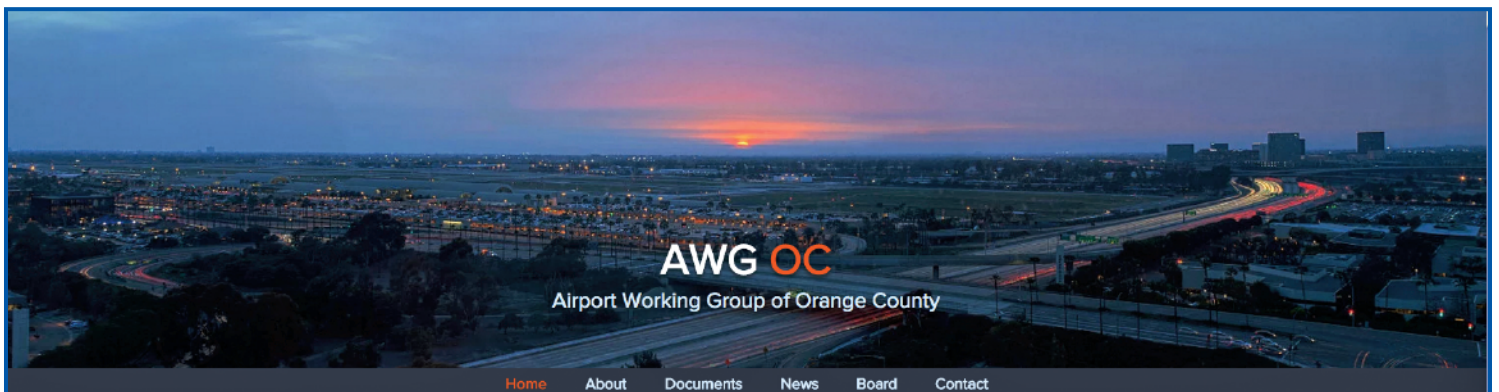
Several new features include-

- The ability to push notices to you, if you “opt in”, when

new information or documents have been added.

- Contributions to AWG can be made on-line via PayPal to save postage mailing expense and hassle.
- Ease in leaving messages or questions for AWG.
- Housing a depository of document links from the related industry (articles on new quieter engines, airline articles, FAA information, city postings, etc.).

Take a look and let us know what you think!



AWG will be able to include other relevant material from the community. Please leave a message on the awgoc.com website and we will contact you. Also, neighborhood meetings and events will be posted on the website for your convenience.