

AIRCRAFT NOISE ABATEMENT TASK FORCE
3rd SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT
OCTOBER 2004

Since the last report was submitted on March 22, 2004, the Aircraft Noise Abatement Task Force (Task Force) has met on six separate occasions (2/25/04, 3/31/04, 4/28/04, 5/26/04, 6/30/04, and 8/25/04). The intent of this report is to briefly outline initiatives taken by the Task Force to address public concerns regarding aircraft noise impact on surrounding communities.

AIRPORT STAFFING CHANGES

Noah Lagos began his new appointment as Airport Director on February 16, 2004. With the approval of the Task Force, Mr. Lagos recommended that Thomas Jewsbury, Deputy Airport Director – Operations & Facilities, remain in his current role relative to the committee.

On March 12, 2004, the Airport Director appointed Jason Schwartz on a full-time basis, to serve as the central point of contact for noise complaints and the dissemination of routine noise related information. Mr. Schwartz is an Airport Operations Supervisor that has been instrumental in conducting research related to airport noise and noise abatement, responding to noise complaints, and developing the St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport's (Airport, PIE) Noise Abatement Procedures brochure and website. This dedicated position will provide timely and knowledgeable responses to community concerns.

On August 23, 2004 the Airport Director announced the appointment of Michele Routh to the full-time position of Community Relations Director. Ms. Routh oversees communications and community, media, and government relations for the Airport. Ms. Routh was introduced to the Task Force and will be attending future meetings.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE CHANGES

The following is a summary of changes that have occurred to the flight schedule over the past six months:

- Air Transat operated a seasonal flight between February-April that departed Mondays at 11:29 p.m. The flight was able to utilize the St. Pete 2 Noise Abatement Departure Procedure.
- On April 26, 2004, ATA discontinued service to Los Angeles resulting in the elimination of a 5:30 a.m. arrival.
- Southeast Airlines rescheduled a weekly arrival from Allentown, Pennsylvania, from 11:00 p.m. to 10:40 p.m. to avoid operating near the Quiet Window. Southeast Airlines is reducing their fall and winter schedule by approximately twenty-five percent.
- In March 2004, Japan Airlines (JAL) selected PIE to provide charter service for the Devil Rays and Yankees baseball teams to an expedition game in Tokyo, Japan. After meeting with the Airport Director, JAL agreed to adhere to noise abatement procedures and request higher departure altitudes from air traffic control. The JAL charters arrived at 11:36 p.m. and 12:00 a.m., and departed at 2:40 a.m. and 3:00 a.m.
- Paragon Express, a check courier company that operates a small single engine aircraft that departs between the hours of 12:00 a.m. - 1:00 a.m., ceased operations as of October 1, 2004.

- At the time this semi-annual report was being drafted, ATA announced plans to discontinue service from Las Vegas beginning November 1, 2004; therefore, eliminating their 6:00 a.m. arrival.

“QUIET WINDOW” (11 P.M. - 6 A.M.)

As of November 1, 2004, UPS Flight #6154, scheduled to arrive Tuesday-Friday at 5:38 a.m., will be the only remaining scheduled flight to operate within the Quiet Window. This does not eliminate the occasional scheduled arrivals or departures that occur during the Quiet Window as a result of unforeseen delays (i.e. weather, mechanical, etc.).

The Airport continues to monitor UPS morning arrivals to ensure that they continue to honor their commitment that the morning flights will not arrive any earlier than fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time. The Supervisor of Noise Affairs monitors arrival times and submits weekly reports to UPS Headquarters for review. There have been incidents where arrivals exceed the fifteen-minute commitment, though UPS has been quick to address and rectify the problem. UPS recently replaced their DC-8 aircraft with an Airbus 300 that generates less noise.

MILITARY OPERATIONS

The Airport Director briefed the Task Force that he had met with Everett Rollins III, the new Commanding Officer for the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater, on August 9, 2004 to provide an overview of aircraft noise sensitivity issues and encourage their continued support to minimize noise exposure to surrounding communities.

On July 7, 2004, a Navy aircraft was conducting training exercises at PIE between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 12:00 a.m. The Airport Noise Affairs Division made contact with the commanding officer and expressed our desire to avoid training operations during the Quiet Window. The officer was very receptive and sent out a notice advising pilots not to conduct training operations during these hours.

NOISE MITIGATION EFFORTS

In cooperation with the Task Force and Airport, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Regional Flight Procedures Office has developed a new “preferred” Area Navigational/GPS Approach to Runway 17L that would enable specially equipped aircraft to arrive from the north over Tampa Bay at night avoiding certain noise sensitive communities. The proposed approach was submitted to the FAA National Flight Procedures Office in spring 2004, and is currently under review for their final approval.

On June 15, 2004, Airport staff conducted a meeting with representatives from Tampa and St. Petersburg-Clearwater Air Traffic Control (ATC) to review and discuss Tampa Bay airspace constraints. Tampa ATC agreed to accommodate higher departure altitude clearances for air carrier and cargo flights operating during evening hours when there is minimal flight activity. To date, Tampa ATC has continued to honor their commitment.

The Airport Director provided the Task Force with a synopsis of his visit to Washington D.C. with Commissioner Karen Seel on June 30, 2004 to meet with Secretary of Transportation, Norman Mineta, and Congressmen Bill Young and Mike Bilirakis, to respectively request that the FAA reverse its position on evaluating the Airport's airspace issues and the evaluation of the possibility of restructuring existing airspace and accelerate the development of a "preferred" GPS approach to Runway 17L. The Airport Director is set to meet with Congressional representatives and FAA officials to follow up to his visit to Washington.

TASK FORCE STUDIES

On July 9, 2004, the Airport solicited a Request for Proposal for an "Airspace & Approach Procedure Feasibility Study & Procedure Design". The objective is to conduct a comprehensive feasibility study to evaluate existing airspace and terminal flight procedure constraints associated with the Tampa Bay area airspace. The study is focused on a myriad of airspace issues that include identifying and pursuing implementation of improved approach and departure procedures to Runways 17L and 35R in order to reduce aircraft noise exposure to surrounding communities. The study will also evaluate the potential for higher departure altitude clearance, a charted visual approach to Runway 35R, and support the Airport's efforts to establish a "preferred" GPS approach to Runway 17L. Proposals were received from three firms. On August 23, 2004 an evaluation committee, consisting of a member of the Task Force (John Padavich, Safety Harbor resident), three members of the Airport staff, and a member of the Purchasing Department, acting as facilitator, met to evaluate and score the proposals. On October 19, 2004, the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved the ranking and authorized Airport staff to begin the negotiation process with the number one ranked firm, Jeppesen, Inc.

On July 9, 2004, the Airport solicited a Request for Proposal for a "Noise Study". The Study will support ongoing work of the Task Force by updating existing and future (5-year) noise contours, conducting "real-time" single-event noise level monitoring at fourteen different locations, and contingent on the outcome of the Airspace Study, evaluate noise exposure levels associated with the potential development of a new Global Positioning System approach procedure to Runway 17L. Proposals were received from five firms. On August 9, 2004 an evaluation committee consisting of a member of the Task Force (H.D. Holland, Feather Sound resident), three members of the Airport staff, and a member of the Purchasing Department, acting as a facilitator, met to evaluate and score the proposals. On October 19, 2004, the BCC also approved the ranking and authorized Airport staff to begin the negotiation process with the number one ranked firm, Wyle Laboratories.

FLIGHT MONITORING SYSTEM

The flight monitoring system was upgraded to provide a live-feed to monitor military flight activity. Due to security restrictions, the live-feed is not available to the public via the website.

The Airport received input from Task Force members and residents that they were unable to access the flight monitoring system "replay" mode. The Airport was able to identify and correct the problem by providing the necessary format required accessing the "replay" mode.

The Task Force had requested the ability to plot noise complaint data to ascertain trends and patterns. In cooperation with the Task Force, the Airport is moving forward with developing performance specifications to solicit Request for Proposals to acquire noise complaint software and equipment to record flight tracks and ATC communications. The chosen vendor will be invited to make a presentation to the Task Force.

JOHN F. BROWN REPORT

Copies of the John F. Brown Report on international demand were provided to Task Force members. The consultant's findings were presented to the BCC at a workshop session held on April 27, 2004. On May 11, 2004 the BCC later approved the permitting and design phase to extend Runway 17L-35R to 10,000 feet, as well as adopting a resolution directing the Airport to continue to aggressively pursue all courses of action resulting in the reduction of noise impacts from aircraft operation on Pinellas County residents.

NOISE COMPLAINTS REPORTS

Monthly and quarterly noise complaint reports are submitted by the Airport's Supervisor of Noise Affairs and reviewed by the Task Force (see attached reports). At the direction of the Task Force quarterly and year-to-date reports are also provided. The majority of complaints continue to be attributed to low flying aircraft and noise abatement deviations.