

RESOLUTION

Santa Monica Airport Flight Path Impacts

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal government body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, Santa Monica Airport's so-called "Fly Neighborly Program" currently directs departing aircraft to avoid Santa Monica neighborhoods by overflying Venice, shifting the burden of noise impacts from Santa Monica's airport on to Venice residents; and

WHEREAS, the primary departure flight tracks from Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and Santa Monica Airport (SMO) (Runway 21 at heading 210) therefore converge and conflict just west of the airports, making necessary the sequencing of LAX and SMO takeoffs, thereby causing delays at both LAX and SMO, and causing jets to hold and idle on the SMO runway; and

WHEREAS, ultra fine particles and black carbon from jet fuel, particularly from idling jets, are thus spewing toxic jet fumes on a daily basis into West Los Angeles residential homes 250 feet from the east end of the runway at Santa Monica Airport (SMO); and

WHEREAS, a 1989 inter-departmental memo between the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regarding SMO warned that sensitive equipment and personnel should not be within 300 feet of jet fumes due to deleterious and dangerous health effects, and yet homes exist 250 feet from where jets blast fumes and Los Angeles residents experience these deleterious health effects on a daily basis; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is in the process of implementing the Next Generation Air Transportation System, or NextGen, with the goal of transforming the country's air traffic control system from a ground-based system to a satellite-based system in order to increase efficiency and capacity, while saving time and fuel, and improving aviation safety; and

WHEREAS, as part of NextGen the FAA has developed a Metroplex program with proposals to optimize the crowded airspace for the Southern California region, which is made up of airports from Los Angeles to San Diego, LAX and SMO; and

WHEREAS, the FAA has prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to document the potential environmental effects associated with the optimization of aircraft routes and the supporting airspace management structure while departing from or arriving to the Southern California Metroplex area; and

WHEREAS, in June 2008, the FAA Flight Standards Division changed the criteria used for evaluating obstructions and terrain, and in March 2009 the FAA clarified rules pertaining to Minimum Vectoring Altitudes (MVA) to provide for safer terrain and obstruction clearance for aircraft operations; and

WHEREAS, these two FAA actions changed the initial departure procedures for SMO Instrument Flight Rule (IFR) departures, thus increasing the contingent nature of departure operations at LAX and SMO and requiring that SMO departures at heading 210 must be sequenced with LAX departures, which produce significant departure delays and cause aircraft to emit tons of pollutants and emissions; and

WHEREAS, the FAA devised a test procedure for SMO departures to reduce the length of delays at SMO and LAX resulting from sequencing the traffic from both airports that required propeller driven IFR departures from SMO to turn to heading 250 immediately after takeoff, thereby providing the appropriate degrees of lateral separation from LAX jet departures and eliminating the need to sequence departures and the resulting delays impacting jets at LAX and IFR propeller aircraft at SMO; and

WHEREAS, the FAA issued an "Interim Review of Santa Monica IFR Departure Heading Test" on March 18, 2010 that reported departure delays had been drastically reduced; prior to the test the average number of delay minutes per month was 594; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Monica IFR Departure Heading Test reduced the 594 delay minutes per month to 87 minutes - an 85% decrease, and the runway idling and wait time was significantly reduced at both SMO and LAX, resulting in a positive contribution to air quality by reducing emissions; and

WHEREAS, the Metroplex project should design routes that increase efficiency and capacity, while saving time and fuel, and improving aviation safety;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by adoption of this resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2015-16 Federal Legislative Program SUPPORT for the FAA to adopt Metroplex procedures that seek to eliminate takeoff convergence and conflicts of primary departures flight tracks at LAX and SMO, thereby reducing or making unnecessary the sequencing of LAX and SMO takeoffs, and eliminating the cause for delays at both LAX and SMO; and that if noise and air pollution impacts are to be taken into consideration in the design of air traffic corridors and flight path operations, that such impacts be fairly allocated so as not to shift the full or disproportionate burden of the impacts from Santa Monica's airport on to the residents of City of Los Angeles.

PRESENTED BY:



MIKE BONIN

Council member, 11th District

SECONDED BY:



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