

Aviation Noise Working Group

MEETING SUMMARY

AUGUST 14, 2023; 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

VIA ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE

Meeting Objectives:

Overview of Greener Skies/Optimized Profile Descents' implementation in the Seattle area and the barriers to its completion. Updates on the Aviation Near-term Noise Action Agenda.

Meeting Summary:

- I. Facilitator Welcome, introduction, and meeting agenda, Brian Scott, BDS Planning & Urban Design (filling in for Andres Mantilla)

- II. SEA Flight Patterns, Tom Fagerstrom, Noise Programs Manager, Port of Seattle (POS)
 - Presentation is a primer for Lynae Craig's (Alaska Airlines) presentation which follows.
 - FAA's NextGen Program aims to modernize the U.S National Airspace System
 - Utilizes satellite-based navigation for aircraft rather than ground-based radar systems
 - Results in narrowed and concentrated flightpaths wherever it is implemented
 - NextGen arrival procedures at SEA (Greener Skies Program) began to be implemented for west-side approaches in 2014, with some early implementation in 2013.
 - Pilots ask for permission to fully utilize this procedure all the way through Elliott Bay. If used more often, noise benefit for north Seattle would be significant. The turn through Elliot Bay is rarely utilized however.

- III. Greener Skies/Optimized Profile Descents in Seattle, Lynae Craig, Director of Air Traffic Management & Airfield Operations, Alaska Airlines
 - Lynae introduced herself and gave brief background on RNP (Required Navigation Performance)
 - Initial goals of Greener Skies: eliminate the traditional step-downs and level-off on arrival for aircraft in the approach pattern to the west of SEA; fuel and emissions savings; reduce noise exposure; maintain or enhance capacity
 - OPD (Optimized Profile Descents), rather than a step-down descent, allows pilots to power back as much as possible during the descent and ultimately use RNP all the way to the runway.

- Successes: implemented OPD arrivals; implemented RNP approach to the west of SEA; high aircraft RNP equipage rate at SEA
 - Benefits of OPD demonstrated. RNP approaches are shown to work when fully utilized.
 - FAA issued waiver for aircraft separation for RNP flights merging from the west in a curved path (such as the Elliott Bay turn).
 - Reduces air traffic controller communications by 15 or 18 instances versus the step-down descent.
- Challenges: air traffic has increased in recent years; merging traffic from west and east of SEA; pilot must request RNP approach through Elliott Bay; aircraft sequencing tool TSAS (Terminal Sequencing and Spacing) delay
 - Air traffic volume continues to increase. Eastside arrivals utilize traditional approach procedures. Challenge with how aircraft are sequenced using the two approaches: traditional and RNP.
 - FAA waiver for RNP aircraft separation expired
 - Traffic sequencing and spacing tool has been defunded and was not put into effect.
- Barriers: Traffic volume/efficiency; balance arrivals with departures; airfield surface congestion could increase with full implementation of turn through Elliott Bay; sequencing tools; FAA waiver expired
 - High rate of arrivals would help get planes on the ground faster but they would need to be balanced with comparable airport departure rates.
 - RNP on only one side of the airport.
 - To start this process over would require a new separation waiver for the RNP approaches.
- Questions: FAA's NAC (NextGen Advisory Committee) tasks – increase RNP use? Airspace change necessary? Denver CRDA (converging runway display aid) application to SEA? FAA waiver renewal?
 - NAC asked industry stakeholder group to develop plan to reduce number of instrument flight procedures and increase use of existing PBN (performance based navigation) procedures.
 - Through this process, can we reenergize RNP to get more usage of this approach through Elliott Bay?
 - Denver has a very good RNP program. CRDA – tool intended for something else but helps greatly with sequencing. Seattle has the tool – could we figure out what it would take to get that to work?
 - FAA Waiver renewal for airplane on curved path versus a straight path.
 - Can provide win-win benefits. The 10-year-old data still shows that it would be a benefit.
- Q/A
 - Separation waiver requirements – 1 ½ miles versus 3 miles separation

- Still waiting for the sequencing tools; original project was delayed so long it was eventually killed. No easy answer as to why it's not being used. Many factors are contributing.
- We need to figure out what we need to do to make it happen; then we can take a good look at the benefit analysis.
- Success is also in reduced fuel burn and improved safety. Airports do use it. Denver is currently using it and LA is trying to implement it with 2% aircraft utilization so far. We know there's potential.

IV. Aviation Near-term Noise Action Agenda, Tom Fagerstorm, Noise Programs Manager & Paris Edwards, Noise Program Coordinator, POS

- Late Night Noise Limitation Program
 - Established in late 2019; noise level thresholds during the hours of 12am to 5am were established for departures and arrivals; noise level exceedances are tracked and reported on a quarterly basis; airlines are contacted regarding their noise exceedances.
 - If noise exceeds an established threshold, airlines are contacted and sent a letter to see if change is possible. Possible ways to achieve a reduction is through quieter aircraft or a schedule change.
 - Exceedances: China Airlines Cargo in the top spot. FedEx moved down from top spot. Noise exceedances are declining because FedEx retiring MD11 aircraft – their noise exceedances should continue to decrease.
 - Increase in passenger operations during Q2 at night was observed. Cargo operations stayed steady.
 - Late Night Operations: FedEx noise exceedances decreased by 44% in Q2 versus Q1 due to the change from the MD11 to a quieter aircraft during late nights.
 - In July, an average of 47 operations during late nights – 41 passenger, five cargo, one general aviation.
- Late Night Runway Use: average of one third runway landing per night in 2023 through July. A total of 161 late nights with zero landings on third runway.
- July Noise Comment Report
 - July noise comments decrease continues with a slight decrease in number of comments when compared to June. It's not clear why it's going down. No significant flight pattern changes; flow didn't really change; cannot find a direct causation.
 - City of Burien mentioned a higher number of flights over Burien last weekend that seems to be continuing. Some are likely due to Seafair rerouting flights for the Blue Angels. Flight patterns have not changed, however. Other causes may be missed approaches that occur occasionally. Justin Biassou with FAA will investigate what other factors might be involved.
 - Decline in complaints may be influenced by industry working together to diminish noise.

- City of Federal Way asked if we can tell the ratio of comments coming from the Port app versus the third party button app. Approximately ninety percent of comments come through the third party button app. Monthly report does breakdown way someone files a complaint.

V. FedEx Express Fleet Changes, Marco Milanese, Community Engagement Manager, POS

- In June, our working group talked about FedEx’s improvements in the late night hours stemming from switching from the MD11 to a Boeing 767. We talked about sending a letter to FedEx congratulating them and encouraging them to continue these efforts. Letter has been approved by Steering Committee and hope to send that letter out shortly. We will promote the good news in other ways as well.
- For all the StART initiatives, we are making a renewed effort to get in front of air carriers and educate. Met with airline station managers, the Airport and Airline Affairs Committee (AAAC) and are soon meeting with air cargo operators.

VI. Noise Insulation Status Report, Tom Fagerstrom, POS

- Single Family Residences: Completed one home in 2023 and five homes have been through the design process and ready for construction at the end of August. four additional homes have gone through design and ready for construction in Q4.
- Condominiums: Three condo complexes are eligible; one is complete, and the others have chosen not to participate.
- Apartments: Progressing with five complexes. Process for hiring construction firm is underway. Phase two has four additional apartment complexes; they will proceed to construction the second half of 2024.
- Places of worship: three are eligible and are proceeding to construction in 2024. Five are eligible, two declined, and three are in design process.
- The Noise Programs Office has contacted every owner who is potentially eligible more than once.
- Tom provided a map of where the insulation projects are located.

VII. Wrap Up

- Next meeting October 9, 2023

MEMBER	INTEREST REPRESENTED	PRESENT
ADOLFO BAILON	BURIEN - CITY	✓
AMY ARRINGTON	NORMANDY PARK - CITY	✓
BILL VADINO	FEDERAL WAY - CITY	✓
BOB LEONARD	DES MOINES - COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE	-
BRYAN TOMICH	NORMANDY PARK - COMMUNITY	✓
GARMON NEWSOM II	BURIEN - CITY	-
CARL COLE	SEATAC - CITY	-
DAVE BERGER	FEDERAL WAY - COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE	-
DENISE LATHROP	DES MOINES - CITY	✓

JEFF HARBAUGH	BURIEN – COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE	✓
LANCE LYTTLE	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
MICHAEL MATTHIAS	DES MOINES – CITY	-
PETER PHILLIPS	DES MOINES – COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE	-
ROBERT AKHTAR	SEATAC – COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE	-
SCOTT INGHAM	DELTA AIR LINES	✓
SCOTT KENNEDY	ALASKA AIRLINES	-
LYNAE CRAIG	ALASKA AIRLINES	✓
ZACH SCHIELDS	SEATAC – CITY	✓
PARIS EDWARDS	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
TOM FAGERSTROM	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
RESOURCES	TITLE	
MARCO MILANESE	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
SARAH COX	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
STEVE VITNER	PORT OF SEATTLE	-
DAVE KAPLAN	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
PARIS EDWARDS	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
CLARE GALLAGHER	PORT OF SEATTLE	✓
JUSTIN BIASSOU	FAA	✓
CONSULTANTS		
BRIAN SCOTT	BDS PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN	✓
CHERYL SWAB	BDS PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN	✓
VINCE MESTRE	CONSULTANT	✓

NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 9, 2023- 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
LOCATION: ZOOM VIDEOCONFERENCE