

**AIRCRAFT NOISE ABATEMENT TASK FORCE
ST. PETE-CLEARWATER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT
(October 2021 and January 2022)**

Since the last report, the Aircraft Noise Abatement Task Force (Task Force, NATF) met virtually via the GoToMeetings platform, on two separate occasions (October 20, 2021 and January 19, 2022). The purpose of this report is to briefly outline initiatives taken by the Task Force and St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport (Airport, PIE) to address public concerns regarding aircraft noise impacts on surrounding communities.

NOISE ABATEMENT COMPLIANCE REPORT

The *Noise Abatement Compliance Report* for the months of July through December 2021 was reviewed and reported to the Task Force. The overall compliance rate reflected an average of 90%.

The number of flights during the Voluntary Quiet Window (VQW) ranges between 10% - 17%, with an average of 13% for this period. The latest scheduled flight within the VQW is 11:45 p.m. Some of the reasons for non-scheduled flights during the VQW were weather (Hurricane Elsa) causing ramp closures for safety and ground stops issued from the Jacksonville Air Traffic Control Center due to COVID (shortage of controllers), severe weather en route, and air traffic flow.

NOISE COMPLAINT SUMMARY

There were 886 complaints received during the 3rd Quarter, with 711 complaints coming from one household in Safety Harbor and 123 complaints coming from one household in Oldsmar. The top three cities submitting complaints were Safety Harbor, Oldsmar, and Clearwater. The top three reasons for complaints were excessive noise, low flying aircraft, and did not use a Noise Abatement Procedure (NAP). Mr. Sprague recognized Mr. Andrew Knapp, Oldsmar representative, and Oldsmar Mayor, Eric Seidel, for the letter written to the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Noise Ombudsman regarding voluntary quiet hours and noise mitigation.

There were 563 complaints received during the 4th Quarter, with 425 complaints coming from one household in Safety Harbor and 94 complaints coming from one household in Oldsmar. The top three cities submitting complaints were Safety Harbor, Oldsmar, and Palm Harbor; with the top three reasons for complaints being late night/early morning, excessive noise, and low flying aircraft.

For the year of 2021, there were a total of 4,593 complaints, with 2,386 complaints coming from one household in Safety Harbor and 729 complaints coming from one household in Oldsmar. The top three cities submitting complaints in 2021 were Safety Harbor, Oldsmar, and Clearwater; with the top three reasons for complaints being excessive noise, low flying aircraft, and did not use NAP.

ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Air Carriers on RNAV Noise Abatement Procedure Update

Mr. Sprague provided an update on the status of the airlines that have obtained FAA approval to fly the RNAV Procedure. On December 16, 2021, Swoop Airlines received approval; on January 3, 2022, Delta Airlines received approval, and on January 27, 2022, Sun Country received approval. All commercial air carriers and some charter carriers can fly the RNAV Procedure. Next, Mr. Sprague will work with charter air carriers United and Air Canada to get them approved on the RNAV Procedure.

Pinellas County Congested Airspace Working Group

Mr. Sprague advised of the formation of the Pinellas County Congested Airspace Working Group, which is comprised of local FAA officials, general aviation local companies, U.S. Coast Guard, Tampa Bay Aviation, Pinellas County Airports, U.S. Air Force, Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, and Pinellas County Sheriff's Office Aviation Unit. The Group is sponsored by the FAA Safety Team and led by Anthony Kiggins, Captain, U.S. Navy, retired; Captain, Alaska Airlines, retired. The Group will work in five different phases and are currently on Phase 2.

NATF Recap of 2021

- ➔ Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Southern Region Administrator, Michael O'Hara, provided an update on Metroplex which went into effect April 22, 2021, and a panel of experts answered questions from NATF Members and citizens.
- ➔ Major League Baseball (MLB) Toronto Blue Jays, began using the Dunedin Stadium for all home games due to the COVID restrictions between borders. This generated the need for MLB Charters to get Air Carriers on the Noise Abatement Procedures (NAP).
- ➔ Updated the FLY2PIE website including a newly designed Noise Page reducing the former three pages into the one current page. New software was added to efficiently track aircraft matching up to address where the complaint was submitted.
- ➔ Updated the Noise Complaint Form adding three new fields (Weather, Activity Disturbed, and Time Disturbed).
- ➔ Added New NAP Airfield Signage
- ➔ Updated the NAP Brochures to include the Metroplex.

- ➔ Once the Metroplex went into effect, the Airport monitored the departures and found minor inconsistencies on when they were being flown. The FAA admitted it was a software issue that was being resolved. The local Air Traffic Control Tower, as well as the Airport, monitored compliance and issued the back-up St. Pete 9 Departure when the Metroplex wasn't being flown.
- ➔ Announced the termination of Sunwing Airlines but added Swoop Airlines, which will be moving operations from TPA to PIE. Also, Sun Country Airlines, which solely provided charter service at PIE, announced Scheduled Air Service. Both Carriers started in Fall 2021.
- ➔ NAPs are for air carriers over 60,000 pounds. A need was identified for a NAP for smaller general aviation jets under 60,000 pounds. Mr. Sprague worked with the Fixed Based Operators (Sheltair Aviation and Signature Flight Support) to identify these smaller jets. Mr. Sprague worked with the FAA Metroplex and the FAA introduced the MAEKO departure for these general aviation jets.