

MMSHA - Airport Noise

First, it must be recognized that airport noise is unavoidable when you live two miles from an active air carrier airport. Those who have lived here a long time will recall that it used to be much, much worse. The biggest relief has been the adoption of quieter aircraft over the last 25 years and the dissemination of airport-specific noise abatement procedures to the airlines and to their pilots. But there's always room for improvement, and you can have a part in that as outlined below.

Having personally flown these noise abatement procedures as a pilot for decades, and also as a 27-year More Mesa Shores resident who dislikes aircraft noise when I'm home just as you do, I think the procedures themselves have been optimized about as best as they can be. They are effective, but can never be 100% effective because they cannot be used when weather obscures the airport and dictates the use of instrument procedures or when there are traffic conflicts. If improvements can be made, it isn't to the procedures themselves but rather how they are disseminated to pilots.

I think it may be helpful to understand how the noise abatement hotline works and how you can provide effective input. A little background first.

Pilots of airline and private/corporate aircraft carry charts for every airport they use. These charts describe the instrument procedures and flight paths used when weather precludes visual flight to the airport. Charts are published by the US Government and one other company whose charts are essentially nicer versions of the government charts.

With *very few exceptions*, airport-specific noise abatement procedures are not included in the charts that pilots receive. These procedures are generally developed locally by the administrators of airports like ours that are in the midst of populated areas. *There is no national, general dissemination or access point for publication of local noise abatement procedures.* The result is that many pilots flying into airports such as ours do not have the airport's noise abatement procedures in-hand. This means it's up to local airports to try to get their procedures into the hands of pilots using their airports.

That's where the noise abatement hotline and reporting system comes in. Its purpose is to positively identify flights where the noise abatement procedures *could* have been flown but were not. If the flight can be identified, the airport will contact the operator of the aircraft and provide our noise abatement procedures to them and ask the operator to ensure that their pilots get them. The airport sends dozens of such letters every month. (You can see the counts on the airport web site.) An ongoing effort is necessary because airlines and operators may deploy pilots new to our airport as their work assignments change. Sometimes new airlines start service here (e.g. Contour), resulting in a spike of non-compliant flights until their pilots receive and learn the procedures.

So rest assured that your reports ARE useful and are acted upon, but they have to be of good quality to be useful. Carefully follow the guidelines when calling the hotline to ensure that they have enough correct information to follow up on when they contact the airlines. You must provide your address and the **exact time, to the minute**, that the aircraft was overhead. If you can positively identify the airline from the aircraft logo, do so. Be polite, clear, and concise.

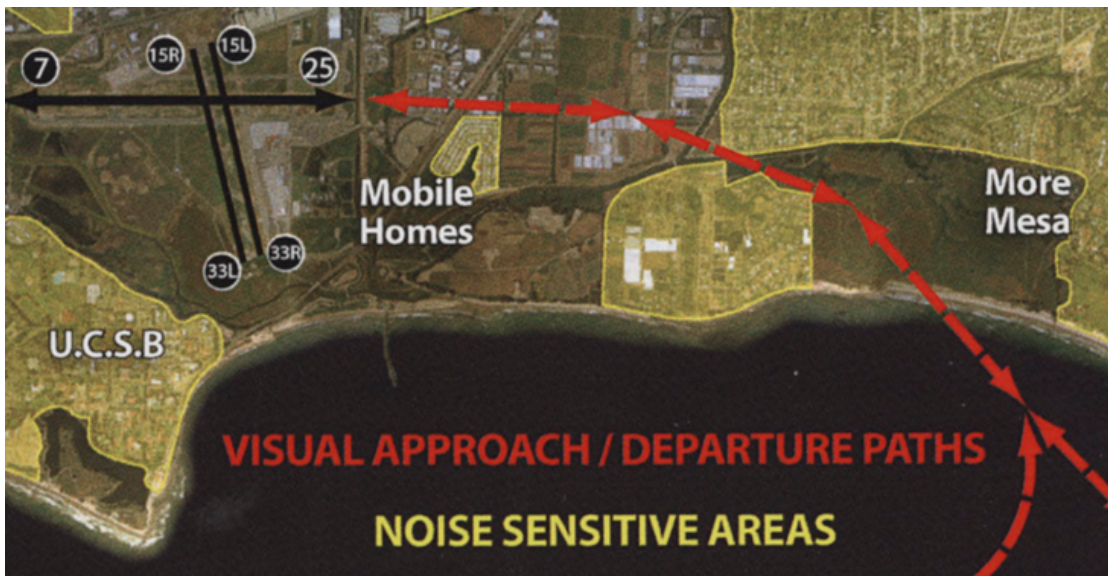
Do not expect a call back when you make a call to the noise abatement hotline, although in some cases you may receive one if the report wasn't clear. Your calls ARE being acted upon, but the airport staff only have so much capacity to manage the process. Their time

is better spent acting on your calls by completing the identification process, correlating it with other reports, and contacting the operators of the aircraft.

Do not call the hotline several times a day or every single day. If you make hundreds of calls to the hotline your calls will be disregarded. Quality, not quantity, counts.

In addition to the telephone hotline, the airport has just implemented an online system called Symphony PublicVue. You must register to use it, but it may provide a better way than the telephone hotline to make a report. Significantly, you can request an acknowledgement that your report was reviewed and see an indication of its status. Go to the airport's web site and look under "About SBA / Inside SBA / Noise abatement" to get started with PublicVue.

It may also be helpful to understand the noise abatement procedures so that you know what aircraft are supposed to be doing. (See below.) Think of the approach to the airport as a funnel, with the narrow end about one mile from the runway, roughly over the greenhouses along Patterson, and the wide end centered over More Mesa at the shoreline. By the time an airplane is at the narrow end, there is little leeway in its position since it must be lined up with the runway when that close in. (Just like your car can't do sharp turns at 140 MPH, neither can an airplane.) But at the wide end, crossing the shoreline, there can be much more variation.



The noise abatement procedure aims to remove that variation by guiding the pilot to target the center of More Mesa as they cross the shoreline. If you see an airliner crossing the shoreline well west of More Mesa, over our neighborhood, they're not following the procedure. Make the call.

We *can* work to reduce airport noise by providing effective, accurate input to the noise abatement hotline and the new PublicVue system.

Gordon Feingold, Austin Road