

# Air Traffic 101

Presented to: LAX Noise Community Roundtable

By: Dianna Johnston – Los Angeles District General Manager

Date: Wednesday, September, 20, 2023



**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

# Airport Traffic Control Tower (ATCT - “Tower”)

- **Prior to departure, the airline/pilot will file a flight plan. Items evaluated to determine which route to fly are:**

- Fuel
- Traffic Patterns
- Weather
- Required Routes



- **Once the aircrew is ready to depart, they will contact the Tower.**

Clearance Delivery → Ground Control → Local Control



# Terminal RADAR Approach Control (TRACON)

- **Once the flight is airborne, the tower controller will turn communications and control of the flight over to Southern California TRACON (SCT) controller.**
- **SCT is located in San Diego, and handles flights throughout Southern California up to 23,000 feet.**
- **SCT is the busiest TRACON in the world.**



# SCT Traffic Count

November 22, 2019

## Top 7 TRACONS

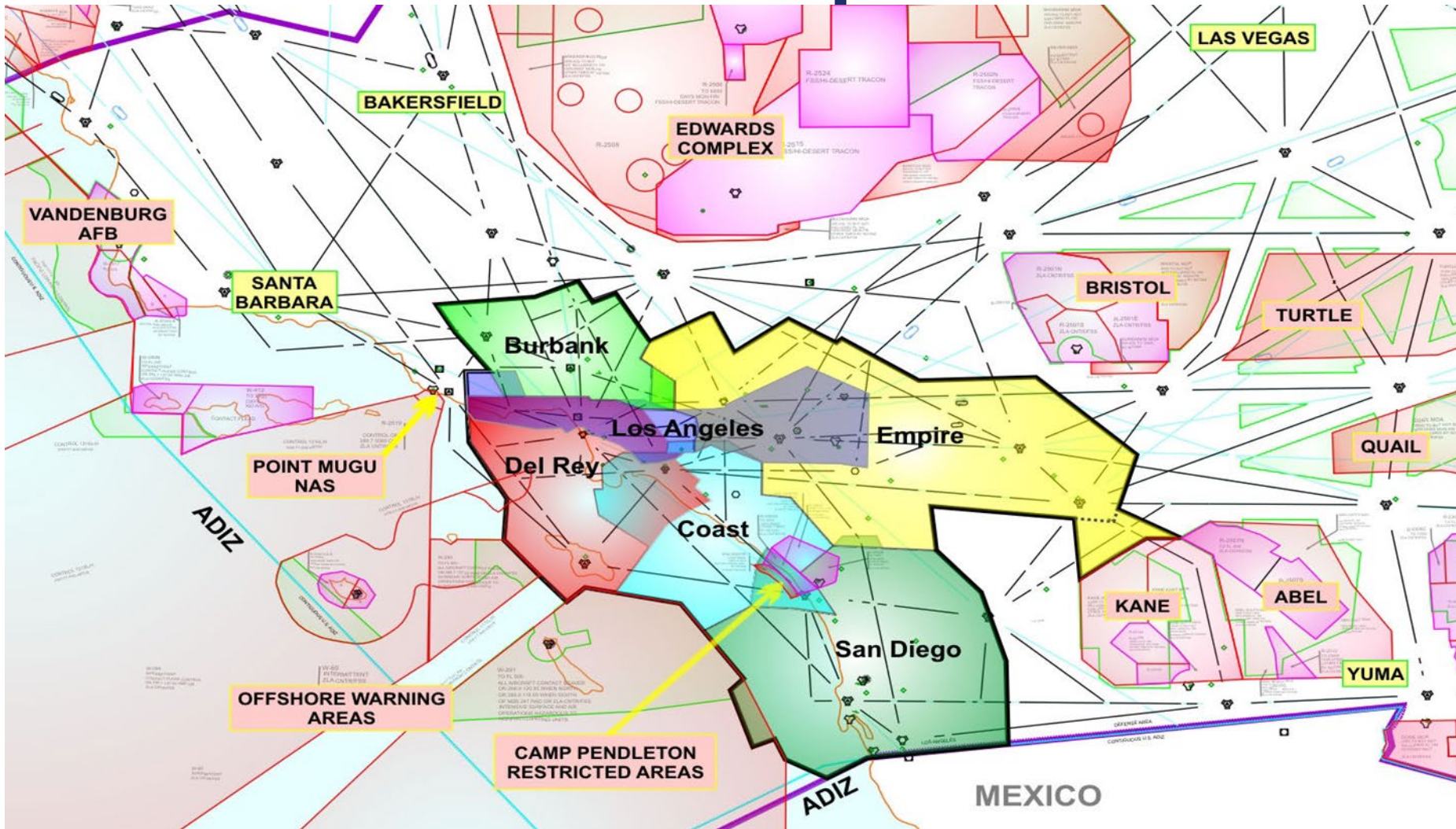
Facility	Operations		Delays			
	Total	% Var from Baseline	OPSNET Total	% of TMI Ops	To	AH
<b>Total</b>	33824	9.42	2	0.01	2	0
SCT	7406	18.21	0	0.00	0	0
NCT	5486	18.13	0	0.00	0	0
N90	5400	(2.6)	1	0.02	1	0
PCT	4031	2.47	0	0.00	0	0
C90	3998	12.21	0	0.00	0	0
A80	3815	11.84	0	0.00	0	0
D10	3688	3.86	1	0.03	1	0

**FY2018 –  
2,256,970  
operations, the  
most since  
2001.**





# SCT Airspace





# SCT Traffic Flows



# Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC – “Center”)

- **When the flight climbs out of the vertical limits of SCT’s airspace, communications transfer to Los Angeles Center (ZLA) located in Palmdale, California.**
- **During all stages of flight, controllers will ensure the flight is clear of any other aircraft and known bad weather.**









# National Airspace Boundaries

- There are 22 Air Traffic Control Centers
- Within each Center airspace, there are one or more Terminal Radar Approach Control (TRACON).
- Within each TRACON, there can be numerous airports. For example, SCT TRACON has 42 ATCTs.



# Phases of Flight

