



September 17, 2013

Mr. Michael R. Salamone
Manager, Airport Cooperative Research Program
Keck Center of the National Academies
Transportation Research Board
500 Fifth Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

RE: ACRP 02-48: Assessing Annoyance of Helicopter Noise Compared with Jet Aircraft Noise

Dear Mr. Salamone:

The Los Angeles International Airport/Community Noise Roundtable (Roundtable) is an organization that consists of local elected officials and staff, representatives of congressional offices, members of recognized community groups, the airlines, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and Los Angeles World Airports. These parties work together to identify noise issues affecting communities surrounding Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and to seek feasible solutions to reduce noise over those affected communities.

Roundtable members are optimistic that the research work from the Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP) will provide information that is supportive of the Roundtable's mission in achieving aircraft noise reduction at LAX. As such, we have been reviewing and providing recommendations on ACRP projects for the past several years. More recently, as you know, the Roundtable sent a letter to the ACRP to express our support and assessment for 14 noise-related problem statements for research consideration. It is our understanding that ACRP has selected 10 of the 14 recommended problem statements, one of which includes *ACRP 02-48: Assessing Annoyance of Helicopter Noise Compared with Jet Aircraft Noise*.

The Roundtable is particularly interested in this research as helicopter noise adversely affects many people in Los Angeles County due to the high level of helicopter activity in the Los Angeles airspace engaged in various flight operations. The research in ACRP 02-48 involves determining if human responses to helicopter noise are significantly different from those of jet aircraft noise, since the operating characteristics of jets and helicopters are very different. The study would also provide a better understanding of helicopter noise annoyance, and could potentially assist the FAA to better assess helicopter noise problems.

The proposed research will consist of selecting up to three helicopter routes or corridors to conduct surveys of residents, and to take noise measurements of helicopter operations along the routes as part of the research plan. We would like to take this opportunity to suggest that the ACRP select the *Imperial Helicopter Route* and the *West Pacific Coast Highway Helicopter Route* located in Los Angeles County as study areas for the research.

The *Imperial Helicopter Route* is located immediately south of LAX and follows the West Imperial Highway from the shoreline to the Harbor Freeway, with many residential areas immediately south of Imperial Highway. It is a common route used by helicopters transitioning from the LA basin to the coast or by those operating at nearby airports. More recently, some helicopter operators fly this route and hover over nearby residential areas to conduct plane spotting activities. These activities allow passengers to observe and take photographs of various aircraft operations at LAX from a better vantage point. Plane spotting flights tend to prompt helicopters to operate at very low altitudes and hover over residential communities for extended periods of time, causing noise disturbances to these communities.

The *West Pacific Coast Highway Helicopter Route* was established in the 1990s and is one of the major helicopter routes currently used by helicopter pilots operating at Zamperini Field Airport (KTOA), located in Torrance, CA. The route encompasses a high level of helicopter activity that causes noise annoyance for the surrounding residential communities. At the request of the City of Torrance, the FAA is looking at the possibility of modifying the helicopter route to increase the altitudes and to implement other voluntary measures to reduce noise from helicopter operations to help alleviate this problem.

Taking these factors into consideration, the Roundtable members believe that these two helicopter routes are very suitable for the ACRP research on assessing annoyance of helicopter noise and recommend the research team include the said routes in the study.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our interest in ACRP research. The Roundtable appreciates if you would forward this letter to the panel members of the ACRP Project 02-48 for their consideration. If you wish to contact us for further information, please address your correspondence to the LAX/Community Noise Roundtable, c/o Los Angeles World Airports, 1 World Way, P.O. Box 92216, Los Angeles, CA 90009-2216, Attention: Kathryn Pantoja, or call Ms. Pantoja at 424-646-6501.

Sincerely,



Denny Schneider, Chairman
LAX/Community Noise Roundtable

cc: Joseph D. Navarrete, ACRP
Eric Garcetti, Mayor, City of Los Angeles
Frank Scotto, Mayor, City of Torrance
Shant Megerdichian, City of Torrance Facilities Operations Manager
City of Torrance Council Members
Roundtable Members