

The History of Noise Abatement at Buchanan Field

The two public meetings held to date regarding the Buchanan Field Airport Master Plan highlighted the need to explain Buchanan Field Airport's Noise Abatement Program. Several community members expressed concerns that nothing is being done to resolve the noise issues. Conversely, several Buchanan Field Airport pilots and business members spoke to the many years of working with the community on noise-related matters. Given the divergent beliefs, I believe it will benefit all to detail the evolution of Buchanan Field Airport's Noise Program.

Our Noise Abatement Program is an always evolving Program, as we seek new ways to improve its effectiveness. We also acknowledge that it is unlikely that every aircraft-related noise concern will ever be eliminated.

- In 1965, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors created the Aviation Liaison Committee to provide advice and counsel on aviation matters including noise abatement. In 1977 the Committee was renamed the Aviation Advisory Committee, and it continues to meet the third Tuesday of each month.
- During the early 1980's the aircraft traffic pattern was raised from 800 to 1000 feet for light aircraft and to 1500 feet for heavy aircraft to help reduce the aircraft noise in surrounding communities. In addition, preferential runways for landings and takeoffs, when wind allows, were published to minimize aircraft flying over homes.
- In 1987 the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors authorized the Airport Ordinance 87-8 which had many noise reducing clauses. For example, flight training Monday through Friday between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. and extended hours on Saturday, Sunday and Holidays to 8:00 a.m. was prohibited. The older/louder (Stage II) jet aircraft were also restricted from operating at Buchanan Field Airport.
- In 1988 the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors authorized Airport Ordinance 88-82. This Ordinance strengthened the aircraft noise restrictions provided in Airport Ordinance 87-8.
- In 1988 the Airport hired its first dedicated staff position to manage the County's Noise Abatement Program and address neighborhood concerns.
- In 1989 the Airport completed a FAR Part 150 Noise Compatibility Program, as part of a Master Plan update.
- In 1998 noise abatement signs were installed at the runway run-up areas to remind pilots that noise sensitive communities surround the Airport.
- In 1999 the Airport established annual meetings with flight schools, FAA Air Traffic Control Tower staff, and air ambulance companies to review the Noise Abatement Program and discuss current community related noise concerns.
- In 2001 the Airport updated its website to provide better information to pilots regarding the noise abatement procedures and requirements at Buchanan Field Airport . It is a resource for anyone looking for information about the Airport, including links to the Airport Ordinance and the Federal Aviation Administration Advisory Circular on which the Ordinance is based.
- (www.buchananfield-byronairports.org.)
- In 2002 the Airport published a *Noise Management Program Guide* for pilots to quickly reference preferential and less impacted routes for flight planning purposes. Additionally, in 2002 the Airport streamlined the automated call-in phone system as requested by users. Noise complaints can now be filed by a single-touch telephone message system, and a complaint report is accessible by the internet.
- In 2003 the Airport implemented a new program in which aircraft owners were notified if their specific aircraft operation caused a noise complaint.
- In 2005 the Airport began an update to the Buchanan Field Airport Noise Compatibility Program, approved by the Board of Supervisors in 1989.

Airports staff members are very proud of the Noise Abatement Program. Everyone has worked hard towards making this program an industry leader. We continue to strive for improvements as we know that our work will never be done.