

MINUTES

Meeting of the KHR Communities Network Committee (CNC)

7/15/2021

Virtual Meeting

Board Members:

Present: Donny Sandusky (Jet Center/Advanced Air/Hawthorne Airport LLC), Robert E. Smith (Hawthorne Planning & Zoning Commission), Melvin Wagner (Holly Park Neighborhood Association), Julie DeCoste (Hollyglen Neighborhood Association), Bob Hawks (Wiseburn Watch), Kathleen Teal (Gardena), Laura Emdee (Redondo Beach Councilmember).

Quorum present? NO

Others Present:

Guido Fernandez (Secretary) and Ivan Gutierrez, community engagement officer with the FAA.

Proceedings:

Meeting (no quorum) began by Donny Sandusky at 6:09 pm.

The minutes of the April 15, 2021 meeting were not officially reviewed or approved because there was no Quorum.

Oral Communications:

There were no comments from the public.

Agenda Item #3: FAA Guests to discuss request to meet with FSDO representatives about low flying aircraft, unsafe flying, and FSDO enforcement action

Donny Sandusky what is the process for enforcement action when there is someone flying in an unsafe altitude Ivan and how does that work and do you have examples of people being cited or losing their license because everyone here is frustrated by noise and especially by those not even following the regulations.

Bob Hawks what is an unsafe altitude. That's what comes into play. You guys decide what is an unsafe altitude. Is that correct?

Ivan Gutierrez There are regulations for that so if you guys would like to go ahead. I did have some talking points that I want to share with the group so its up to you if you want me to go through that now. Ok, good afternoon everyone. I understand that you don't have a quorum tonight but I can still share this information. It is being recorded which I would assume that you would be sharing this information with the other members once it is available. My name is Ivan

Gutierrez and I'm in the community engagement officer with the FAA and my primary areas of responsibility are southern California and Arizona.

The FAA investigates all allegations of unsafe flying. The process is to submit safety complaints to the local Flight Standard District Office also known as FSDO. The agency has designated community engagement officers like myself to represent agencies at roundtable meetings. When I received this request to have FSDO here present I did initiate the coordination to address it and through that process there have been some challenges from within the agency because Flight Standards is not equipped to present at roundtables as their main focus is safety.

If there is ever a safety concern the FAA must at a minimum look into it. Our website will walk you through the process for the questions if you want to submit a safety complaint when you make a complaint through the FAA hotline reporting form which can be found at <https://hotline.faa.gov>

Within the complaint it is important to have as much information as possible such as identification, time and place, altitude, and any supporting evidence to include photographs if you took any. When you provide identification tell if it is military or civilian, the color of the aircraft, whether you were able to get the registration number which appears on the fuselage or the tail and that is something we typically call the tail number, the time and place and that would be exactly where it occurred and what direction the aircraft was heading, the altitude and that would be based on your estimate and also based on local buildings and landmarks that you could probably perceive. If you have photographs, these would also be helpful to us and if provide that information about witnesses it would be helpful to have names, addresses, and telephone numbers in case we need to get in contact for further information. If you took photographs we would also like to ensure that you let us know what type of camera device or camera you used in taking those pictures. All investigations are in a case-by-case basis.

Once FSDO receives the safety complaint and has all the relevant information then they can work with air traffic to put an aircraft in a specific location to further investigate. FSDO will attempt to identify that aircraft operator. A quick internet search of section 91.119 of the General Operating and Flight rules can provide specifically prohibitions of low flying aircraft such as over congested areas and also other than congested areas.

In reference to actual enforcement these can range and are dependent on the investigation which will always be on a case-by-case basis. The actions that can be taken under the compliance could include civil penalties or actions that can actually affect certificates. Once again to file a safety concern please visit the FAA hotline and you can also locate there the local FSDO office and contact them on their website. Any other questions regarding FSDO we do ask that they are submitted via the roundtable and that they are provided with specifics to ensure that our local internal team can work with FSDO to get appropriate answers. Thank you.

As far as the actual altitude of these airplanes there is specific on those orders of what it is supposed to be. One thing to keep in mind obviously if a plane is landing then they need to

come down in altitude and if a plane is taking off then there is an altitude that could be lower at take-off. We are at the FAA working to try to get FSDO to present at roundtables, they don't typically do it, we are trying to motivate them to be here at Hawthorne. That is something that I'm diligently working on but at this time the agency has delegated presentations to roundtables to community engagement officers like myself.

Bob Hawks who is FSDO?

Ivan Gutierrez FSDO is Flight Standards District Office. The Flight Standards office deals with safety issues if there is any.

Guido Fernandez Ivan would you be able to send that information to my email and then I could share it with the group. The contact information for FSDO.

Ivan Gutierrez Absolutely. That is on the website. I can locate the specific Los Angeles one and send it to you. This is public knowledge so you definitely share it and put it on your website, you can do that as well.

Bob Hawks So out of say 100 complaints, how many is an action taken?

Ivan Gutierrez that is not something that I can answer. Like I said it is on a case-by-case basis. FSDO is a different unit but they will investigate and if there is action that needs to be taken they will take the action depending on the severity of course and if there is actually a violation that took place. That is something that they have to do and they have to investigate.

Bob Hawks the reason I brought that up. Based on the way the rules or guidelines are written, people put in a complaint and they get the same basic thing, well it is within the guidelines of the FAA and the altitude, etc. and everyone just gets pushed to the side.

Ivan Gutierrez I understand that. In my conversations with FSDO one of the biggest tips or guidance that they provided me is to have detailed information and I know it can seem like it's a lot to get all this information but you have to imagine that they want to place the airplane exactly where it was a when that complaint was made. So I think photographs, we all have cell phones or cameras but let us know what device you took it on because that can change the range or the look of it. If you are at an event and you have witnesses that will be able to share that information then all that information will be helpful.

Bob Hawks I use Flight Radar and I'll be out here when I hear it coming and it's loud and when I see it I see that it is low. I go to Flight Radar, I do a screen snap shot, I'll send it in and it shows 900 feet but then I get thrown back at the bus saying there is a time delay, this or that, he was at the right altitude. Really?

Ivan Gutierrez obviously the height perception, it's not something that I can personally say that something is at 9,000 or 10,000 or 900 or 1,000 feet. Obviously that is hard to say but if you

have pictures or something showing a landmark. You say that you are doing the screen shot on these devices. These are third party devices and I don't know if they are accurate or not but obviously the more information you can put it would be better for the investigation.

Bob Hawks out of curiosity. How accurate can you be with a cell phone camera?

Ivan Gutierrez I wouldn't know how to answer that question.

Guido Fernandez Donny have you had experiences with FSDO being a pilot?

Donny Sandusky we deal with the FSDO, that's who as pilots and as an operator that is the office that oversees all of our operations. We've had a few pilots miss radio calls but I haven't heard of anything of altitudes. Years ago I know a guy who was identified by the aircraft tail number and by the color of his watch because that's how close he was to the beach. He got his license suspended. My experience with them has not been about action against a pilot.

Guido Fernandez in reference to that question as far as minimums. There is no minimum when you are departing or arriving.

Donny Sandusky Yes, for landing and take-off. The 1,000 is for sustained flight, level flight. 1,000 feet above and one mile horizontally from the nearest object in a congested area. LA is congested. If the aircraft shows it is still climbing on departure then it's going to be hard for them to go after someone and be any consequences. Same thing for landing, if they are in a constant descent to land. It is challenging because you are in a departure of an airport.

Guido Fernandez but once they have leveled off then that's a different story?

Donny Sandusky Yes, unless they are told to by ATC but ATC would never have you level off at 1,000 feet or 1,500 feet unless there is some sort of emergency.

Melvin Wagner when they are descending they have a certain air speed that they have to travel?

Donny Sandusky there are air speed limitations within this airspace. You cannot exceed 200 knots within that airspace. You cannot operate an aircraft when it is reckless to those in the ground or to property. There is a descent path you follow when you come in approach. There are visual cues and also instrumentation you can use as a pilot.

Donny Sandusky But that doesn't mean you have to follow. You can come at a much faster rate but there is a speed limit of 200 knots within it.

Guido Fernandez Ivan, once I get that information from you. We have an informational document where I put the noise portal that you gave me and I will add it under FSDO.

Ivan Gutierrez That would be perfect. Like I said, the more information you provide the better it would be for the investigators.

Guido Fernandez I think the frustration of some of the members is, they understand about there is no minimum when arriving or departing, but let's say they have level off and they are flying at 900, that's what their concern is. That's what they want to address with the FSDO. When it is considered unsafe flying.

Bob Hawks I would say getting up to an altitude quicker. When they come over here those Gulfstreams and they are at 1,000 feet, they're loud, and I'm at a 1.5 mile from the airport. You can do better than that.

Donny Sandusky that's what we tried to address with that request to the FAA to have a higher initial altitude for the IFR departures which is what those Gulfstreams are flying out on and they came back saying "not possible." With that being said, we met with the Tower manager to see if they could hand off those departures quicker to SoCal Tracon with is ATC. What happens is that you depart talking to the Tower and the Tower hands you off to the air traffic control that controls the larger metro area of LA and usually what happens is if there is no traffic that is conflicting or no potential traffic alert or you get too close then they will give you a higher altitude and we asked if the Tower could hand off that airplane faster coming off Hawthorne, to do the same thing that you are talking about, get them to a higher altitude initially and the Tower came back and said that they do it as fast as they can, as soon as they show on the radar on their screen is when they hand them off to SoCal Tracon. They are essentially doing everything they can as well.

Guido Fernandez Donny, do you remember the response from the FAA as to why the initial climb altitude?

Donny Sandusky yes, because of the overlying overspace. It conflicts with Special Flight rules, the mini route, and above that you have Class Bravo. Just a complex airspace. That initial altitude is there at 3,000 feet because you have Special Flight Rules at 3,500 feet and you have another route at 4,500 and you have a route off the coast at 2,000 something and you also have the mini route at 2,500 feet so it is really layered, all these different routes are crossing over each other and if there are aircraft to be flying at the same time at the same place they should still separate them by altitude.

Donny Sandusky Ivan, do you have any examples of pilots having a violation for flying unsafe?

Ivan Gutierrez I actually don't. I actually, to be frank, I was on google trying to find any fines or violations that were public. I haven't found any but I'm working with FSDO to get them to provide some that maybe are open to the public and once I have that I will share it so that you can see an example but I will continue to ask for them on my end.

Donny Sandusky can you ask for the FSDO for examples of people of flying too low or people being fined or most recent. That there are consequences to doing so.

Ivan Gutierrez I will ask that of them and I would also recommend that this group as a body does send a letter requesting those examples because that is definitely going to help that if there are any examples they are shared with you.

Guido Fernandez You did explain that you made the attempt for FSDO to come because that was our specific request. If you have a specific name and contact person that you want this body to send a letter of request you can share that information and of course we would have to wait until the next meeting to actually make that decision when we have a quorum but we would be happy to take that information from you.

Ivan Gutierrez Ok.

Bob Hawks you know, for the most part, all the pilots are following the guidelines that I can see. I don't see anything reckless. It's just the guidelines that are in place that the residents are having issue with. All you guys are following the rules.

Donny Sandusky yeah, I think 95% of the pilots follow them pretty well and then you have a few that are just negligent or are unaware. For the most part most aircraft are following the departure which happens to be over your house.

Laura Emdee Roxanne that used to be in this committee compiled 700 data of airplane data that went over her house and the City of Redondo actually hired a lawyer out of San Francisco to review all 700 and 4 of them violated the space. So each one of those 700 were noisy over her house so then I started to go let me figure out if there is maybe a certain type of plane that is causing all this noise but to put that on residents to figure that out is just so hard, people have lives and I've yet to see any pattern, could it be a certain type of aircraft, because even though they are following the 1,000 feet, it's beating our heads against this wall about these rules, like you said 95% of the people follow the rules, so maybe there are other rules that could be put in place, it just seems that there are other types of rules that Hawthorne can do to help minimize the impact on the residents that are not within these guidelines, we spoke about restrictions of time in Hawthorne we went down that road too. And what I'm feeling the frustration and maybe I'm wrong is that the residents just feel that they are at a dead end every time and that's frustrating. I know that you are respecting that it's frustrating but we come back to these meetings and I keep hearing the same frustrations and I'm not finding how we can kind of solve some of these problems and it affects some people much more than others and I don't know if that has to do with, could it be their windows or the construction of their house or how it kind of bounces off certain neighborhoods and in that case the solution would be can we get funding for them to get their windows replaced or do something like that, anyway, it seems like we are having the same conversation.

Guido Fernandez I think that the initial intent of the CNC was to bring the operators and tenants and community leaders to have an open discussion about the issue and we began to check off the boxes like what Donny said. Can we have an initial higher climb altitude and they said no, now we spoke to the Tower manager, can you hand it off quicker and they said no. It reminds of what Denny said at the last meeting, we can take a perspective that we are going to keep trying and we are not going to give up. Now as far as benefits that I've seen in the last 1 ½ year, 2 years, at least now we are communicating, Donny is here and he is spreading that information also to all the FBOs which was non existing before the CNC we were not communicating with pilots and now we are having the FAA come and visit us on a regular basis which I think is a good thing as well, but I do hear you, I definitely hear you.

Laura Emdee I didn't mean to leave that out, I agree, there has been communication, I feel the frustration of residents and it seems that there has to be something else we could be doing, I'm looking forward to the next check box to check, how's that?

Guido Fernandez agreed.

Bob Hawks question here. Where LAX got sued by Mike Fuer where the FAA lowering altitudes of airplanes coming in to LAX. If there are lowering their standards of elevation that compresses us at Hawthorne as well, doesn't?

Donny Sandusky I think I know what you are talking about. On the whole Metroplex redesign there was no proper environmental impact before it was done so the FAA was sued so now they have to do a proper environmental impact for those new routes. So that's my understanding I think that's what you are talking about. That's already been done and it didn't change any of the departures of Hawthorne as far as altitudes go since I have been here since 2010. It didn't affect Hawthorne's departures or arrivals but it definitely concentrated the arrival and departure routes over people's homes that were not affected prior to that and with GPS guidance now that aircraft use now like the new departure off Hawthorne that was implemented 18 months ago. It is GPS based departure and it's much more accurate it is no longer just looking at a heading and the aircraft is either on it or off of it and most of these aircraft have autopilots and you are telling it to follow it and it's very concentrated very accurate system but unfortunately for those that are under it and those that are off at either side of it are not going to see it as much as you used to.

Guido Fernandez it's interesting that you say that Donny because as soon that new SID, the SPACEX standard instrument departure we began to receive numerous noise complaints from the Del Aire neighborhood which we would never receive complaints from them before and now it's just constant that we are getting them and we have explained to them that we have no control over changing that instrument departure and there is also a neighborhood in Hawthorne that was impacted because like you said now they are concentrated over that area as opposed to being wide spread. If you move the flight path it might help one neighborhood but it will be to the detriment of another.

Julie DeCoste I have a comment and a question. Obviously I get a lot of complaints and people know that I'm in this committee and I try to give them feedback and I listen and I've learned a lot and I think it's good to learn and hear about this because it enables me to give feedback. What I'm hearing is that 95% are following the rules and there is always going to be that 5% and I don't think there is much about we can do about that, that's the FAA department, and I do talk to them about the curfew and violations. They want to know if they are getting a hand slap. My question is this, the jets, the little planes they don't phase me, it's the jets, are they increasing? Have we noticed an increase in the jets?

Guido Fernandez I would say yes. I would say that they slowed down during COVID but I don't think that you can deny that its increased but I think that everything has increased and honestly I don't expect it to go down, as the economy improves, and as COVID hopefully goes away, that it's just going to keep increasing. Donny can comment at this point as well.

Julie DeCoste I would love to hear what you have to say Donny. I know that we can't really do much about the other but is it something we can do to kind of limit how many jets?

Donny Sandusky Guido can tell you it's a public airport. It's like saying only 20 of you can come to the park. It's open to the public. There is no limit on the aircraft. ATC would be the limiting factor if they can't handle that many aircraft trying to come in. I agree with Guido there are more business jets flying. There are a couple of reasons. It's started during COVID you had limited airline schedules and people as things started to open a little bit they wanted to get out of town and if they can afford it now they are chartering a whole aircraft to stay safe and we are seeing more new customers to that market and across the whole country it's not jus here. And similar for business a way to move their employees because their airline schedules are just not what they were so it's more productive to move people direct versus through different cities so some business are using business jets to move their key personnel. Business travel is up on jets but lots more of recreational leisure travel is driving that market now and I would imagine that might decline somewhat as the world comes back to normal but how far are we, I don't know, 1 or 2 years who knows, with all these variants popping up, hard to say.

Guido Fernandez and Julie, I wish I could find the email but I get reports maybe every other day they are called Quick Hits and they tell you how many passengers the TSA has screened and I was used to during COVID seeing it was like 40% less than pre-2020 levels but that percentage has continued to go down so you can tell that passengers are just going back to flying commercial in increasing numbers as a matter of fact there were a few days in which I was shocked where it said, not every day but a few days, where it was higher than pre-COVID levels.

Julie DeCoste wow. As a homeowner and someone who sells houses a lot in Hawthorne I'm wondering what is it going to be like in 5 years from now, is it going to continue to keep increasing, the jets, the little planes it's not a big deal, I've been here for 32 years, it's the jets.

Bob Hawks Coffman and Associates gave us the load down as to how much it's going to increase.

Guido Fernandez they gave us an estimate for 5 years. A 5 year forecast. I think they were estimating from about 75,000 to 90,000, I think was the estimate but I would have to look at the chart.

Donny Sandusky of operations. That is piston and turbo. The Airport is only so big, yes it can handle some more capacity. I get it it's annoying for those living under departure and arrival. Yes, it can handle more but how much more, I couldn't tell you, it's not like you ever will see LAX type constant arrivals constant departures because there is not enough room in the ground. Coffman did have some numbers about potential growth.

Guido Fernandez and there are other pressures that I think most of you have mentioned before. One is Santa Monica shortening their runway and their planned closure and the stadium so there are things that would put additional operations.

Donny Sandusky I would say that in the next 10 years aviation is going to change a lot because of all these VTOLs and power sources electric or hydrogen that stuff is going to come to live and be real in about 10 years and aviation is going to change especially around a metroplex like this. We actually have a tenant that is moving in the company is called Universal Hydrogen but they are developing hydrogen fuel cell power plants to retrofit into existing aircraft so the idea would be that you are no longer using jet fuel to power these aircraft and now it's just an electric motor driving a propeller versus a turbine engine so it is quieter and it does not burn any carbon emission and it's just water as the exhaust. It will take their prototypes to be flying in 3 years. It's still a ways out. All these aircraft that are coming out, even the jets are getting they are getting quieter and quieter. Noise is a big concern, and I know it's in the FAA's priority list and 30 years ago it didn't matter. Now it's a design aspect, it's part of the criteria for designing the aircraft.

Laura Emdee that's exciting news.

Julie Decoste that is exciting.

Donny Sandusky when you compare a jet made today versus one that was made 35 years ago 30 years ago night and day difference as far the noise. They are only going to get quieter because if they want to continue to fly into metroplexes and not be a nuisance. The market is driving it. It's not going to happen overnight. Another example, I live next to Long Beach airport. Long Beach has an operations limitation for commercial operations based on the cumulative noise measurement for the year and they have some kind of equation they divide by X and it equals X number of operations per day. Well as aircraft get quieter and quieter they are under that threshold therefore they can increase the number of operations because they are still under that noise threshold so that's what happened like 3 years ago when Southwest started operating out of Long Beach is because instead of being 75 flights or 70 flights per day there are an additional 10 to 15 allowed because the jets that are operating in and out of there were quieter so it is in their best interest. That is grandfathered in and no other airport can put the

same noise abatement procedures in place or noise abatement plan in place but it is still in all these operator aircraft manufacturer's interest to make them quieter.

Bob Hawks question here. Correct me if I'm wrong. In the last few years did the FAA work with the commercial airliners in lowering the elevation or the altitude that they were going to fly at in order to save fuel?

Donny Sandusky I don't think so. If anything you want to be higher to save fuel. You burn more fuel down low but I know that routing is supposed to be more direct to save fuel. The goal is eventually to in the Next Gen traffic control system is to instead of having these step climbs and step levels off is a constant climb out and constant descent for more efficient operations but that's in the future. I don't know how far out that is. Hopefully eventually you will be able to depart an airport just continue climbing so you wouldn't be loitering there low to avoid other traffic and computers would take care of all of it for us.

Kathleen Teal would it be this office the FSDO that would also investigate things that happen with those jet packs that the pilots were seeing so often and any drone infractions like the stuff going on at Bolsa Chica. Is it the FAA and this office that goes after those people or is that somebody else?

Ivan Gutierrez the hotline is used for any safety complaints. So if they are safety complaints and obviously aviation you can submit them through that portal or hotline and it will get routed through. If they are not the group that would take care of that investigation then they would definitely routed to where it is supposed to be. Once again make sure that you provide all the information necessary so they can have that because even on that hotline it says that if they don't have all the information that may be necessary a no response may be given. So it's really important to have all that information as thorough as possible.

Kathleen Teal got it. So I see a guy with jet pack. I should be able to identify him.

Ivan Gutierrez even though local police departments are not aviation experts. They are certified and trained observers so if you were to make a police report that is definitely something that you can do and that is another process but having the hotline that you witness is a step in the right direction.

Donny Sandusky Ivan we will get a letter out requesting the information from the FSDO and any examples they are willing and able to share of violations or any sort of examples they can give us. Thank you for joining us even though we didn't have a quorum.

Guido Fernandez I want to thank Ivan for coming out. We appreciate it.

Ivan Gutierrez do you have the next date by any chance?

Guido Fernandez yes, it is in October, the next meeting. What I can also do is send out the schedule to everybody as a reminder. It will be October 21st. I can send that to you Ivan. I did take an informal roll call and we did have 6 members with us today.

Donny Sandusky I guess until the next meeting then. Hopefully we can get a quorum for the next one and make it official and get an answer from the FSDO in the meantime. Thanks for everyone's time.

- Meeting ended at 6:55 pm.
- Minutes were recorded by City of Hawthorne via Zoom.
- Minutes were reviewed and submitted by the Secretary, Guido Fernandez.