FALL UPDATE
Update - All things Aviation:

If you'd like additional information, please contact the Newport Beach City Manager's Office.

John Wayne Airport General Aviation Improvement Program

The airport is proposing to modernize its general aviation facilities and has taken the first step with the release, on September 20, 2018, of a Draft Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") 627. The proposal intends to make certain changes to the General Aviation facilities, including but not limited to:

- Modifications to buildings and airfield roadway to comply with current Federal Aviation Administration ("FAA") standards for airport design
- Provisions for an international General Aviation Facility ("GAF") 4
- Provisions for a flight school with tie-down areas
- Provisions for the Orange County Sheriff's Department ("OCSD") air support facility
- Provisions for a self-service fuel facility for general aviation aircraft
- Retention of the existing general aviation fuel farm, which is located on the southeast side of the airport

All improvements are proposed to be confined to the existing airport footprint

The entire EIR 627 may be easily accessed on line at: https://www.ocair.com/deir627

Anyone interested in making comments to the EIR 627 may do so. Comments may be submitted, in writing, postmarked no later than 5:00PM on November 6, 2018, via regular mail to Ms. Lea Choum, 3160 Airway Avenue, Costa Mesa, CA 92626 or by e-mail to EIR627@ocair.com

For those of you who decide to dig into the DEIR, you will find it is more general in nature as some of the parts of the proposed project have not been completely identified. The document is aimed at the more general planning level as opposed to being site specific. There is an excellent Executive Summary for those of you who do not wish to weigh into the approximate 3000+ page document.

Volans System to Add Noise Readings

The Volans system, which can be accessed on line at, https://www.ocair.com/communityrelations/flighttracking/, is a web-based application designed to display flight operations in 3D. The application is capable of showing aircraft operations to or from John Wayne Airport, and over Orange County. The Volans system will be adding an additional feature in the near future, namely noise readings of the particular aircraft as it flies by the respective noise monitors. The change in the system is scheduled for October 19, 2018.

A resident who uses Volans recently inquired why the tracks appear to move. In order to obtain the most accurate track of the particular flight path of a plane, be sure that the "*curtains*" application is turned on when you operate the system.

Access Plan 2019

The Board of Supervisors for Orange County recently adopted the allocation of flights and capacity pursuant to the JWA Airline Access Plan. John Wayne Airport has one of the most stringent aircraft access and noise monitoring programs in the United States, and perhaps, the world. Commercial Air Carrier operations at John Wayne Airport are regulated by the Phase 2 Commercial Airline Access Plan and Regulation (Access Plan). The Access Plan places restrictions on operational capacity, hours of operations, and noise levels at the County's ten (10) noise monitoring stations. General Aviation operations are permitted 24 hours daily subject to compliance with the daytime noise limits and the more restrictive curfew noise limits, as documented in the General Aviation Noise Ordinance (GANO).

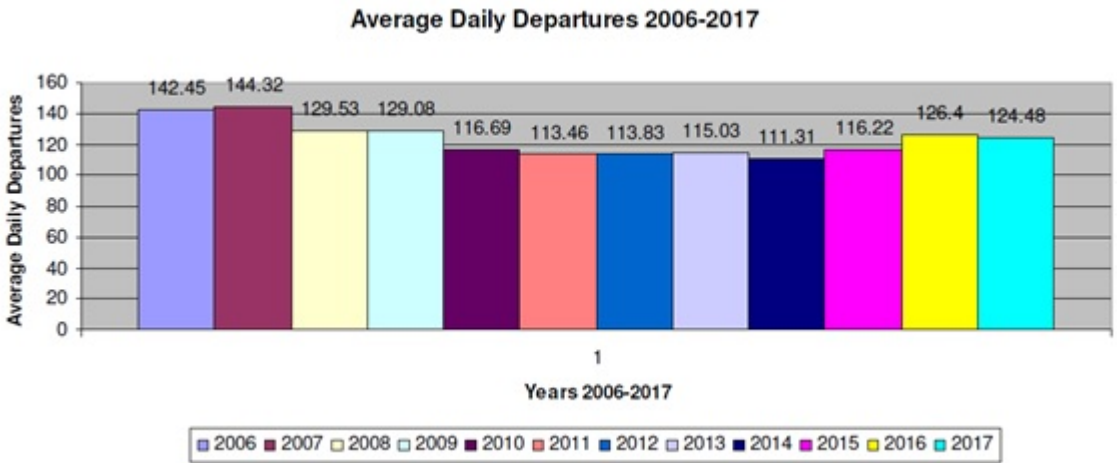
The County, pursuant to the Plan for 2019, recently adopted the allocation for each carrier including, but not limited to, their allocation of the number of Class A aircraft as well as the Class E Capacity both of which are regulated by the JWA Settlement Agreement. The entire staff report regarding the 2019 allocation may be accessed on line at: https://www.ocair.com/commissions/ocairportcommission/archive/2018/2018-09-05/agenda.pdf

JWA Monthly Statistics

Airline passenger traffic at John Wayne Airport increased in August 2018 as compared with August 2017. In August 2018, the airport served 991,112 passengers, an increase of 6.1% when compared with the August 2017 passenger traffic count of 934,515. The top three airlines in August 2018 based on passenger count were Southwest Airlines (354,854) , American Airlines (158,157) and United Airlines (157,680).[1]

In August 2018, there were 136.53 Average Daily Departures (ADD) vs. 128.56 ADDs for August 2017. The airport currently appears to be on course for service of approximately 10.5 MAP in 2018. The JWA Settlement Agreement allows 10.8 MAP.[2]

Again because people continually ask for a perspective with regard to the ADDs over the years, you will find below a chart representing the Average Daily Departures of commercial departures for 2006-2017:



[1] Percentage wise this equates to: Southwest: 36%; American: 16%; United: 16%.
[2] A perfunctory review of airports in the region show increases well in excess of the current increases at JWA, which underscores the importance of the JWA Settlement Agreement.

JetBlue Retrofit of its A320 Fleet

You may have read about JetBlue's3 announcement that they will be retrofitting their planes nationwide as a result of early production issues with the A320. It should initially be noted that any attempt to reduce the impacts of noise should be applauded. It is also important to put some historical context to this particular announcement. This announcement is as a result of a decision by JetBlue to retrofit their planes, nationwide, with vortex generators. Part of this is a result of the early production issues with the A320. The retrofit is the inclusion of a vortex generator. A vortex generator is a noise-reducing component, a simple 5cm piece of sheet metal mounted upstream of the vents which has shown to solve the problem. The early production A-320s create a distinctive high-pitched noise similar to the sound created when blowing over the mouth of a bottle. When air passes over circular pressure equalization vents for the fuel tanks located under each wing, *just before landing* gear and flaps are deployed for landing, the opening "whistles." Vortex generators have been used on the wing underside of Airbus A320 family aircraft to reduce noise generated by airflow over circular pressure equalization vents for the fuel tanks.

As indicated earlier above, this retrofit applies to older planes in their fleet. In fact, beginning in 2015, JetBlue began taking delivery of new aircraft with the vortex generators already installed. This current announcement applies to the remaining older generation of A320s in the fleet. As way of additional comparison, United Airlines in 2016 announced that they were retrofitting with the vortex generators on their fleet of A319s and A320s.

Finally hats off to the City of Costa Mesa for weighing in on this issue as early as January 16, 2018 concerning operations at Long Beach Airport. The letter to JetBlue by Costa Mesa can be accessed at: http://ftp.costamesaca.gov/costamesaca/council/agenda/2018/2018-02-06/NB-5.pdf

[3] JetBlue currently does not operate at JWA.

Southwest Orders the Last of its 737s
Maxes May Be on the Way

There may be a bit of potential good news for residents in Newport Beach, as Southwest Airlines announced that its dedication to an all-737 fleet entered a new phase as the carrier closed out deliveries of one generation of the jet and turned attention to the next. From now on, the airline will receive only 737 Max planes, the latest iteration of the narrow-body aircraft that is Boeing Co.'s largest source of profit. Southwest operates the biggest 737 fleet. As many of you know the 737 Max, which Southwest has begun to utilize, is one of the newer, quieter planes operating in the skies.[4]

Southwest is already flying about 16 Max 8s, according to the Dallas-based carrier's website, and has 237 Max of that model on order in addition to 30 Max 7 aircraft. The first Max 7 will arrive next year.

Departure Performance and Noise

Repeated questions have been asked about departure performance and the noise levels associated with the departures. While this has been addressed before it bears repeating. Remember that the manner in which the particular carrier departs the airport is dependent upon the carrier and their ability to not exceed the appropriate noise thresholds at the departure monitors. There are many different factors which dictate how and where planes depart and therefore how much noise they may create. It is not a simple equation, but here are the different factors which affect noise: 1. The procedure that the plane flies, which is dictated by the FAA. 2. The take off weight of the aircraft, i.e. the weight of aircraft upon departure. This is subject to the type of aircraft as well as the load of the aircraft, this is determined by the airline; 3. The type of aircraft or aircraft performance is another factor pertaining to noise. The climb rate and flight profile of departing aircraft will vary considerably based on aircraft type, this is again determined by the airline;

[4] See February 2018 Airport Update for a further discussion of the 737-MAX.

4. The noise abatement departure profile that the airline chooses, as an example, the so-called "close in" or "distant" departure procedure. Again, this is the choice of the airline. It can not be emphasized enough that all planes departing JWA need only meet the appropriate noise thresholds at the noise monitors; 5. Aircraft noise is also dependent on meteorological conditions including temperature, humidity, and wind. During warm temperatures, the air density (air molecules per cubic foot) decreases significantly, thereby reducing aircraft performance and lift. One report suggests that on an 80° day at JWA, an aircraft could have close to a 25% increase in takeoff roll, and up to a 20% decrease in climb performance due to a higher density altitude. Therefore the aircraft can be at lower altitudes over various areas of the departure tracks than on a cooler day. However, aircraft noise is also more noticeable on cloudy days. Low ceiling cloud cover tends to refract aircraft noise downward off the clouds, thus confining it.[5]

Questions about the Airport or Operations

This is a friendly reminder that if you have any questions about John Wayne Airport and its departures and/or operations do not hesitate to contact the City. In addition, the City is willing to go to various locations in the City to observe airport operations. Regarding any questions, the City will try and get you an answer or response as quickly as possible. If you wish to lodge a complaint about noise with the FAA, the City's link on its website is:
https://www.newportbeachca.gov/government/departments/city-manager/john-wayne-airport/nextgen

[5] As noted previously, HMMH is looking at departures from JWA and taking into account some of the above in determining so called optimal departure profiles.