



VATNAC NEWS

Statement of Concern

VATNAC has gathered, at least, 921 signatures on our "[Statement of Concern](#)," 458 from face-to-face contacts and 463 online. One thousand is just around the corner, let's make it happen. Halloween and homecoming neighborhood events are upon us. Tables anyone?

Special thanks to Rainey Astin for our latest neighbor-to-neighbor signatures. She didn't let a couple of broken toes hold her back. Well done, Rainey.

Are We Crazy?

Did anyone see the [article on the WAMU website](#) that says airport noise and the resulting FAA policies are unduly affected by individuals who repeatedly complain? This is the conclusion drawn by [George Mason University's Mercatus Center which is funded by the Koch brothers](#). The next day, my Google Alert found [another article in Quartz](#) that more fully described the "research." Here's a quote from that article. By the way, the article is titled, "A handful of cranky people risk making air travel costlier and more polluting for everyone."



Eli Dourado, a researcher at the libertarian Mercatus Center, recently examined the public records of noise complaints for American airports and came to a disturbing conclusion.

"We are letting crazy people make our airport noise policy," is [one way he summarized his findings](#).

Dourado and his co-author on [a new study](#) of airport noise complaints found that most of the calls are coming from a small group of people who are unusually irritated by what they're hearing, suggesting that costly decisions about noise mitigation—which can ultimately increase the cost of flying—may be driven by the complaints of a select few.

Both the [WAMU](#) and [Quartz](#) articles are worth reading.

Now, a first reaction might be:

- 1) Kudos to the motivated individuals who are complaining and trying to remedy an intolerable situation by working the system, and,
- 2) Most people don't use the MWAA complaint link (in the case of DCA noise) because they don't know about it or they suspect it's a sham; or,
- 3) People have complained but not to the MWAA complaint line. For instance, they may have contacted their political representatives or the FAA or airlines directly. Or, they may have called the DCA Control Tower directly at (703) 413-0341.

We know that 916 people have signed our Statement of Concern and that at least half of those signatures came from neighbor-to-neighbor contacts and volunteer outreach. So, a few of us may be crazy; I'll give them that, but most neighbors are motivated, hard-working, level-headed, and simply trying to remedy an awful situation involving government complicity in commercially-driven community degradation.

But, upon deeper reflection, one might ask "who are we fighting?" And, by *we* I mean the good people of Villamay and sister neighborhoods, and, by *fighting* I mean defending our neighborhoods and quality of life from noise bombing.

When we began VATNAC last Easter we assumed that soulless technocrats, money-grabbing airlines, and apathetic politicians would array against us. But apparently, we also launched an ideological battle in the eyes of uber-rich and politically ambitious movers and shakers.

A silver lining? Since the Mercatus "study" looks at DCA, IAD, DEN, LAX, LAS, PDX, SEA and SFO, these must be the top airports, in the eyes of the ideologically pure, where "free market" commerce is in peril. It's good to know that we made the list. Somebody must be feeling the heat. So...Crazy on!

Working Together for a South Flow Alliance

Carol Lyon is doing a great job coordinating outreach to sister neighborhoods. The goal of that outreach is to eventually form a South Flow Alliance that encompasses Mount Vernon District neighborhoods and supports our Statement of Concern. But, how might that happen?

Say you live in a sister neighborhood. Let's call it Belle Vernon Wood Hills, BVWH for short. If you're not a community association officer, just a regular neighbor, you might send a note to your CA rep, attach the Statement of Concern and ask that the CA endorse it. Then, when that motion passes with flying colors at your next CA board meeting, give Carol a call and let her know.

Then, hopefully, BVWH would appoint an organizer and begin outreach for Statement signers. They might set up tables or go door-to-door or just put something in the BVWH newsletter.

After a while, when enough sister neighborhoods have canvassed their residents and gauge community support, we could hold a meeting and launch a South Flow Alliance. In theory, that milepost would give us a greater influence with decision-makers.

If you live in BVWH or any other sister neighborhood, VATNAC can provide materials and friendly support to get things started. You can reach Carol at cl7433@hotmail.com.

And Now the Updates

Update from Mike Rioux, MWAA Representative

The MWAA WG community reps met on October 19 to get consensus on a comprehensive plan to present to MWAA and the FAA at the Nov 3 meeting. The reason for the comprehensive plan is that the reps have been focused only on what affects their community, which is not unexpected. As a result the collective focus was lost and the WG forgot that they are dealing with a system problem not just a noise issue over DC, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Alexandria and Fairfax County. There are many community working groups across the US dealing with the same issue and some airport authorities use these groups to demonstrate to the public that they care. Privately that may not be the case. We are fortunate that we have a WG that is making progress even though it is slow. BWI is dealing with similar noise issues, and the MAA and FAA are just starting to consider meeting with community reps.

Political pressure has some impact, but in the end, unless there is something substantial to recommend other than get the FAA to move more quickly, the politicians will get their face time with the FAA. Then, the FAA will tell them they are working on it and reference all the support and activity they are doing with a WG. Everyone walks away; blocks are checked, and everyone is satisfied except for us.

As you may know, Prince George's County does not support the conceptual revised flight procedure for south flow, and, last week I gave a presentation to the Mount Vernon Citizens Association (not MVCCA) explaining the process and the conceptual south flow departure procedure. They were not very supportive and were highly concerned that they will inherit more noise, which may mean they are not likely to support any changes to south flow. Another challenge that hopefully can be overcome.

The balance of the MVCCA resolution which included a DCA Fly Quiet Program, creation of a permanent Noise Advisory Group and addressing approach procedures to Runway 01 was presented and unanimously passed by the FFX County BOS meeting on October 20. A letter will go to MWAA from the FFX County BOS, which will be helpful.

In case you were not aware, the DC government published an RFA (due Nov 10) which is designed to contract an independent contractor to help the District better understand the impacts of airplane noise on District communities due to NextGen implementation and identify potential improvements to existing noise abatement programs. A noise assessment is something the WG has tried to get MWAA to support and fund but to date they don't see the value of such a study; we are working hard to get them to understand the benefit of determining noise footprints for both the north and south flow flight procedures. If we want our other elected officials to be supportive one suggestion would be for VA and MD to take the same approach as DC and contract a noise assessment. Not sure where the funding will come from considering that the VA budget has a shortfall but we will leave that up to the politicians. Fairfax County could be an option, but money is tight there as well. MD and VA could partner on the assessment as well making it less expensive.

Actions that our elected officials can take to support our efforts include:

- Stop the 1250 flight perimeter exceptions at DCA.
- Support efforts to send more flights to IAD.
- Support recent FFX County BOS resolution.
- Sponsor or partner with MD and DC on completing a noise assessment.

Update from Paul Krizek, Delegate, 44th District, Virginia House of Delegates

Good news! The Supervisors unanimously approved sending a letter to the FAA in support of the Fly Quiet Program and keeping the MWAA Working Group going. Please send Supervisor Storck an email thanking him for his successful advocacy on our behalf. I saw him last night after the meeting and thanked him personally.

I did follow up with him on Mary's idea regarding the County's Airplane Advisory Board. Essentially, he feels, and I kind of agree, that that has been superseded by the MWAA Working Group board.

Supervisor Storck's Motion

Here's the motion that our good friend a supporter, Dan Storck, successfully led through the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Nicely done, Supervisor Storck.

JOINT BOARD MATTER WITH CHAIRMAN SHARON BULOVA AND SUPERVISOR DAN STORCK FOR MWAA

FOR Implementation of a DCA Fly Quiet Program & Implementation of a Permanent MWAA Noise Advisory Working Group

Background

Residents in the Belle Haven, Villamay, Marlan Forest, Mason Hill, Hollin Hills, Wellington Heights, and other communities of the Mount Vernon District have been

subjected to continuous high noise levels since April 2015, created by aircraft departing DCA and turning west five miles south of the airport to pass overhead in climb power at altitudes between 2200-3500 feet.

The current MWAA working group is chartered to inject broad-based community input into noise-related discussions, and to move the noise discussion beyond the airing of individual and neighborhood complaints toward a cooperative effort to identify practical solutions and recommend those solutions to the MWAA for submission to the Federal Aviation Administration for consideration and action.

To date, noise complaints north of DCA have resulted in two Working Group recommendations that the FAA revise the current north flow departure procedure waypoints to maximize the time aircraft spend flying directly over the Potomac River and minimizing the time aircraft spend flying over adjacent communities.

The Mount Vernon community is asking for the same consideration to be given to the southern part of Fairfax County with recommendations for MWAA and FAA to reduce the excessive noise concentrated on affected communities and not to simply move the problem to other communities both within and beyond the Mount Vernon district. Identifying and rectifying the issues of outgoing and incoming aircraft noise is critical for a complete solution.

In addition, implementation of a DCA Fly Quiet Program provides an opportunity to influence airlines to operate as quietly as possible in the Washington DC Metropolitan Area. A successful Fly Quiet Program should reduce both single event and total noise levels around the airport and along the departure and approach flight paths. Fly Quiet reports communicate results in a clear, understandable format on a scale of 0-10, zero being poor and ten being good. This allows for an easy comparison between airlines over time. Individual airline scores are computed and reports are generated each quarter. These quantitative scores allow airline management and flight personnel to measure exactly how they stand compared to other operators and how their proactive involvement can positively reduce noise in the Washington DC Metropolitan Area. Each Program Element described below will be graded on a scale of 0-10 with an average score calculated for all the Elements.

Proposed Action

Therefore, I move the Board authorize staff to write a letter to MWAA indicating the Board of Supervisors support to implement a DCA Fly Quiet Program, and create a permanent MWAA Noise Advisory Working Group, and address noise issues of outgoing as well as incoming aircraft.

But wait, there's more

Rate of Climb

Ever wonder if air traffic could climb higher and eliminate some of the ground noise? Here's a link from Mike Rioux you might want to investigate.

To calculate ROC (for example) take 255 feet per nautical mile and ground speed of 70 knots and plug it into the formula: (70 KTS divided by 60 minutes) times 255 feet per nautical mile = 298 feet per minute rate of climb. Most are flying at a ROC of ~ 200' per minute.

<http://expertaviator.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/ClimbDescent-Table.jpeg>

Legal Damages for Air Traffic Noise?

This link was passed along by Kacey Olney. Thanks, Kacey.

<http://airportnoiselaw.org/damages.html>

Jobs

All the jobs listed below are still open. But, the most important message is this: Contributors are a must.

If you want VATNAC News to continue, pitch in. Many people happily write email missives about the noise bombing of our peaceful, well-maintained neighborhoods. I say, take it one step further and compose an article that you'd like the VATNAC mailing list to read. I'll be happy to inflict minimal editorial control and let them fly, so to speak. Please take to heart. SJH

FAA Liaison – We need a direct channel to the FAA.

Political Aggregator – Track political developments of interest to VATNAC.

Air Traffic Noise Campaign Cataloger – Robin Brown on the job, if you want to help please get in touch.

Newsletter Editor – Channel your inner Thomas Payne and relish being edited by Lisa Aramony.

FOIA Hound – Anticipating the need to start asking questions of the FAA. The truth is out there.

Villamay Volunteer Lawyers' Committee – Anticipating the need to flesh out our court-based options.

If you want in, give me a call or shoot an email to Steve Hantzis 571-882-1660 or sjhantzis@gmail.com.