



LAX/Community Noise Roundtable

Aviation Noise News Update

May 10, 2017

Secretary Chao Leads ATC Fact-Finding Mission to Canada



On March 30 and 31, 2017, U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao led an American delegation on a review of Canada's air traffic control system

- Joining Secretary Chao on the trip was House Transportation Committee Chairman Bill Shuster who has long advocated for privatizing the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) air traffic control division
- Nav Canada, the FAA's counterpart in Canada, is often cited as a model for a privatized air traffic organization
- "The delegation was interested in learning more about Nav Canada, its operations pursuant to powers granted by the Civil Air Navigation Services Commercialization Act, and the transition process toward becoming a private, non-share capital corporation, working at arm's length from the Government with the exclusive right in Canada to provide air navigation services," Transport Canada said.
- Chairman Shuster intends to reintroduce legislation to privatize the FAA's air traffic control operation as part of the next FAA reauthorization bill that expires on September 30, 2017



Photo Credit: Transport Canada

Airbus Adds 80 Seats to the A-380



In an effort to boost flagging sales, Airbus announced at the 2017 Aircraft Interiors Expo in Hamburg, Germany, that it intends to add 80 more seats to the Airbus A-380 by reconfiguring the interior of the aircraft

- The typically A380 seats about 550 passengers on its two decks in a three-class layout, but several airlines chose configurations with fewer seats to offer enhanced passenger amenities such as bars and showers
- Emirates has offered 600 seats on some of its routes, but the aircraft is capable of carrying more than 800 passengers in an all-economy configuration
- “We are adapting the aircraft to meet evolving market needs,” said Kiran Rao, Airbus’ executive vice president of strategy for its commercial-plane unit
- Like other aircraft manufacturers, Airbus sees offering greater seat capacity as a way to keep up with increased air travel demand and airport congestion
- This process, known as “upgauging”, allows airlines and airports to handle significant increases in passengers with minimal growth in aircraft operations and noise exposure

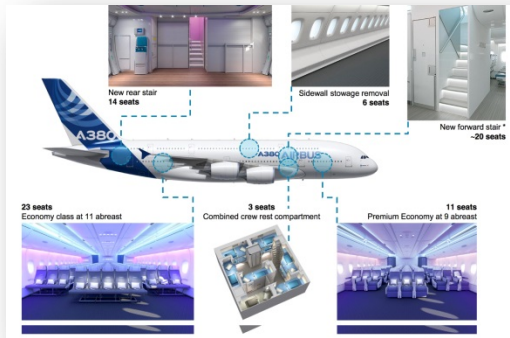


Image Credit: Airbus

Boeing, JetBlue Invest in an Electric Aircraft Venture



As an indication of the possible viability of an electric commercial passenger aircraft, Boeing and JetBlue Airways have provided funding to Seattle-based Zunum Aero to study and develop a 10 to 50-passenger hybrid-electric regional aircraft

- “The shift of the industry to large aircraft and long ranges driven by gas turbines has concentrated almost all air traffic to just two percent of our airports, creating a massive transport gap over regional distances where there is no high-speed alternative,” said Zunum Aero CEO and founder Ashish Kumar. “Hybrid propulsion is an industry-changing solution, enabling midsize aircraft on regional routes to have better cost efficiencies than airliners.”
- Zunum predicts the hybrid-electric aircraft would initially cut community noise by 75 percent and emissions by 80 percent. As battery designs improve, Zunum believes it could produce aircraft that generate no greenhouse gas emissions.
- Zunum, which has been developing the hybrid-electric aircraft for over three years, plans to have the aircraft ready for commercial service some time early in the next decade



Image Credit: Zunum Aero

Palm Beach County Questions FAA Jet Ban Ruling



Palm Beach County officials said that while the FAA has ruled that jets can safely land and takeoff on Runway 9-27 at Palm Beach County Airport (LNA) in Lantana, Florida, they have not received any formal directive from the FAA to lift the ban on jet operations for noise control purposes

- An operator of a Cessna Citation jet that wished to operate at LNA had requested that the FAA review the County's jet ban and provide a ruling on the ban's legality
- In a March 17, 2017 letter, the FAA told the County "that permitting jet aircraft operations on Runway 9-27 will not affect safety or efficiency at LNA or surrounding airports." The FAA letter continued that its, "conclusions do not obligate the county to alter its existing plans for LNA. . .and federal regulations for aircraft operations may continue to reasonably restrict the type, kind and class of jet aircraft that may take off and land."
- The County's legal counsel, Peter Kirsch, found that the FAA's ruling was not a formal order and does not represent a formal directive to the County to lift its ban on jets. He noted, "We will assume that your letters are an informal recommendation."
- The operator of the Cessna Citation expects legal action may be required on his part to operate at LNA

FAA to Conduct Second Rotational Runway Use at ORD



On April 30, 2017, the FAA air traffic controllers at Chicago-O’Hare International Airport (ORD) began the second test of the nighttime rotational runway use program

- The program is intended to reduce nighttime noise for the most heavily noise impacted neighborhoods around ORD by spreading nighttime flights around through a weekly runway rotation
- “This second test improves upon the runway rotation plan conducted last year by incorporating feedback from the FAA, airline pilots and the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission,” said Chicago Department of Aviation Commissioner Ginger S. Evans
- While some communities felt they benefitted from the first test, some communities northwest and northeast of ORD felt as though their aircraft noise levels increased
- For this next 12-week test, City Officials said five of the ten runway configurations from the first test have been replaced with new configurations
- A description of the test and rotation schedules can be found at <http://www.airportprojects.net/flyquiettest/>

Senators Cite Roundtable Resolution for Changing Flight Paths



In an April 19, 2017 letter, two U.S. senators and seven members of Congress representing Maryland told FAA Administrator Michael Huerta that they supported the DC Metroplex BWI Roundtable’s resolution on reverting to pre-NextGen flight paths

- The letter stated that the resolution, which was adopted at the DC Metroplex Roundtable’s first meeting on March 21, 2017, “. . .satisfies the FAA’s Request that a Community Roundtable reach a consensus opinion before the FAA will consider returning to previous flight paths.”
- On December 12, 2016, the FAA wrote to U.S. Senator Ben Cardin indicating that the FAA is “. . .committed to giving full and fair consideration to any formal CR [Community Roundtable] endorsed changes, which could include returning to previous flight paths if that is a consensus position after getting input from the affected communities.”
- The Maryland lawmaker’s letter concluded that, “Now that the Roundtable has acted, we call upon you to accept the Roundtable’s Resolution and take swift action to revert to pre-NextGen flight paths. It is essential to provide relief to the affected residents until an acceptable solution can be devised.”