

# TRUCKEE TAHOE AIRPORT DISTRICT POLICY INSTRUCTION

PI NUMBER: 515 (revised)

Effective: May 25, 2016

**SUBJECT: Community Annoyance Comment Processing Procedures**

## **Purpose:**

The Truckee Tahoe Airport District recognizes that aviation activity has potential to create annoyance in communities within District boundaries. The District shall take reasonable and appropriate action to respond and make efforts to resolve instances of community annoyance. This Policy Instruction, in conjunction with all other applicable District Policies and Instructions, outlines the strategies and protocols by which staff receives, reports, and processes instances of community annoyance.

Annoyance is subjective. The types of activity and thresholds which trigger irritation are individual and personal. The scope of this policy shall be *noise* and *safety*. Noise and safety alone don't define annoyance but they are observable and reportable. The Airport District defines Community Annoyance as irritation associated with either *noise* or *safety* resulting from an aircraft activity within the Truckee Tahoe Airport District boundaries. Accordingly, Truckee Tahoe Airport District maintains records of all instances of community annoyance and makes regular reports to the Board of Directors in a public forum.

As a steward of public trust and monies, responsibility to District stakeholders is paramount to fulfilling the obligations of the District's Mission Statement. Commenters shall receive an objective ear, an open mind, and a vigorous effort on their behalf to find solutions. All commenters and operators shall be treated with dignity and respect, and the District requires the same in return. Staff will use District-published Noise Abatement Procedures as a guide for processing annoyance comments.

## **Noise Abatement Procedures and Compliance:**

Where possible and consistent with safety, Noise Abatement Procedures direct aircraft over major roadways and railways, a widely accepted practice to collocate areas of noise. Highways mask noise, and the District has determined that shared use of these corridors helps contain the overall effect. Further, the use of such routes has potential to reduce the overflight of many nearby residential areas. Where no major roadway route exists, the Airport requests overflight of unpopulated or lesser-populated areas.

TTAD recognizes that many factors influence the actual flight path and altitude of aircraft, including wind, density altitude, traffic, absence of Air Traffic Control, and airfield conditions and that Noise Abatement Procedures are voluntary. It is a fact that residential communities nearby the airport and along major roadways are and will be impacted by aircraft overflight. The Airport aims to minimize adverse impacts and requests that operators use best practices to support that goal. Aircraft operating at KTRK under VFR conditions are responsible to see and avoid other traffic. During periods of IMC, aircraft fly FAA-designed Instrument Procedures. Those procedures may be flown by choice at any time.

A metric of compliance has benefit to gauge the effectiveness of Noise Abatement Procedures, however the District understands that a compliant operation may still generate community annoyance. A record of the comment shall be retained regardless of compliance. Since development and roadway infrastructures as well as governing bodies of the Airport District change over time, this policy shall reference the most current Noise Abatement Procedures publications as the primary method to determine compliance. The Airport District also recognizes that Noise Abatement Procedures should be compliant with published FAA instrument and published visual procedures since the FAA is the sole governmental authority of aircraft in flight.

**Protocols:**

Community members may initiate the process of reporting annoyance at any time. The Airport phone system, website, and staff may be utilized to file a comment. Per commenter preference, Airport staff will attempt to reply to a commenter via the same method a comment was received. Once the details of the annoyance are clearly understood, staff will confirm the receipt of the comment to the commenter and begin an investigation.

To ensure due process, the investigation shall consider circumstances relevant to the complaint and flight operation. Tools and protocols to measure operations at the Truckee Tahoe Airport will be used to determine the geospatial location of an aircraft in flight and the proximity in distance and time to the comment location. The investigation shall commence to define the specific details surrounding the annoyance. The outcome of this investigation shall determine whether the operation was compliant with currently published noise abatement procedures and whether staff makes outreach to the aircraft operator with the aim of affecting future operations to mitigate potential community annoyance.

**Investigation Outcomes:**

Although compliant operations shall not automatically receive outreach, staff may elect to make outreach if possible annoyance reductions may be realized. Repeated outreach by staff on compliant operations may disrupt effective communication between the Airport and aircraft operators. In certain instances where repeated, excessive, or a disproportionate level of comments are generated from a single household in a given month or quarter, the General

Manager is authorized to modify comment response protocols to best fit the needs of an individual commenter and available District staff resources. Modifications to protocols may involve airport visits and meetings by commenter, field visits to commenter's residence or business. The intent here is to apply the appropriate amount of District resources to the annoyance and fairly address all constituents.

Non-compliant arrivals and departures will result in operator outreach. Some exceptions may be made case by case, however staff intends to reach out to every operator who performs a non-compliant operation. Effective outreach to operators for non-compliant operations must offer a viable and safe alternative for future operations. Operator outreach shall be handled the same as annoyance comments, with an objective ear, open mind, and with vigorous effort to find solutions.

Any investigation outcome which indicates a violation of 14 CFR Federal Aviation Regulations or hazardous operations shall be recorded as a safety concern and staff will make appropriate outreach or request an investigation by the FAA.

**Beyond Single-Event Based Annoyance:**

Even with the best possible outcomes and 100% compliance of Noise Abatement Procedures, peak operations periods generate community annoyance calls based on the frequency of operations and overall tempo of activity. The Airport recognizes that as a transportation facility located in a resort destination, it is subject to the same trends in traffic as all other area transportation entities. Summer peak seasons and winter holiday periods tend to generate comments based on the tempo of activity. These comments shall be maintained and reported within the existing framework as well.

**Summary of Instruction:**

1. Comments and outreach efforts shall be recorded, and a quarterly report shall be presented to the Board of Directors in a public meeting.
2. Community annoyance comments will receive a reply. All comments shall be recorded in a database maintained by staff.
3. Staff will investigate all comments. If it is determined a commenter makes repetitive comments about compliant operations, the General Manager may modify comment response protocols to meet the needs of the commenter and the District.