

JAN 13 REC'D

BRUCE L. WOODBURY
Commissioner



Board of County Commissioners

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January 9, 2006

Ms. Kathryn Higgins
Air Traffic Division
FAA Western-Pacific Regional Headquarters
P.O. Box 92007
Los Angeles, CA 90009-2007

Dear Ms. Higgins:

I am writing to you today to address the issues surrounding the Federal Aviation Administration's plan to amend the departure procedure for flights destined to eastern destinations taking off from McCarran International Airport's (LAS) westerly runways (runways 25 Right and Left-RWY 25R/L) making a right turn over the northwestern part of the Las Vegas Valley.

Prior to October 2001, this was a common procedure for flight to the east. In fact, prior to the implementation of the FAA's Four Corner-Post Plan, 60% of departures from RWY 25R/L turned to the right, and only 40% turned to the left. In 2001 however, and in spite of Clark County's insistence that it would reduce the capacity of LAS, the FAA implemented their Four Corner-Post Plan, which directed almost 100% of flights departing from runway 25R to make a left turn over the Enterprise and Spring Valley Townships.

In effect, these residents of the southwestern part of the valley—who had historically shared the inconvenience of airport noise with their neighbors in the northwest part of the Las Vegas valley—were now subjected to nearly all the noise of westerly departures, while the northwestern part was relieved of all but occasional departures. The residents of Enterprise and Spring Valley, through their Town Advisory Boards, met several times with representatives of the FAA's Western Regional Headquarters to voice their discontent with the way the FAA originally implemented the Four Corner Post Plan, and especially with the inequity of transferring almost all of one community's airport noise to their community.

The FAA's regional representatives, to their credit, listened to the residents of Enterprise and Spring Valley, and assured them that the FAA would carefully follow the National Environment Protection Act's (NEPA's) process, and re-activate the right hand turn from RWY 25R/L. The FAA's position was that they needed to do so, not only because of residents' complaints but also because they discovered that they had indeed lost capacity and flexibility by requiring all RWY 25 R/L departures to turn to the left.

I am well aware that the FAA has received numerous verbal and written responses to the Draft Supplemental Environmental Assessment for the proposed modification to the Four Corner-Post that you published on November 22, 2005, and I commend you on extending the public comment period to January 13, 2006, in order to allow the public additional time to review and comment on the document. I am also aware that much of the response to your proposal has been urging the FAA not to re-activate the right hand turn.

Note: Three (3) copies of this comment letter were received. 1) Received via fax, Jan. 9, 2006. 2) Received via U.S. mail, Jan. 13, 2006. 3) Received via e-mail, Jan. 19, 2006.

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The FAA has stated, and Clark County's modeling has confirmed, that reinstating the right-hand turn will increase McCarran International Airport's capacity, and will extend the time until the airport reaches its sustainable capacity. Nearly half of all visitors to Las Vegas come through McCarran – approximately 45 million passengers in 2005. The contribution of these visitors to the local economy is extremely important, and I believe that many of those who are complaining to you, if they considered the fact that their livelihood is tied either directly or indirectly to the tourism industry, might change their positions. I am sure you are aware that whenever any level of government proposes to take an action, those who are opposed to that action actively voice their opposition. On the other hand, many of those who favor your proposal are less likely to speak out.

L1-2

On behalf of many of my constituents in the Las Vegas valley and the others in the silent majority, I would like to voice our support for your efforts to re-instate the right hand turn. Reinstating the right-hand turn would not only increase our valley's ability to welcome more visitors, but would also demonstrate the goodwill of the FAA to meet its commitments expressed to the residents of Enterprise and Spring Valley over the past 3 years.

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Respectfully,



BRUCE L. WOODBURY
County Commissioner
District A

cc: Randall H. Walker, Director, CCDOA
Marion Blakey, Administrator of the FAA
Ms. Sara Hassert, Landrum & Brown