

Airspace Utilization

1. Q: What about the variability in the flight path?

FAA Response: There are currently no FAA approved procedures that would allow a variation in the location of arrivals for Runway 9L/27R.

2. Q: Why are the planes so low?

FAA Response: The aircraft are flying the approach descent according to the glideslope to Runway 27R. This is set to 3.0 degrees and is the FAA standard.

3. Q: Is the Continuous Descent Approach method the best we can do?

FAA Response: Continuous Descent Approach (CDA) is not currently being used at O'Hare. It is being tested at a number of locations, including at Atlanta (ATL) on the midnight shift. CDA can reduce noise impacts. However, according to preliminary results, the greatest environmental benefits are realized 30 to 40 miles from the runway. Communities within 3-5 miles of O'Hare would likely not receive any noise benefits from CDA.

4. Q: Why doesn't O'Hare have RNAV in place and why can't a more rapid descent be used to mitigate our noise issues?

FAA Response: O'Hare does have RNAV procedures. They are overlays for existing arrival and departure procedures. Arrivals use the Runway 27R glideslope which is an FAA standard of 3.0 degrees.

5. Q: Why isn't there a preferential flight track for this runway yet?

FAA Response: The current O'Hare Fly Quiet Program, which includes preferential flight tracks, is used for nighttime departures. Nighttime preferential tracks are for traffic between the hours of 10 pm and 7 am. This runway is not a preferred nighttime departure runway.

6. Q: Why is it that pilots and air traffic controllers have so much trouble sticking to the preferential flight tracks for other existing runways?

FAA Response: Wind drift accounts for some variability in the departure aircrafts along a track. For example, Runway 28 has a Fly Quiet departure heading of 290 degrees. This heading is assigned to the departure aircraft, which the pilot complies with. Winds out of the north or south will cause the aircraft to drift either north or south of the track.

7. Q: A concerned resident asked if a higher flight pattern or a slight alteration to the flight pattern would be possible?

FAA Response: There are currently no FAA approved procedures that would allow a variation in the location of arrivals for Runway 9L/27R. Aircraft are flying the approach descent according to the glideslope to Runway 27R, consistent with the FAA standard of 3.0 degrees.

8. Q: It looks like a number of the aircraft flying over my house are flying too low, isn't that dangerous?

FAA Response: The difference in size between narrow-body aircraft, like MD-80s and regional jets, can appear to the human eye to be flying higher than larger aircraft, like 747s and 777s. In fact, all of the aircraft arriving on Runway 27R are flying the approach descent according to the glideslope to Runway 27R and are all at approximately the same altitude at the same points along the arrival flight path. This is set to 3.0 degrees and is the FAA standard.

9. Q: Are there any boundaries on the airspace above an individual's home?

FAA Response: The navigable airspace is a limited natural resource that Congress has charged the FAA to administer in the public interest as necessary to ensure the safety of aircraft and its efficient use. The amount of usable airspace above a given property will vary depending upon the location of the property relative to an Airport. Federal Regulation 14 CFR Part 77 establishes standards and notification requirements for objects affecting navigable airspace. Specifically, Part 77 includes a section (77.13 – https://oeaaa.faa.gov/oeaaa/external/content/FAR_Part77.pdf) which describes what types of construction requires notice with and study by the FAA.

10. Q: What streets do the O'Hare approaches line up with?

FAA Response: A depiction of the various flight tracks, superimposed over a map can be found in the EIS, Appendix F, and Attachment F-2. Please see the Alternative C exhibits. (<ftp://public-ftp.aql.faa.gov/ORD%20FEIS/Appendix%20F/F-Attachment-2.pdf>) You can see from these exhibits that the approach for an individual runway might vary by a few blocks, the further away from the airport you are. This is due to wind and weather conditions, and is acceptable.

11. Q: Will there be further changes in the airspace design associated with Runway 9L/27R?

FAA Response: None are currently planned.

12. Q: Is the FAA planning to use NextGen at O'Hare?

FAA Response: NextGen is an umbrella term for the ongoing, wide-ranging transformation of the United States' national airspace system (NAS). At its most basic level, NextGen represents an evolution from a ground-based system of air traffic control to a satellite-based system of air traffic management. This evolution is vital to meeting future demand, and avoid to gridlock in the sky and at our nation's airports.

When fully implemented, NextGen will safely allow more aircraft to fly more closely together on more direct routes, reducing delays, and providing

unprecedented benefits for the environment and the economy through reductions in carbon emissions, fuel consumption, and noise. NextGen implementation has started, and will include a series of technology improvements and changes across the country and throughout the aviation and aircraft industry. Its implementation will include O'Hare.

For more information on NextGen, please see our website:
(<http://www.faa.gov/about/initiatives/nextgen/defined/what/>)