

Runway Utilization

1. Q: How many flights are arriving on runway 9L/27R?

FAA Response: As the airport operator, the City determines which runways are open and available for use by the airlines and the air traffic controllers. The FAA utilizes these runways based on airfield, air traffic, and weather conditions, all of which cause the number of aircraft utilizing individual runways to vary every day. The FAA's EIS assumed that in Build-Out conditions the average annual day arrival count for Runway 27R would be 326. This is an average count, and it was assumed that some days would experience more or less arrivals, due to prevailing winds, aircraft demand, and weather conditions.

The FAA's forecast used in the EIS assumed that operational levels at O'Hare would be higher than what are currently being experienced. Due to the decrease in actual operation levels, the arrivals occurring on Runway 27R are currently less than what was assumed in the EIS.

2. Q: Isn't this runway only supposed to be used only during bad weather?

FAA Response: Runway 9L/27R is considered an all-weather runway. O'Hare will receive the greatest benefits of the new runway during bad weather conditions by allowing air traffic controllers to utilize a third east-west parallel runway for aircraft arrivals. In order to maintain a safe and efficient airspace, the FAA utilizes all seven of O'Hare's current runways as needed depending on airfield, air traffic, and weather conditions, as well as noise abatement restrictions.

Projected usage of the runways was disclosed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and source documents made available for public review and comment prior to the publication of the Final EIS. The FAA met with and provided information to ONCC and communities surrounding O'Hare, and reviewed and accepted public comments prior to approving the City's requested runway alignment. The FAA is aware that the City of Chicago's (City) press documents and website may have created some confusion on how/when Runway 9L/27R would be used. The FAA has requested the City amend their information.

3. Q: When will this runway be used?

FAA Response: During the day the runway will be used for simultaneous triple parallel approaches during all weather conditions. The runway is anticipated to be used infrequently at night. The City's nighttime noise abatement program, called the Fly Quiet Program, does not include the new runway as a preferential nighttime runway.

The EIS evaluated the runway for use in all weather conditions; however, its delay reduction benefits are greatest in poor weather conditions. It is available for use approximately 63% of the time currently, and at full build out will be available for use approximately 72% of the time. Build Out annual daytime runway use is

estimated to be 22.4% of all annual arrivals. When the Parallel 27 configuration is being used the arrival rate for Runway 27R can be between 35-40 per hour, now and in the future. See FAA EIS pages D-7 and D-9

(<ftp://public-ftp.aql.faa.gov/ORD%20FEIS/Appendix%20D.pdf>), and F-82 (<ftp://public-ftp.aql.faa.gov/ORD%20FEIS/Appendix%20F/Appendix-F.pdf>).

4. Q: How will this runway be used?

FAA Response: In response to a request from ONCC, in September 2008 the FAA provided information as to the intended runway use of the new Runway 9L/27R. Although it is unknown to the FAA where the “less than 10% of its capacity” portion of the comment above originated, the FAA accurately stated that this runway will not be utilized 100% of the time when it opens. This statement was meant to convey that when first opened, Runway 9L would only occasionally be used for arrivals, while Runway 27R would be used regularly for arrivals, as weather conditions dictate. The FAA did not state that arrivals on Runway 27R would not be used to its full capability. When Runway 10C/28C is opened, Runway 9L will be used to its full capability, and then Runway 9L/27R will be used to its full capability in both directions.

5. Q: What aircraft types are using Runway 9L/27R?

FAA Response: Runway 9L/27R can accommodate aircraft as large as Boeing 747s. Regional jets, MD-80s, Airbus 319s and 320s, and Boeing 737s and 757s are using the runway routinely. As stated in the EIS, the new runway was designed to accept all types and categories of aircraft that currently operate at the Airport. See Table F-31

(<ftp://public-ftp.aql.faa.gov/ORD%20FEIS/Appendix%20F/Appendix-F.pdf>) for the aircraft fleet mix assumed for Build Out.

6. Q: What happened to the other runways that are intended to be used for arrivals?

FAA Response: Other runways are being used for arrivals as assumed in the EIS. See EIS pages D-7 and D-9

(<ftp://public-ftp.aql.faa.gov/ORD%20FEIS/Appendix%20D.pdf>). As is with normal practice, the City of Chicago will provide actual runway use statistics to the ONCC at the Full Commission meetings.

7. Q: Why has Runway 4L/22R ceased to be used entirely? Has runway 4L/22R closed? Where did planes land before 27R (was it 22R?) If runway 4L/22R handled the planes before runway 9L/27R opened, why can't it handle the traffic again? Can traffic be alternated more frequently?

FAA Response: Runway 4L/22R has been used since the new runway opened and will continue to be used. With the existing airport layout, it is planned to be used as an arrival runway (Runway 22R) during a configuration that is anticipated to be used approximately 10% of the year. It is also planned to be used as a departure runway (Runway 4L) during a configuration that is anticipated to be used approximately 23% of the year. As with normal practice,

the City of Chicago will provide actual runway use statistics to the ONCC at the Full Commission meetings.

Many of the flights landing on Runway 27R previously used Runway 22R. This is because the configuration Plan W (see page D-6 of the EIS – <ftp://public-ftp.agl.faa.gov/ORD%20FEIS/Appendix%20D.pdf>) was removed as of November 20, 2008, due to airspace changes, reducing the number of landings on Runway 22R. Now Parallel 27s will be the most frequently used (See pages D-7 and D-9 – <ftp://public-ftp.agl.faa.gov/ORD%20FEIS/Appendix%20D.pdf>).

8. Q: What about Runway 10/28 and the others?

FAA Response: Runway 10/28 is continuing to be used as weather conditions warrant. See EIS page D-7

(<ftp://public-ftp.agl.faa.gov/ORD%20FEIS/Appendix%20D.pdf>). As is with normal practice, the City of Chicago will provide actual runway use statistics to the ONCC at the Full Commission meetings.

9. Q: An airline pilot in Park Ridge said that the airlines are livid over the amount of traffic being forced to 9L/27R. It is a 20 minute taxi from its end to the terminals, and causes them to use more fuel and makes it harder to reach the gates on time. What is the FAA's response?

FAA Response: The airlines have not submitted any comments to the FAA regarding taxi times from Runway 9L/27R. Arrivals from Runway 27R, based on modeling take between 15 and 16 minutes on average to reach the gate. The airlines are in the process of calculating their own travel times from runway exit to the gate. Although there is extra taxi time when compared to closer in runways, the Airport is able to accommodate additional arrivals due to the new runway.

Under the best case scenario before November 20, 2008 the Airport was able to process no more than approximately 100 arrivals per hour. Today, with the new runway, the Airport is able to process up to 112 arrivals (the majority of which are on other runways than Runway 27R) per hour. The additional taxi time is offset (and then some) by the Airport's ability to accommodate additional flights that would have either been delayed or cancelled at the origination airport. Despite the taxi time, this arrangement provides for fuel savings and delay reduction.

10. Q: What will the final traffic level be after the OMP is done? Is there a maximum of traffic that the FAA will allow? What is that level?

FAA Response: There currently is no maximum traffic that the FAA will allow at O'Hare. The activity level will be determined by the business plans of the airlines and other airport users. The FAA evaluated 1.194 million total annual takeoffs and landings 5 years after the completion of the project. In 2007, the Airport accommodated approximately 926,000 total take offs and landings. The FAA's EIS did determine that delays would once again grow after completion the modernization effort to levels experienced today when the Airport reached

approximately 1.4 million total annual take offs and landings. Though the flight caps were lifted in October 2008, the Airport will most likely end the 2008 calendar year with less than 900,000 operations, fewer than in 2007.

11. Q: The misinformation about this runway's implementation and subsequent use seems deliberate to many of us.

FAA Response: The anticipated runway use has been publicly available since the issuance of the Draft EIS in January 2005. See the information provided in the EIS Information section below regarding the FAA's coordination with ONCC and the City of Park Ridge and public meetings held on the Draft EIS.

12. Q: Is the new runway being used during hours other than was proposed, specifically after 10 p.m. and midnight?

FAA Response: The O'Hare Modernization EIS anticipated that Runway 27R would be used infrequently at night. Specifically, it included the assumption that nighttime arrivals would occur four percent (4%) of the time at the time of Build Out (See Table F-39 on page F-82 of the Final EIS – <http://public-ftp.agl.faa.gov/ORD%20FEIS/Appendix%20F/Appendix-F.pdf>). "Build Out," as defined in the EIS, is the point in time at which Runways 9L/27R (new), 9C/27C (new), 9R/27L (extended), 10L/27R(extended), 10C/28C (new), 10R/28L (new), 4L/22R, and 4R/22L will all be in operation. The EIS estimated that Build Out would occur in 2013/2014. The City has stated its commitment to the completion of O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP) runways by December 31, 2014.

Although the normal hours of operation for the North Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) and Runway 9L/27R are 6:00 AM to 10:00 PM, there is no prohibition of aircraft arriving on Runway 27R after 10:00 PM. The FAA prefers to have the North ATCT open no later than 10:00 PM. However, the number and time of flights arriving on Runway 27R can be affected by weather conditions, alternate runways affected by disabled aircraft, and other issues. When the North ATCT and Runway 9L/27R are open past 10:00 PM, the FAA incurs additional operational expenses.

13. Q: Who was responsible for the flight caps at O'Hare being lifted, and why were they lifted?

FAA Response: Arrivals at O'Hare were capped in 2004 at 88 operations per hour during most hours of the day to alleviate extreme congestion until the first runway of the O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP) could be opened. The extension to Runway 10/28 that opened on September 25, 2008 and the new Runway 9L/27R that opened on November 20, 2008 are part of the OMP, the purpose of which is to address the projected needs of the Chicago region by reducing delays at O'Hare, and thereby enhancing the capacity of the National Airspace System. As planned, the FAA eliminated the flight caps at O'Hare on October 31, 2008.

The aviation industry has been deregulated since 1978. The FAA does not have the authority to determine airline routes, destinations or schedules, but may intervene in extreme cases of congestion, such as the delays that were impacting O'Hare and the entire national air transportation system in 2004.

14. Q: Is operation of the new runway safe, especially with so many aircraft flying over my house and these schools?

FAA Response: Safety is the FAA's highest priority. The FAA reviewed the design of City's proposal to ensure that it would properly protect the public safety. The new Runway 9L/27R was designed to meet and operate to FAA standards.

15. Q: Who decides where the planes will actually land?

FAA Response: The FAA determines which runways to use based on available runways and prevailing weather conditions. It is a complex decision-making process which includes consideration of an airplane's origin or destination, as well as other en route traffic. Safety, efficiency to the users and capacity of the National Airspace System (NAS) are all taken into consideration when planning complex operations such as at O'Hare. The preference is to allow arriving aircraft to be routed to the runway that is closest to the origination city without having to cross other aircraft streams enroute to the Airport.

16. Q: Can you provide me with the FAA approved glideslopes to runway 27R? I see aircraft moving east to west from Touhy to as far south as Devon -- literally stacks of 6 plus arrival lanes. I can only assume they are all heading to 27R since the 27L runs roughly in line with the Kennedy Expressway. I drive home in the evening and see stacks of planes coming east to west, all of which I assume are converging on 27R.

What are the current approved glideslopes for 27L?

FAA Response: O'Hare currently has three parallel runways that allow for simultaneous approaches from the east, landing to the west. The lateral (horizontal) separation between Runway 27R and 27L is 7,418 feet. The lateral separation between Runway 27L and Runway 28 is 5,594 feet.

The glide slope provides an approaching aircraft with the appropriate angle of descent. A localizer provides an aircraft information that allows it to line up on the centerline of a runway. Typically an aircraft will fix on the localizer from 10 to 22 miles away from a runway end and then stay in alignment with the localizer, on the centerline of the runway, for its descent. A runway with instrument approaches (like Runways 27R, 27L, 28 (future Runway 28R) and the future runways at O'Hare) has one glide slope and one localizer. The electronic signals are fixed, and provide consistent information to aircraft.

When aircraft are more than 22 miles away from O'Hare they are at least three miles apart laterally (horizontally). The aircraft are also three or more miles apart in their longitudinal (one behind the other) separation. As they approach the

airport they are in closer proximity laterally (see runway separation distances above), and at approximately the same separation longitudinally. Despite appearances, there are only three streams of aircraft into O'Hare from the east.

A depiction of the various flight tracks when the OMP is completed is located 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>)

17. Q: What is the latest runway utilization? Also, in today's current runway configuration, what is the % breakout by runway of arrival traffic?

FAA Response: The City of Chicago provides data to the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC) on runway utilization. This information is available on the ONCC's web site.

18. Q: If they are using 3 runways for arrivals, why are there are 5 or 6 rows of planes coming in towards O'Hare?

FAA Response: Although there may appear to be more lines of aircraft, when arrivals are occurring from the east on Runways 27R, 27L, and 28, there only three arrival streams of aircraft, one for each runway.

19. Q: Is the 35 – 40 planes per hour, assumed for operation on Runway 27R, from 6 am to 10 pm (approximately 560 – 640 flights per day?)

FAA Response: When the Parallel 27/28 configuration (defined as the configuration "Parallel 27s" in the EIS) is used, the arrival rate for Runway 27R can be between 35-40 per hour, now and in the future. It is available for use approximately 63% of the time currently, and at full build out will be available for use approximately 72% of the time. If enough aircraft demand is present and the Parallel 27 configuration is used from 6:00 AM to 10:00 PM, the runway has the ability to accommodate 560-640 aircraft per day.

20. Q: We were told nighttime flights were restricted on Runway 27R, but we get flights before 6 am and after 10 pm. Are there nighttime restrictions? If not, what is the limited number of planes per hour during night hours?

FAA Response: These questions are addressed by "Runway Utilization" Question #12 on the website. You may also be hearing operations on other runways. With ongoing airfield construction, the airport is utilizing some runways at other times than you may be accustomed. You may also reference our monthly correspondence to the ONCC (also posted on this website) regarding Runway 9L/27R use.

21. Q: In March the daily average flights arriving on 27R was 85 with no departures. This is according to the official report from Brian Gilligan. So was this runway only used approximately 13 – 15 % of its full capacity in the month of March, 2009?

FAA Response: No. The 85 operations that you referenced were the average daily arrivals on 27R for March 2009. There are days that are much lower than this and there are some days that are much higher. Runway utilization is best measured day to day, instead of with a daily average based on a month.

“Runway Utilization” Question #17 on the website also addresses this question.

22. Q: Are the number of planes for Runway 28 the same as Runway 27R (35-40 per hour)? Is this runway restricted at night? Are cargo planes included in the flights per day numbers or is it only passenger planes?

FAA Response: When the Parallel 27/28 configuration is used, the arrival rate for Runway 28 can be between 35-40 per hour.

Runway 10/28 is one of the designated preferential runway by the City of Chicago for use during Fly Quiet conditions which occur from 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM, when feasible, unless wind, weather, runway closures or loss of NAVAIDS dictate otherwise.

Aircraft operations assumed in the EIS included all aircraft activity occurring at the airport, including cargo operations.

23. Q: How many aircraft utilize Runway 9L/27R in any given month?

FAA Response: The City of Chicago publishes monthly reports on O’Hare runway utilization. The 2009 reports are posted on the Chicago Airport System Community Noise Resource Center web page and can be found at: http://www.ohare.com/cnrc/ohare/o_noise_monthly_runwayuse2009.shtm

24. Q: How many cargo flights use Runway 9L/27R?

FAA Response: You can request details on types of aircraft or specific operations from the O’Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC). Please contact the ONCC at (773) 686-3198.

25. Q: Are any cargo flights taking off of Runway 9L/27R after 10:00 p.m.?

FAA Response: The FAA sends information regarding nighttime operations on Runway 9L/27R to the ONCC on a monthly basis. Please click on “Monthly ONCC Correspondence” link at this website: http://www.faa.gov/airports/airport_development/omp/FAQ/index.cfm).

While this correspondence does not identify air carrier vs. cargo operators, it will indicate what, if any departures, have used the runway overnight. For specific operations by type of operator, please see the previous question.