



FAA Informational Briefing on Hollywood Burbank Airport (BUR) and Van Nuys Airport (VNY) to Offices of Elected Officials - 30 July 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Safety** - The FAA's statutory mission is to ensure the safety of aviation in the United States. The commercial aviation system in the United States operates at an unprecedented level of safety. In the past ten years, more than 7 billion people have flown on 90 million U.S. commercial flights, with one single fatality.
- **State-of-the-Art Airspace** - In 2012, Congress directed the FAA to modernize the airspace to ensure the continued safety and efficiency of the U.S. air transportation system. The FAA introduced satellite navigation to Southern California in 2017 as part of the nationwide effort to improve safety and efficiency¹ of the airspace. Southern California has the nation's busiest and most complex airspace.
- **Aviation and the Economy** - The Los Angeles metropolitan area's economy and population drive demand for transportation, including air transportation. Aviation, in turn, contributes to the region's economy.²
- **History of BUR and VNY airport operations** - BUR opened in 1930 and VNY opened in 1928, before communities developed around them. FAA analyses show flight tracks and operations at BUR and VNY from 2008 to 2019, which include data before and after the FAA implemented satellite navigation procedures in 2017 (Metroplex). The data shows flight tracks of aircraft from either or both airports over communities south of the 101 freeway throughout the time periods analyzed.
- **BUR satellite navigation procedures today (Metroplex)** - The satellite navigation portions of today's departure procedures at BUR start 11 to 17 nautical miles north and northwest of the airport. Controllers handle aircraft departing from BUR today as they did before Metroplex: controller's vector aircraft as soon as the aircraft reaches the minimum vectoring altitude and the departing aircraft have at least 3 nautical mile lateral / 1,000 feet vertical separation from other aircraft in the airspace (e.g., aircraft arriving into BUR or aircraft departing from VNY).

The data shows a southern shift for the southernmost BUR departure flight tracks that coincide with the time Metroplex procedures were implemented; but this shift cannot be explained by Metroplex, because the satellite navigation segments begin north and northwest of the airport and controllers handle aircraft departing from BUR today as they did before Metroplex. Other factors that can cause shifts in flight paths include air temperature, aircraft performance/fleet mix, and air traffic volume across the region. For example, when the airspace is busy, aircraft departing from BUR may have to delay their turns to ensure safe separation. On a hot day, heavier aircraft may take longer³ to reach the minimum vectoring altitude.

¹ To the FAA, efficiency in the airspace means fewer actions and steps for controllers to manage the air traffic safely.

² According to the Los Angeles Tourism and Convention Board, Los Angeles had 50 million visitors in 2018, who spent \$24 billion in the region; tourism supported over 500,000 jobs in Los Angeles County's leisure and hospitality sector; tourism's economic impact in Los Angeles in 2018 was \$36.6 billion. According to the LA County Economic Development Corporation, BUR generated \$663 million in labor income, \$1.8 billion in business revenues, and generated \$122 million in state and local taxes in FY2013, while VNY generated \$37.2 million in labor income, \$107.5 million in business revenues, and \$4.5 million in state and local taxes in 2015.

³ At speeds on the order of 200 miles an hour after takeoff, aircraft traverse three miles in less than one minute (one mile in 18 seconds).



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- **VNY satellite navigation procedures today** (Metroplex) - The satellite navigation departure procedures at VNY – which start immediately after takeoff, unlike at BUR – did shift flight paths about half a nautical mile south, post-Metroplex.
- **Addressing Community Concerns** - As the FAA modernizes airspace, more aircraft are flying and the fleet mix at airports continually changes to meet demand. Community concerns about aviation are an aviation industry and community issue. No one group – Airport, Air Carrier, Industry Representation or Municipality – can singlehandedly resolve these issues. We need to work in a collaborative fashion, with all entities, to find the balance for the system, the users, and the community.

The FAA has made longstanding efforts to address community concerns. The most constructive way for the FAA to engage with communities is through airport noise roundtables or noise forums; in this case, the Joint Task Force that is representative of all communities potentially affected by any change proposal. In addition to community engagement efforts, the FAA provides funding to mitigate noise issues. These include sound insulation programs, research and development on aircraft noise and emissions reduction technologies, aircraft operational concepts for noise reduction, and noise and emissions prediction tools. The FAA also continues to set more stringent noise, emissions, and particulate matter standards, and to fund research to understand the impact of noise on multiple fronts, including sleep, cardiovascular health, and children’s learning.

- **Ongoing Engagement**

BUR

The FAA proposes to amend BUR departure procedures by creating a satellite navigation segment immediately at departure. These procedures are intended to turn aircraft sooner, and they overlay historical flight paths pre- and post-Metroplex. After two public workshops in November 2018, the FAA decided to conduct an Environmental Assessment for these proposed amendments and will consider reasonable alternatives in the process. The FAA is in the process of developing a timeline for preparing the Environmental Assessment. The agency will provide Environmental Assessment updates on its Burbank Community Involvement website: https://www.faa.gov/nextgen/nextgen_near_you/community_involvement/bur.

VNY

The Los Angeles City Council made a motion requesting FAA action on VNY departure procedures. The FAA provided positive feedback on an option that could meet the intent of this request. The option would change the departure procedures’ satellite navigation segment immediately after takeoff, which could result in flight paths closer to those that existed pre-Metroplex.



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The FAA's response to this request will not affect BUR procedures, because aircraft departing VNY and BUR airports will continue to be vectored as soon as the aircraft reach minimum vectoring altitude and the aircraft are safely separated from other aircraft in the airspace.

Joint Task Force

The BUR-VNY Joint Task Force provides an opportunity for all communities currently experiencing noise from both airports to discuss concerns in an open and transparent manner, and for stakeholders to come together to discuss potential solutions. Outside of the collaborative, consensus-driven environment of forums such as the Joint Task Force, communities sometimes seek relief from aircraft noise independently, and at the expense of other communities. The FAA would provide technical support and advice to the Joint Task Force.

The FAA makes airspace procedure changes for safety and efficiency. Changes requested for noise reasons, through consensus by the Joint Task Force or other community noise forums, have to be submitted to the FAA by the proponents. The FAA follows a process to evaluate the feasibility of requests for procedure changes.