

Airport Commission Meeting of
June 10, 2021

Honorable Chair and Members
of the Airport Commission
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Commission:

SUBJECT: Supplemental Material – Correspondence for Oral Communications.

Attached is correspondence which was received after the Airport Commission
Agenda was prepared.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gerry Pinela".

Gerry Pinela,
Facilities Operations Manager

From: [Jim Gates](#)
To: [Airport Commission](#); [Anne O'Brien](#); [David Zygielbaum](#); [Harry Pross](#); [Jack Gong](#); [John De Rago](#); [Linden Nishinaga](#); [Tom Witherill](#)
Subject: ORAL Comments--Airport Commission 6/10/2021
Date: Friday, June 4, 2021 1:16:45 PM
Attachments: [2021-06-02 Ltr to TPD--harassment.pdf](#)

WARNING: External e-mail

Please verify sender before opening attachments or clicking on links.

Chairperson O'Brien and members of the Airport COMmission:

At last month's Commission meeting, I presented our concerns about harassment of Torrance pilots (see attachment). I recall that there were some questions from the commissioners that I was unable to answer because of the 2-minute limit. This month, I won't attempt to read this attachment, but will devote the 2-minute orals allotment to answering any of your questions.

--

Jim Gates




TORRANCE AIRPORT ASSOCIATION

2785 Pacific Coast Highway
Torrance, CA 90505

June 2, 2021

Acting Chief Megeff
Torrance Police Department
3300 Civic Center Drive
Torrance, CA 90503

Dear Chief Megeff:

A number of our members have reported harassment by one or more individuals who hand-deliver letters to the member's home, make middle-of-the-night hang-up phone calls, and take other obnoxious actions targeting Torrance pilots--warning them not to fly over the individuals' homes and threatening further "actions." Some of these events have been recorded on video and some members have retained the letters.

Although one of the perpetrators has been identified by a neighbor, in most of these incidents, the perpetrators never identify themselves or their addresses, so it would be impossible to avoid flying over their homes. These individuals have an irrational obsession to harass and intimidate the pilots.

Intimidation is intentional behavior that "would cause a person of ordinary sensibilities" to fear injury or harm. It is not necessary to prove that the behavior was so violent as to cause terror or that the victim was actually frightened. Harassment is an intentional behavior that is found disturbing or threatening. Harassment can take place through any form of communication, including: online messaging, contact through social networking, e-mails, phone calls, trespassing or through spoken/physical interaction.

To date, 37 Torrance pilots have reported receiving more than 61 intimidating calls or letters (see attachment). There are undoubtedly more. Many of these incidents have been reported to the TPD. These pilots have valid concerns about their safety and the safety of their family members resulting from the City's recent public disclosure of their identifying information. Every day we read about a tragedy that results from an unstable individual's decision to violently act on their obsession. It only takes one of these individuals to create a tragedy!

What is the Torrance Police Department doing to eliminate this illegal activity?

We look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

Jim Gates, President

Torrance pilots reporting harassment incidents						
Last Name	First Name	Av Watch	S B Neighborhood Assoc	S Redondo Neigh Assoc.*	Unidentified/Other	Comments
Adams	Ryder				1	
Amman	Brad				1	
Bentley	David				3	Multiple phone calls
Black	Alan	2	3	1	1	Debbie Rosales sent ltr to Mariposa w false airworthiness issue
Broen	Peter		1		5	Paul Thomas-3 ltrs; 1 irate in-person confrontation; 1 phone call
Bu	James				1	
Caldwell	Jim	1				
Delane	Dan				1	
Ekberg	Craig				1	
Fagan	Fred				1	
Glaser	Scott				1	
Graau	Wayne				1	
Harshman	Christopher	1				
Haworth	Michael				1	
Holstein	David				2	
Hou	Robin				1	
Jones	Robert				2	South Bay Aware Group
Klein	David				1	
Liknaitzky	Matt	1				Bought domain
Lipaz	Gil				1	
McAfee	Stuart	1				
Mikkelsen	Dan	1			1	
Mosley	Hardy	1				
Myers	Lou				1	
Piper	Skylor				1	Southwood Village Neighborhood Assoc
Pluntze	Steve				1	
Reisman	Garrett				1	South Bay Aware Group
Reitdyk	Guido				1	
Smith	Darrin				2	
Striplin	Don				2	
Tommervik	Sean	1				Reported to Airport Office
Tymczyscyn	Bill	2				Reported to Airport Office
Wachner	Jeff				3	1 phone call
Wiekehr	Roger	1	2		1	
Yiung	Jeffrey				1	
Zeissner	Doug				1	
Zimmer	Chris				2	
	TOTALS:	12	6	1	43	
	TOTAL REPORTS:	62				

Possible harassment sources--may not be real addresses



From: [Jim Gates](#)
To: [Airport Commission](#); [Anne O'Brien](#); [David Zygielbaum](#); [Harry Pross](#); [Jack Gong](#); [John De Rago](#); [Linden Nishinaga](#); [Tom Witherill](#)
Subject: Noise monitoring--part 2
Date: Friday, June 4, 2021 1:04:53 PM
Attachments: [2021-05-18 Noise monitoring-part 2.pdf](#)

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I sent an e-mail to the Commission last month on this subject. Since then, we have done some more studying of the "complaints" used by staff to justify the new monitoring system RFP. It appears that more than 80% of those April "complaints" were submitted by a single individual and they may not even be related to real aircraft at all.

Two minutes allotted to orals in the Commission meeting is not adequate to present this material, let alone answer any follow-on questions the commissioners might have, so I will use the 2-minute allocation to answer questions about this issue.

--

Jim Gates




TORRANCE AIRPORT ASSOCIATION
 2785 Pacific Coast Highway
 Torrance, CA 90505

The Noise Complaint Factory--Part 2

Torrance does not have a noise problem--it has a complaint problem!

In a previous e-mail, I discussed a computer-based company named AIRNOISE.IO that claims to have filed over 8 million noise complaints at 59 airports. As noted previously, these questionable complaints can be filed from anywhere with just the click of a computer mouse or by sending of a 2-letter text message. This company had filed 739 complaints with Torrance noise abatement office in April and an astounding all-time total of 2,550 noise complaints with Torrance!

On April 20, 2021, as the Torrance City Council was deciding whether or not to issue a request for proposals for the purchase a new noise abatement system, the noise abatement staff presented

copies of 127 complaint reports filed during the 3-week period between April 1 and April 20. Within the 127 complaints were 105 complaint reports that listed AIRNOISE.IO, as the source of the e-mailed complaint--83% of the complaints.

Aircraft noise complaint - April 11, 2021 08:42

complaints@airnoise.io
 Mon 4/12/2021 8:09 AM

To: Noise Abatement <NoiseAbatement@TorranceCA.gov>;
 From: [REDACTED]

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Noise Abatement Office.

While at my private residence I experienced bothersome and intrusive aircraft noise. Complete details of the event are provided below.

My Address:	[REDACTED]
Complaint date:	Apr 11, 2021
Complaint Time:	08:42 am
Operation type:	Departure
Aircraft type:	2001 BROEN PETER C GLASAIR III
Aircraft operator:	BROEN PETER C - [REDACTED]
Aircraft callsign:	N43PB
Aircraft registration:	N43PB
Distance from my house:	0.4 mi
Altitude:	2841 ft
Filed route of flight:	
Weather conditions:	VFR: BKN at 20000, wind Calm, visibility 10.0, temperature/dewpoint 52F/52F
Additional remarks:	

Please send a notice of violation to the pilot and the owner of this plane for taking off to the west and turning left below 1500 feet or reaching the ocean.

Please take appropriate action on this complaint.

I would like someone from your office to contact me about this complaint.

Sincerely,
 [REDACTED]

Phone:

The complaint report included here is one of those 105 AIRNOISE complaint e-mails. Note that the Additional Remarks section contains the phrase: **"Please send a notice of violation to the pilot and the owner of the plane for taking off to the west and turning left below 1500 feet or reaching the ocean."**

As you know, there is no

FAA regulation against turning left after take-off. The reference here is clearly to Torrance Municipal Code section 51.2.3e, which the FAA Chief Counsel has stated is preempted by Federal law, is invalid and is unenforceable.

Of the 105 complaints from AIRNOISE, 97 (92%) contained this exact phrase. When TAA was testing the AIRNOISE app, we found that the user is able to input their own statement in the Remarks Section of their user profile and that this statement is then included on all complaints that this user triggers with AIRNOISE. The obvious conclusion is that all 97 of these AIRNOISE complaints with that comment--83% of them-- were triggered by ONE INDIVIDUAL USER during the 3-week period! **Who is this individual?**

The pilot and owner of the aircraft that is the subject of the report shown here recounted that he took off from 29R and executed a RIGHT-hand box climb over the airport to 4500 feet in order to transit the LAX special flight rules area. He remained at all times NORTH of the airport. Note that the report above lists his altitude as 2841 feet.

Also in this report, note that the Operation Type is listed as DEPARTURE. This indicates that his aircraft had taken off and was still in the vicinity of the airport. In examining the 105 AIRNOISE complaints, TAA found that 22 (21%) were about aircraft in the traffic pattern at an altitude of about 1,100 feet, 43 (41%) were about aircraft that were landing or taking off with a listed altitude of under 1,000 feet, and 29 (28%) were above 2,000 ft altitude. One was even listed at an altitude of 5,985 feet. At this altitude, it would be very unlikely for someone on the ground to see or even hear the aircraft! Furthermore, this aircraft was a Bombardier Learjet--likely to have taken off from Long Beach--and was within Class B airspace.

Decisions should be based on the truth

The Torrance Airport noise violation rate is only 1 to 2 per week and does not justify spending thousands of dollars per week on a very expensive LAX-type monitoring system. Some are trying to justify the expenditure using a dubious complaint volume, but how many INDIVIDUALS are really complaining and are those complaints about anything over which the City has legal authority to regulate?

Before the City Council votes to spend money on a new system, it should require an independent audit of the complaints filed in 2020 and provide answers to these questions:

- 1) Who is the individual who triggered 80% of the questionable complaints in April?
- 2) How many INDIVIDUALS filed the 2,550 AIRNOISE complaints that resulted in the questionable complaint spikes in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th quarters of 2020?
- 3) What actions are taken to validate noise complaints?
- 4) How many individuals are filing real complaints?

Jim Gates, President
Torrance Airport Association

From: [Pinela, Gerardo](#)
To: ["Jim Gates"](#); [Airport Commission](#); [Anne O'Brien](#); [David Zygielbaum](#); [Harry Pross](#); [Jack Gong](#); [John De Rago](#); [Linden Nishinaga](#); [Tom Witherill](#)
Subject: RE: Noise monitoring--part 2
Date: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 12:33:00 PM

Dear Commissioners,

For Information Only. Please Do Not Reply.

Supplemental Correspondence under Oral Communications is not an item on the agenda for full discussion. This portion of the meeting is reserved for public comment on items on the agenda or on topics of interest to the general public. Under the Ralph M. Brown Act, Commissioners cannot act on items raised during public comment but may respond briefly to statements made or questions posed; request clarification; or refer the item to staff. Speakers under this Public Comment period will have no longer than 2 minutes per speaker.

Best Regards,

Gerry Pinela

Donations Coordinator, Facilities Operations Manager, General Services Department
Torrance Airport | 3301 Airport Drive | Torrance CA 90505 | 310.784.7900 voice | 310.784.7930 fax |
GPinela@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

From: Jim Gates [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 1:04 PM
To: Airport Commission <AirportCommission@TorranceCA.gov>; Anne O'Brien [REDACTED]; David Zygielbaum [REDACTED]; Harry Pross [REDACTED]; Jack Gong [REDACTED]; John De Rago [REDACTED]; Linden Nishinaga [REDACTED]; Tom Witherill [REDACTED]
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Cc: [Herrera, Rafael](#)
Bcc: [Shant Megerdichian](#)
Subject: RE: ORAL Comments--Airport Commission 6/10/2021
Date: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 12:32:00 PM

Dear Commissioners,

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Torrance Airport | 3301 Airport Drive | Torrance CA 90505 | 310.784.7900 voice | 310.784.7930 fax |
GPinela@TorranceCA.Gov | www.TorranceCA.Gov

From: Jim Gates <red.lancair@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, June 4, 2021 1:16 PM

To: Airport Commission <AirportCommission@TorranceCA.gov>; Anne O'Brien

[REDACTED] David Zygielbaum [REDACTED]; Harry Pross

[REDACTED]; Jack Gong [REDACTED] John De Rago

[REDACTED] Linden Nishinaga [REDACTED]; Tom Witherill

[REDACTED]

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Jim Gates

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