



Noise Program



Contra Costa County Airports Noise Program

Contra Costa County Airports (“Airports”) is committed to working closely with community members and the flying public to help minimize aviation noise impacts in Contra Costa County (“County”). Buchanan Field Airport (“CCR”) has been a member of the community and a vital economic contributor to the County since 1946. As the community has grown around the Airport, Airport staff has worked diligently to address the concerns of its neighbors.



*CCR 1946

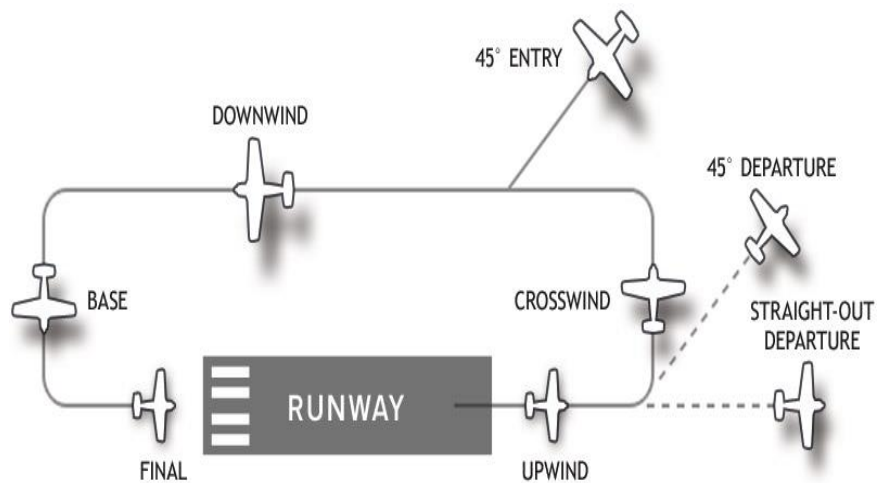
Unfortunately, noise from aircraft departing or landing at CCR can be a distraction to our neighbors. This is largely related to the orientation of the Airport’s four runways when Buchanan Field Airport was established in the 1940s. The Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”) designated the flight paths in use for safety and standards purposes, but regrettably, there was a lack of foresight to create a larger buffer between the Airport and residential spaces. As a result, we have residential neighbors close to the edge of Airport property, which can create discomfort or conflict for all parties.

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*Approximate flight pattern at CCR

*For safe operations aircraft must take off and land into the wind. Wind direction changes by season and even throughout the day, thus altering the runways in use.
*Aircraft may operate at low altitudes as necessary for landing and takeoff per Federal Aviation Regulation 91.119.



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Program History

For over 30 years, the County has been able to mitigate some aircraft-related noise at CCR through adoption of Airport Ordinance 87-8. The Ordinance details, among other items, noise and operations restrictions such as aircraft engine run-up, touch and go operations, preferential runway use, and allowable jet noise levels. CCR is one of the few airports in the country fortunate to have an Airport Noise Ordinance grandfathered by the FAA but unfortunately the ordinance does not encompass all aircraft noise and this where the noise abatement program (“Program”) comes in.

The Program has evolved as the environment in and around CCR has since noise mitigation efforts first started in 1965. Program advancements include:

- **1965-** Aviation Liaison Committee created and renamed Aviation Advisory Committee (“AAC”) in 1977
- **Early 80’s-** Airport traffic pattern is raised from 800’ to 1000’ above ground level for light aircraft.
- **1987-** Airport Ordinance 87-8 is enacted including noise and operations restrictions:
 - No practice landings and takeoffs, training, touch and go and/or proficiency operations shall be conducted between the hours of 10pm and 7am on weekdays. On weekends and holidays touch and go operations are prohibited from 10pm to 8am.
 - Maximum permitted takeoff noise level, as set in the FAA Advisory Circular 36-3, for jet aircraft of 78 decibels between 7am and 10pm and 75 decibels between 10pm and 7am.
 - No maintenance or test runups shall be conducted between the house of 10pm and 7am.
 - Landing aircraft shall maintain not less than traffic pattern, 1000’, altitude until necessary to commence descent for a normal landing.
- **1988-** Airport Community Relations Officer (“CRO”) staff position established to assist and respond to community noise concerns.
- **1989-** Airport completed a FAR Part 150 Noise Compatibility Program, as part of a Master Plan update.
- **1994-** Byron Airport opens in East Contra Costa County.
- **1998-** Noise abatement signs installed at CCR entry ways and runway run-up areas to remind pilots of noise sensitive communities surrounding the Airport.

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- **1999-** The Airport initiates meetings with flight schools and air traffic control to review the noise abatement program and discuss current community related noise concerns.
- **2001-** The Airport updates website to provide better information to pilots regarding noise abatement procedures and requirements.
- **2002-** Published a *Noise Management Program Guide* for pilots to insert into their flight books and quickly reference preferential noise abatement routes for flight planning purposes.
- **2003-** Airport implemented a new program in which aircraft owners were notified if their specific aircraft operation caused a noise complaint.
- **2005-** The Airport updated the Buchanan Field Airport Noise Compatibility Program, originally approved by the Board of Supervisors in 1989.
- **2006- Current-** Continuous improvement efforts which included:
 - CRO expanded program elements (beyond Noise Ordinance) to concerns and issues around the Byron Airport.
 - Instrument jet departure flight path revised on CCR Runway 19R to minimize noise impacts.
 - Created and implemented an online noise complaint process.
 - Tracked noise trends and issues to address with Airport users and highlight in the biannual Airports newsletter.
 - Revised and updated *Noise Management Program Guide* pilot guide and related website information.
 - CRO researches and responds to every noise complaint via phone, email and/or letter, as requested.

While Contra Costa County (“County”) owns and operates the airport, the FAA is the oversight authority when aircraft are flying (including taxiing to and from the runways) and all aviation safety-related concerns. In addition, federal law requires CCR to remain open to the public 24 hours per day, 7 days per week on a non-discriminatory basis. As the FAA controls the flight patterns and airspace, the Program relies on voluntary compliance by Airport users

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Annual operations are rising again (122,435 operations in 2016) from a low of 78,098 in 2012 after the economic downturn, which directly affected aviation. CCR is far removed from its peak of 357,181 annual operations in 1977, the 304,868 annual operations in 1990, and the helicopter flight training school in the late 2000's, but it is imperative for the Program to evolve and the Airport to continue to be a good neighbor. Also, a recent FAA revision of the jet flight paths at Oakland, Sacramento, and San Francisco International Airports has resulted in noise impacts for residents all over the County. While improving the safety and efficiency of the national transportation system, the new flight paths have created noise impacts for communities throughout the County and many that had not been previously impacted. Airport staff will continue to take steps to benefit the community no matter where the source of disturbance originates.

Stakeholder, Pilot, and Community Outreach

The Program proactively seeks cooperation from Airport users by encouraging pilots to observe and follow voluntary noise abatement procedures, which is a recommended flight path or operational procedure, to minimize aircraft disturbances when safety, weather and/or traffic conditions permit. Airport staff created the *Noise Management Program Guide* detailing specific noise abatement procedures for Airport users at CCR. The Program and related information is posted on the County website at www.ContraCostaCountyAirports.org for everyone's benefit. A main tenet of the Program is directed toward continual improvement and community and pilot education.

Buchanan Field Airport (CCR)
www.ContraCostaCountyAirports.org

Noise Management Program

Buchanan Field Airport, located in Concord, California, is a public facility owned by Contra Costa County. As such, the County has a responsibility to provide Airport users a safe, efficient facility with access to the national airspace system. By the same token, the Airport must also be sensitive to community concerns and operated in such a way as to minimize the affects of aircraft noise on the community.

The CRO uses multiple channels to educate airport users and pilots of the noise program and trends:

- Contact airport users directly in person, by phone, or in writing.
- Provide printed *Noise Management Program Guide* for pilots to insert into their flight books to quickly reference preferential noise abatement routes at CCR for flight planning purposes.
- Annual meetings with pilot clubs, flight schools, and air traffic control to review the noise abatement program and discuss current community related noise concerns.
- Discuss noise trends and issues in the biannual Airports newsletter

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The Program receives additional assistance, support and time investment from the Airport Committee, Aviation Advisory Committee (AAC), and the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) for the benefit of the community. Together, we are committed to being a good neighbor and improving the quality of life in our community.

- Airport Committee is a subcommittee of the Board of Supervisors. Its members are typically the Supervisors that have an airport located in their district. Byron Airport is in District III and Buchanan Field is in District IV.
- AAC provides advice and recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on aviation issues related to the Contra Costa County Airports. The AAC works to advance aviation while giving those community members living and working near the Airports a chance to stay informed on Airport matters as well as voice their opinions and concerns. The AAC also provides a forum for vetting policy matters related to Buchanan Field and Byron Airports.
- ALUC works to protect public health, safety, and welfare by ensuring the orderly expansion of airports and the adoption of land use measures that minimize the public's exposure to excessive noise and safety hazards within areas around public airports to the extent that these areas are not already devoted to incompatible uses.

As a good neighbor, CCR is both proactive and responsive to aviation noise impacts in our community. The Program creates a direct line of communication to better understand and serve the needs of our community regardless of where the source of the concern may originate. When a complaint call is received by Airport staff, we assist and respond by:

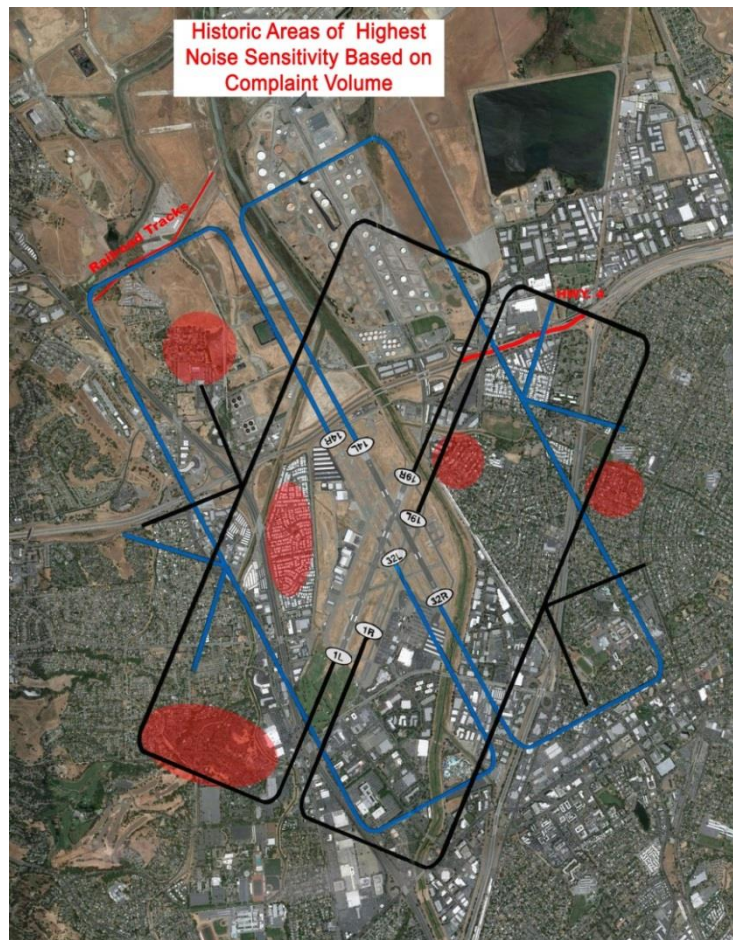
- Contacting FAA Air Traffic Control (ATC), and if possible suggest ATC relay noise abatement procedure(s) to the pilot for noise mitigation.
- Reviewing all complaints through a comprehensive investigation process which includes ATC flight recordings, contacting ATC tower personnel, and available County resources.
- Logging complaints in a database and including in our monthly noise reports to the AAC.
- Collecting data to analyze trends and proactively coordinate with Airport users to address possible noise impacts in support of our community.

The CRO acts as a liaison, or ombudsman, for the community. When special events or new operations occur at the airfield, Airport staff will notify our neighbors and proactively coordinate with the operator to try and mitigate possible noise impacts in support of our community. We are available as a community resource for

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information on the Airports and aviation operations. We post community resources on the Airports website, social media (NextDoor), and news blogs (Claycord) to notify and inform our community of aviation activities and events that may create noise or concerns. Additionally, the CRO has a direct mailing list for those who have requested this type of notification of events and new operations.

Airport staff continues to identify current trends at the Airports. Noise data analysis has identified areas most impacted by aviation noise based on historical complaint volume and this information is utilized in communications and meetings with Airport users to ensure everyone is aware of these areas and the need to mitigate aviation noise. Historically impacted areas identified in the figure below.



Numerous Program improvements have been made to benefit the community at large since noise mitigation efforts first started in 1965. CRO data and trend analysis has been influential in the following improvements.

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- Instrument jet departure flight path revised on CCR Runway 19R away from dense residential neighborhoods and rising terrain and towards major roadways and commercial areas. Data was provided to the FAA for review, study, and implementation from the Buchanan Field Airport Noise Compatibility Program process and collected through the Program. After years of review, the FAA enacted the new flight path.
- Reduced late night aviation noise impacts by requesting emergency helicopters at CCR alter arriving and departing flight paths by increasing altitude and overflying non-residential areas as much as possible.

Program improvements do not begin or end in the communities surrounding CCR. Byron Airport has been a part of Contra Costa County Airports since 1994 and is supported by a larger buffer between the Airport and residential spaces. Airport staff receives a small percentage of total complaints from East Contra County and most reported aviation disturbances in this area relate to aerobatic and low-flying activity. While the Airport Noise Ordinance does not apply to Byron Airport, since the Ordinance predates Byron Airport, Program components are utilized to help minimize aviation noise impacts for neighbors.

- For example, Airport staff received several noise complaints in East County due to aerobatic activity. While the activity was not related to County Airport tenants, Airport staff in coordination with AAC members and pilots, identified, located and informed the individuals associated with the aerobatic activity disturbance in order to best mitigate related noise impacts. Airport staff documented and dispersed information to tenants and nearby airports specifying the area of complaint and where aerobatic activity, allowed per FAA regulations, would minimize the impact. These combined actions had an immediate impact and an immediate reduction in noise disturbances for this community.

Airport staff will continue to strive for improvement to address continually changing circumstances at the airports and in the surrounding communities and we know that our work will ever be evolving. For more detailed information regarding Buchanan Field and Byron Airport operations, aviation, and FAA oversight authority please visit our FAQ's online at <http://www.cccounty.us/3804/Buchanan-Field-Noise-Program>.

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Buchanan Field Noise Response

Our neighbors turn to us for answers. When you contact us to voice your concern and objection to aircraft operations, you help us gauge and better understand what's occurring in our community. In return, we take appropriate action by verifying the source of your complaint and notifying Airport users on applicable noise mitigation procedures.

Your noise response team is listening. This is our commitment to you:

- To be a good neighbor by monitoring aircraft noise and investigating community concerns.
- To listen and respond in a timely manner to your concerns regarding aircraft operations.
- To be readily available to meet directly with concerned neighbors.
- To educate the flying public on preventative and corrective measures instituted to comply with our voluntary noise abatement program.
- To enforce maximum allowable noise limits and training operation limits at CCR per the Airport Ordinance 87-8.

We recognize the value of obtaining feedback from our community. This is a never-ending task, and your sustained input and support is key to this community-wide process. If you have a complaint regarding aircraft operations, would like our noise management team to look into an event, or have a suggestion, please contact us in the following ways:

Noise Complaint Line:

(844) 359-8687 then press 4

Online: www.ContraCostaCountyAirports.org

Contra County Airports Noise Program can be found online in the Community Resources section.