



Department of Aerospace
Engineering and Aviation

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June 7, 2005

Mr. Dennis Hennen
198 Caren Ave.
Worthington, OH 43085

Dear Mr. Hennen:

As you are aware, The Ohio State University Airport agreed to begin collecting "confirmed complaints" from the WOOSE system on April 16, 2005.

The Airport staff has looked extensively at the first month's reports, and is having difficulty thoroughly analyzing the complaints for a number of reasons:

- Flight Data – The Airport does not have regular access to the information necessary to conduct a thorough analysis. The data is controlled by the FAA, and we have limited access to this information through the Columbus Regional Airport Authority (CRAA) staff. I am working on a method for better accessing this information, while minimizing any undue burden on the CRAA staff.
- Confirmed Complaints – A "confirmed complaint" as defined by you is any report that has three or more complaints associated with the same aircraft operation. Nonetheless, as I performed a cursory review of the second month's reports, I find that separate operations are being grouped together to create a "false" report of complaints that may not necessarily meet your criteria as a "confirmed complaint."

ACS Confirmed Complaint #374

The following confirmed complaints have been registered at the WOOSE Aircraft Complaint System. Please respond to this email with any details you discover concerning this complaint. Please do NOT include the original message in your reponse.

Tracking #: 4899
Time of Incident: 2005-06-03 12:31:00
Complaint Type: Noise
Aircraft Type: Jet
Location: 255 HIGHGATE AVE, WORTHINGTON

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Tracking #: 5310
Time of Incident: 2005-06-03 12:36:00
Complaint Type: Noise
Aircraft Type: Propeller Plane
Location: 6784 JOSLYN PL, WORTHINGTON
Note:
Single engine prop aircraft (Gray color - black wing tips)
heading Northeast flew over home. Very loud.

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Tracking #: 4928
Time of Incident: 2005-06-03 12:37:00
Complaint Type: Noise
Aircraft Type: Unknown
Location: 587 FOX LN, WORTHINGTON
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Tracking #: 4937
Time of Incident: 2005-06-03 12:40:00
Complaint Type: Noise
Aircraft Type: Jet
Location: 3095 MEADOWSHIRE CT, DUBLIN
Note:
6th large, loud, low aircraft over my home since 10am today.

From the above information, you will notice that this report “confirms” an operation that supposedly occurred to both the east and west of the Airport at the same time. It is impossible though for an aircraft to be traveling northeast (most likely on departure) over Highgate and Joslyn Place (northeast of the Airport and north of Thomas Worthington HS) and a few minutes later be landing from the west.

- Locations – During the first month reporting (April 16 – May 15, 2005), the Airport received 48 reports, consisting of 176 individual complaints. Upon further review of the reports, it was revealed that a majority of the complaints came from a few locations. In fact, approximately 65% of the complaints came from 10 homes, with the Haueisen’s submitting 16% alone. Although I have not conducted a formal review of the second month’s reports, a cursory review indicates a continuation of this trend.

It is difficult to understand the breadth of this issue when so many complaints come from just a few locations. It appears as though some individuals are more sensitive to these types of sounds (which is supported by research), or that they are submitting aircraft observation reports rather than noise complaints.

- **Aircraft Type** – It was my understanding throughout our study process that those opposed to any growth of the facility are primarily concerned with additional jet traffic. Nonetheless, many of the first month’s reports reference propeller-driven aircraft. In fact, 20 of the 48 reports submitted by you reference propeller aircraft.

I understand that not everyone, while sitting in their home, may know the difference between a jet aircraft and a propeller driven aircraft. In several of the reports though, the individual actually provides the color of the aircraft, so it must be assumed that they can distinguish between these aircraft types. Based on the information provided, I am not sure if propeller-driven aircraft are truly an issue with the community. Please advise.

Also, since several of the reports reference both jet and propeller driven aircraft, is the system again generating a “false” report of complaints that may not necessarily meet your criteria as a “confirmed complaint,” as described above.

- **Time of Incident** – When we first met to discuss the issue of the noise complaints and the WOOSE reporting system, much of the discussion focused on night-time operations. In fact, Ms. Weislogel spoke extensively of the “3:30 am LabCorp flight” being exceptionally bothersome.

One of the benefits I was hoping the WOOSE system was going to offer was a more concrete understanding of the night operation and their impacts on the surrounding community. Nonetheless, the information generated during the first month (and continuing through the second month) focus primarily on day-time activity. In fact, only six of the 48 reports submitted during the first month referenced operations that occurred between the hours of 11:00 pm and 7:00 am, with no reports regarding operations between 1:00 am and 6:00 am.

- **Aircraft Altitude** – The Airport does not have the authority to regulate the altitude of aircraft. The responsibility for monitoring the altitude of aircraft lies with the local Terminal Radar Approach Control (TRACON), which is managed by the FAA in the Port Columbus Air Traffic Control Tower.

The altitude of aircraft is regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration through the Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR’s). According to FAR Part 91.119, while flying over a congested area an aircraft must stay 1,000’ above the highest obstacle within a 2,000 foot radius of the aircraft.

The authority for addressing any violations to the FAR’s rests with the local Flight Standards District Office (FSDO), also located at Port Columbus.

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Issues such as the following will need to be taken up with the FAA Air Traffic Control Tower at Port Columbus:

Tracking #: 2073
Time of Incident: 2005-04-16 13:35:00
Complaint Type: Low Flight
Aircraft Type: Propeller Plane
Location: 6784 JOSLYN PL, WORTHINGTON

Note:
Multi-engine prop aircraft (Light Gray color) heading Southwest flew over neighbor's house at an estimated 300 feet. Very Loud.

As mentioned above, the University Airport is working to develop a system to better analyze the type of complaints submitted by the surrounding community. In the meantime, I recommend that we meet again to clarify some of these issues, and to begin to achieve a system that is both manageable and beneficial.

I will contact you shortly to schedule a time to meet. Thank you.

Respectfully,

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY AIRPORT



Douglas E. Hammon
Airport Director

c: W. Baeslack
D. Tyler-Lee
E. Gubry



**We Oppose
Ohio State
Airport Expansion**

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Douglas Hammon, Airport Director
The Ohio State University Airport
2160 West Case Road
Columbus, OH 43235-2526

By US Mail and Email.

June 13, 2005

RE: WOOSE Noise Complaint System

Dear Mr. Hammon:

I am in receipt of your June 7th letter (received on June 10th) concerning your difficulty with the data provided by the WOOSE noise complaint system. I will respond to each point in turn.

1. We hope you will quickly resolve your issues with collecting data from the FAA and CRAA. Our research shows that numerous airports around the country are able to respond within a few days of a complaint. We have yet to find an airport whose response takes more than 1 week. You may wish to consider the following which we found at <http://www.faa.gov/programs/en/ane/noise/submit.cfm#1>

Note, FAA Air Traffic Control Towers may be asked by airport management to provide assistance in determining what aircraft operation resulted in an aircraft noise inquiry. It has always been the FAA's policy to provide reasonable assistance, recognizing that Towers are not staffed to provide regular, long-term research of aircraft noise events. Recognize that the FAA Airport Traffic Control Tower's primary function is to ensure the safety of airport operations on and around the airport. **For airports with frequent requests for operational data, the FAA Air Traffic Division may develop an agreement with an airport for sharing data, so that the airport can connect noise events with noise concerns of the public.**

We hope that you can reach an arrangement with the FAA and CRAA to meet or exceed the 1 week turnaround found at most airports.

2. We originally and clearly defined a confirmed complaint as any report that had **two** or more complaints submitted within a five minute period.

We also conceded that this method may occasionally provide false positives. This could be because of multiple flights within a five minute period, including flights on different sides of the airport. However, this was determined to be the best method of automation

considering the limited resources our volunteers have to review each complaint.

The number of complaints required for confirmation was quickly changed to three or more **for your convenience**. We felt that the number of confirmed complaints at the two threshold may be too many while you ramped up your response systems. We had hoped this would result in a faster response at the start and we could later lower the threshold back to two.

However, per a June 11th email from me, the threshold has again been lowered to two to avoid confusion.

In response to your specific example, there are four complaints that make up that confirmed complaint. Three of them are in Worthington and on their own make up a valid confirmed complaint regardless of which standard above you use.

Further, as we discussed during our meeting, the reason for a five minute window in calculating confirmed complaints is due to the fact that not everyone's clocks are calibrated. Because of this, it is not possible to make the assumption as you did that the report was for an aircraft landing later.

Additionally, the report from Dublin of an aircraft overhead may have been erroneous in that assumption. It is possible that the noise heard in Dublin was the run-up for the aircraft that was then observed over Worthington and the aircraft was not actually observed.

In short, until your research is performed, the exact cause and nature of the event or events that led to these complaints will remain unknown. And even if the Dublin complaint is due to a different operation, WOOSE holds that each individual complaint is worthy of a response.

3. There are certainly individuals who are more sensitive to aircraft noise than others, those who work from home and thus have more opportunity to hear disruptive aircraft, those who have Internet access at home to file complaints, those who are closer to the airport than others and feel a greater impact, and finally those who are more committed in reporting problems than others. With respect to your specific example, Mr. Hauseisen falls into all five categories.

However, we strongly believe it is not correct for the OSU Airport to prejudge the validity of complaints without first researching them, but to understand the complaint response process is a normal function of Ohio's 5th busiest airport. We also believe a timely response by the airport to a complaint provides a forum for airport management to educate those who lodge complaints as to the benefits aviation provides locally and builds public confidence.

Further, every week I am told by numerous individuals in the community of specific events that were very disruptive, yet they did not take the time to enter the complaint. Because of this, there are simply people who make reports more frequently, and as a matter of probability are much more likely to show up in the list of confirmed complaints.

4. It is true that the WOOSE organization is opposed to the growth of corporate jet traffic. However, this is not necessarily the views of all members of the community using our complaint system.

In your example of the first month's complaints, approximately 42% of the complaints reference a propeller aircraft. As you admit, not everyone may know the difference by sound. However, that leaves 58% of the confirmed complaints during this period as unknown or for jet aircraft. By comparison, the September 2004 Draft of the airport master plan lists jet operations as 8% of total operations in 2003. This shows the complaints concerning jets are not proportional to jet operations, and thus are being complained about at a very high rate.

Reviewing the statistics for individual complaints, 63% are for jets and another 12% are for an unknown type of aircraft. This matches closely to the percentages cited above.

Further, based on our own observations it is our belief that a large number of complaints on propeller planes were twin engine aircraft. These are typically used by corporate users and not for training or recreational use. However, this determination cannot conclusively be made until the complaints are investigated.

Again, as we discussed before, complaints are only correlated based on time, and there will be instances where two operations that occur closely together will be reported as a confirmed complaint.

5. Similar to my prior statements, I regularly hear of people who do not enter in disruptive events, and this is doubly so for night flights. People comment that after being awakened at night, their only desire is to return to sleep and not to file a complaint. And by morning, they say they have forgotten the time of the incident.

Within the individual complaints, there are a number of night flights reported. But because of the reasons cited above, they will infrequently reach the three threshold for a confirmed complaint.

6. As you can imagine, the average citizen is not well versed in aviation regulations or procedures. One of the purposes of the WOOSE complaint system we discussed during the April meeting was feedback from the community so that you could identify and speak with those pilots and organizations who violated aviation and airport rules. If you wish to make a distinction between noisy and low flying aircraft and the proper reporting procedure, then it falls to OSU Airport management to inform the public of this distinction and educate surrounding communities and their elected officials as to the proper venue to file a specific type of complaint.

Let me reiterate the purpose of the confirmed complaint system was as a convenience and courtesy to you. Our hope was that by starting with the most egregious complaints, we could eventual ramp up to a system where you respond to every individual complaint within one week as the CRAA does.

Based on the misunderstandings and your apparent desire for additional data, I propose that we

drop the confirmed complaint system and direct each individual complaint to your office as soon as it arrives. We can also provide you with all 5,000+ individual complaints we have had to date so that you may perform proper analysis and respond to each.

Finally, when we discussed this complaint forwarding system in April, you assured us of your response to each complaint. We were unaware that you planned to first study the data provided by this system before deciding to take action. This lack of communication as to OSU Airport intentions with the complaint forwarding system is disturbing. We are only a phone call or email away, and had we been made aware of the situation we could have provided you several months of data and avoid the 50+ day delay in response to complaints.

Jane Weislogel and I will be happy to meet with you again to discuss these matters. We are available during the following dates and times:

- Tuesday, June 14th before 9:30 AM.
- Wednesday, June 15th before 10:30 AM.
- Thursday, June 16th between 11:30 AM and 3:00 PM.
- Friday, June 17th after 12:00 PM.

Please contact me at 614-430-0403 as soon as possible to arrange and confirm one of the above meeting dates so we may resolve these matters and so you can address the numerous and long standing complaints the community has with OSU airport operations.

Sincerely,

Dennis S. Hennen
President, WOOSE
614-430-0403
dsh@dsh.org

cc: William Baeslack, Dean of the College of Engineering, OSU
Ernest Gubry, FAA
Dawn Tyler-Lee, Government Relations, OSU