

AIRCRAFT NOISE ABATEMENT EFFORT

By Scott Freeman

The airport community, the city, and the residents that live in the vicinity of the airport have been involved in developing an acceptable solution for aircraft noise abatement. A link is now in place on the City website to allow residents to report a noise issue for resolution. Some background information may help in moving this solution forward.

The Hurricane Airport has been in its current location since its early beginnings as a dirt air strip in 1942. Over the years, improvements have been made and the airport now has the third largest number of based aircraft among the 28 rural airports in the state of Utah. Besides the 60 home based aircraft and 43 hangars, there are now 13 aviation related small businesses that are located on the airport property. The airport provides several benefits to our community including: positive economic impact; a base for search and rescue operations in the area; economic flight training opportunities for young people looking to make aviation a career as well as aviation enthusiasts; non-airport located local businesses that utilize the airport; as well as convience for those flying into Hurricane from outside areas to conduct business or tourism.

However, with the recent rapid growth of the city resulting in agricultural and open lands around the airport being developed for residential areas, aircraft noise abatement has recently become a concern. Although there are currently no helicopters based at the airport, helicopter training flights by aircraft from other locations have become a primary concern of residents because of the higher noise levels produced by these aircraft. The majority of these flights have been from Southern Utah University.

In order to reduce noise now and in the future, there have been several accomplishments to date:

- 1) A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with SUU is in place with the City. Through this MOU SUU has committed to several restrictions including limiting their training flights using the Hurricane Airport to 4 per day and no flights between 7:30 pm and 7:30 am. They have also agreed to restrict flights over residential neighborhoods whenever possible and not to conduct any training flights on Sundays.
- 2) In conjunction with local pilots, the Sand Hollow Aviation Association, and the City, a general airport Noise Abatement Policy has been developed for implementation. This policy is based on voluntary compliance and education by the airport community. Local airport noise abatement ordinances or laws are prohibited due to a federal law passed by Congress in the early 1990's, thus the "policy" approach. This Noise Abatement Policy includes restricting any aircraft which exceeds established noise levels from repetitive "pattern work" at Hurricane as well as repetitive pattern work by any aircraft from sunset to sunrise.

To aid in the success of implementing a successful Noise Abatement Policy, the Sand Hollow Aviation Association has purchased an aircraft flight monitoring system that is now active at the

airport and provides real time and historical data of all flight activities in the Hurricane City area.

A critical part of the success of the Noise Abatement Policy is to provide a tool for citizens to be able to report a specific noise incident so that a proper investigation can be completed. These reports, along with the flight monitoring system described above, will provide sound data to measure the policy's success and opportunities for improvement. For each noise incident reported through the form on the City webpage, an investigation will be conducted, a determination made if the aircraft was in violation of the policy, corrective action taken, and timely feedback to the submitter provided.

The noise incident form can be found on the City website www.cityofhurricane.com under the Government tab, then the airport link found on the right side of that page. Once there, click on the "Noise Abatement Request Form" at the bottom of the page, complete the form with all the information available, and submit it for processing.

Using these tools, we can work to continue to work together so that those utilizing the airport and the residents who live in the vicinity of the airport can establish a spirit of cooperation and mutual benefit to ensure the airport remains a valuable asset and "good neighbor" to our community.