

Contact:
Professional Helicopter
Pilots Association (PHPA)

PO Box 7059
Burbank, CA 91510-7059
Phone 323 929 PHPA (7472)



Press Release

Professional Helicopter Pilots Association (PHPA) Statement Re: Los Angeles International (LAX) Heliport – Latest Developments

Los Angeles, CA, January 6, 2016. Upon learning of a plan by Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) to permanently close the Los Angeles International Heliport, several Board Members of the Professional Helicopter Pilots Association (PHPA) met with the Executive Director of Los Angeles World Airports on January 5, 2016. PHPA requested that the plan be canceled and the heliport reopened to commercial helicopter operations. The heliport has been closed since 2010 due to ongoing construction activities at LAX. This construction is expected to continue for the next two years.

Board Members Morrie Zager, Bill Withycombe, Tony Brynes and Legal / Heliport Specialist Ricarda Bennett met with LAWA Executive Director Deborah Flint and members of her staff at LAWA's Administrative Offices. Also present were helicopter industry representatives Chuck Street, Kurt Robinson and Ed Story.

During the meeting, PHPA submitted a detailed report to LAWA's Management Team which outlined the need for a fully-functioning heliport at LAX, currently one of the busiest airports in the country. The report detailed the critical need for helicopter transportation efficiency and the benefits to Public Safety that the current heliport provides. The report was accompanied by support letters from the Helicopter Association International (HAI) and helicopter operators throughout the Los Angeles area.

In response to PHPA's request to reopen the heliport, the Director's staff advised that they had moved ahead with their plans to turn the existing heliport into approximately 178 parking spaces while setting aside only one emergency landing slot above the Terminal 4 Parking structure. In fact, they stated the project was nearly completed. This action by LAWA was not previously coordinated with any of the Los Angeles area helicopter industry or PHPA. PHPA was advised that the LAWA decision to close the heliport permanently was Irrevocable. This was a disappointing development. The loss of this facility is a loss to the National Airspace System and a potential problem for Public Safety first responders at LAX.

LAWA Director Flint advised that they would be willing to work with PHPA on future alternatives to the inefficient helicopter facilities currently available on the South side of LAX. PHPA inquired about a plan being developed at LAX to shuttle VIP's from a special screening facility on the South side of LAX to the main terminals. It was noted that it would be possible for a heliport to be incorporated in the plans

for the VIP facility. LAWA has agreed to work with PHPA on future plans for a heliport at the screening facility. PHPA will continue follow up on the plans for heliport alternatives at LAX. More to come in the future.

Bill Withycombe
PHPA Board Member