



Los Angeles Area
Helicopter Operators Association
"Aviation Professionals Serving the Community"



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Los Angeles-Area Helicopter Groups Request Helicopter Noise Complaint Hotline Remain Active

Los Angeles, Calif. (August 1, 2018) – The Los Angeles Area Helicopter Operators Association (LAAHOA) and the Professional Helicopter Pilots Association (PHPA) are objecting to a proposal to discontinue a noise complaint hotline serving the Los Angeles region and sponsored by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

Started in 2015, the Automated Complaint System (ACS) receives an average of 5,500 calls a month and costs about \$30,000 annually to operate. ACS was originally planned to last just one year but has been twice extended at the request of area stakeholders, including LAAHOA and PHPA. As members of the Helicopter Noise Complaint Review Committee, the two groups learned of the FAA's decision about six months ago.

"It may sound counterintuitive, but many of us in the local helicopter industry firmly support keeping this system in place," states Chuck Street, executive director for LAAHOA. "We want the FAA to continue the ACS program because it objectively quantifies the extent of public concern about helicopter noise in the Los Angeles area."

According to Street, the ACS shows that a small number of callers are sometimes responsible for a significant number of complaints logged by the ACS. "In one ZIP code in April 2018, two people logged more than 1,600 calls," continues Street. "That equates to nearly 94 percent of the calls from that neighborhood."

Morrie C. Zager, President, Professional Helicopter Pilots Association (PHPA) notes that PHPA and the Los Angeles Area Helicopter Operators Association (LAAHOA) attend monthly meetings with the FAA and homeowners groups to discuss the data received from the complaint system. "PHPA and LAAHOA attend these meetings to collaborate and to facilitate a system that allows all parties involved a common starting point with which to begin discussion."

The ACS system also reminds pilots to operate their aircraft so as to reduce the noise impact on neighborhoods they fly over, in accordance with HAI's Fly Neighborly program, which suggests tactics such as flying at higher altitudes or moving common routes away from noise-sensitive neighborhoods. "The ACS system reminds helicopter pilots that there is a form of accountability regarding how they operate their aircraft in the region," says Street.

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PHPA and LAAHOA point out that more than half of all helicopter flights in the Los Angeles region are conducted by aircraft performing public-service missions, such as police, fire, and air ambulance services. However, the two associations also acknowledge the need for their members to be mindful of the noise impact of their operations. “We in the local helicopter community are committed to making adjustments where it makes sense to do so and without compromising safety,” says Street.

In addition to the helicopter associations, members of the California congressional delegation are also interested in continuing the ACS program. Members of the delegation sent a letter to the FAA, asking it to reverse the decision to cancel the program and to improve the program so that it more accurately tracks helicopters operating across Los Angeles County.

“We are grateful to Sens. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) and Reps. Tony Cardenas (D-Los Angeles), Ted Lieu (D-Torrance), Alan Lowenthal (D-Long Beach), Adam Schiff (D-Burbank), Brad Sherman (D-Porter Ranch), and Maxine Waters (D-Los Angeles) for their continued support of this important program,” says Street.

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