

Keep noise down, efficiency up at Queens airports

Sharon Pinkerton, Op/Ed at TimesLedger Newspapers | March 3, 2016

The article, “FAA reform bill raises concern from Queens leaders” (Feb. 19) suggests that aircraft noise is the biggest issue affecting New Yorkers. While it is undoubtedly a concern for some, U.S. airlines have made great strides in reducing aircraft noise in recent years. In fact, FAA data demonstrates that the population exposed to significant levels of aircraft noise has dropped 95 percent since the late 1970s, even as enplanements have tripled. We expect this trend to continue as U.S. airlines purchase new, quieter aircraft that are certified to meet the latest international noise standards.

However, our nation’s antiquated air traffic control system and New York’s dubious distinction as America’s leader in aircraft delays should be of concern to us all. Incredibly, New York’s three airports—Kennedy, La Guardia and Newark Liberty—account for nearly half of our nation’s delays. While some delays are caused by Mother Nature, **our reliance on WWII-era radar technology¹** keeps planes from **flying as directly and efficiently as they otherwise could²** and is responsible for the three major New York area airports perennial ranking among the top five most delayed airports in the nation.

This reliance on radar instead of satellite-based navigation is costing passengers time and money. Air traffic control delays have become about 15 percent longer at 13 out of 20 of America’s largest hubs despite declining traffic, with JFK having the longest increase at 49 percent. **Twenty years ago, a flight from LaGuardia to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport took less than an hour. Today the same flight takes 90 minutes, as airlines have to account for ATC delays.**

The good news is that NextGen modernization—which utilizes technology we’re already using on our smartphones and GPS³—means more efficient ATC and fewer delays. The FAA reauthorization bill now under consideration would advance NextGen **while ensuring that environmental and community protections are maintained and enhanced.⁴**

NextGen reduces noise overall and America’s airlines are committed to working with the FAA and all communities near them to hear their concerns and find solutions⁵ that work for us all.

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(Highlights, footnotes and minor edits may have been added by aiREFORM)**

¹ aiR NOTE: WWII technology has been extensively upgraded and replaced dozens of times; Ms. Pinkerton and other aviation industry lobbyists need to quit making this garbage misrepresentation, alleging 'antique' technologies.

² aiR NOTE: look at the 3/3/2016 screen captures, for all 29 airline flights from LGA to DCA. All of these flights are VERY direct, VERY efficient. The only route adjustments are minor, and mostly to help sequence at Reagan National ... and these all reflect delays caused not by LaGuardia but by airline scheduling in the DC area.

³ aiR NOTE: ...and we have been using GPS in ATC for more than 20-years already. The zigzag routes being presented and talked about are spin & lies ... just a bunch of pro-NextGen propaganda.

⁴ aiR NOTE: In the past three years, NextGen has been a disaster for concentrated noise impact. Not just at LGA< but also at BIS, CLT, DCA, PHX, ORD, SFO, SEA and others. And more NextGen debacles are planned, all with the narrow (but unspoken) aim being solely to bolster airline profits (while scrapping noise mitigation policies).

⁵ aiR NOTE: Here's a solution that works: ask FAA to regulate airport capacity, and reduce the number of small planes, thus the number of scheduled flights. Set manageable limits on operations per hour.