

**Tempe Aviation Commission
Tuesday, October 10, 2023
6:00 p.m. – Call to Order**

HYBRID

Tempe Public Library, Second Floor Conference Room
3500 S Rural Rd, Tempe, AZ 85282

VIRTUAL

Microsoft Teams meeting, [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only)

[+1 480-498-8745](tel:+14804988745), [670312203#](tel:+1480670312203) United States, Phoenix

Phone Conference ID: 670 312 203#

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Public Appearances;** the Tempe Aviation Commission welcomes public comments at this time. The Commission may not respond to public comments unless the topic has been placed on the agenda. There is a *three-minute time limit* per citizen.
3. **Consideration of Meeting Minutes September 19, 2023;** for discussion and approval.
4. **Aviation History Month Saturday November 18 event;** for discussion
5. **Aviation Training and Sky Harbor Near Misses;** for discussion and action
6. **Tempe City Council Correspondence;** for discussion
7. **Commissioners' Business;** suggestions for future agenda items.
8. **Schedule Next TAVCO Meeting;** *Tuesday, November 14*
9. **Adjournment.**

According to the Arizona Open Meeting Law, the Commission may only discuss matters listed on the Commission agenda. The City of Tempe endeavors to make all public meetings accessible to persons with disabilities. With 48 hours advance notice, special assistance is available at public meetings for sight and/or hearing-impaired persons. Please call 350-2905 (voice) or 350-8400 (TDD) to request an accommodation to participate in a public meeting. Parking information is available at <http://www.millavenue.com/go/tempe-community-council>. For public transportation route and schedule information, please visit www.valleymetro.org or call 602-253-5000.

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

TAVCO

September 19, 2023

Minutes of the Tempe Aviation Commission meeting – was held via virtual Microsoft Teams meeting with call in +1 (480) 498-8745 United States, Phoenix (Toll) Conference ID: 243 160 897# and at the Tempe Public Library, on June 13, 2023 6:30 p.m.

(MEMBERS) Present:

W. David Doiron
Stuart Mitnik
Ed Kucharski
Lane Waddell
Peter Schelstraete
Karen Apple

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Desiree Walker
Aaron McBride
John Lynch

Citizens Present:

Darlene Justice
Shannon (Last Name)

City Staff Present:

Brianne Fisher, Sustainability and Resilience Office, City of Tempe

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

The chair, Mr. Doiron, calls the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Appearances

The chair recognizes Darlene Justice for her public comment.

Darlene Justice, President of the North Tempe Neighborhood Association, and resident since 1965 states that she is very aware of noise issues and TAVCO related issues. She is here tonight because she wants a record of her neighborhoods safety concerns as it relates to the September “near misses.” On September 5th the AZ Republic reported on two near misses outlining under staffing of air traffic controllers, over worked controllers and large number of planes coming in and out on tight schedules as the main causes for the near misses. Disturbing details is outlined in AZ Republic article. North Tempe Neighborhood Association will be sending letter outlining concerns to FAA, Sky Harbor, City of Tempe, Senator Sinema and Kelly and Representative Stanton. Phoenix Sky Harbor is owned solely by Phoenix and therefore not a true regional airport. Tempe has not had seat at table, however the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) that exists to keep eastern departures over the river bottom is good but unfortunately there is no agreement regarding approaches. Here tonight asking for your support. We are sending out our letter and we are asking TAVCO to review issue and formally send an

accompanying letter. TAVCO's role is to relay any safety issues to Council and their job is to listen and react. Thank you for your time.

Chair mentions that TAVCO will have this on the agenda for next month meeting to be able to discuss in further detail.

Fisher states that Commissioner's can ask clarifying questions but cannot discuss the item since it is not agendaized.

Member Kucharski asks D. Justice what her ideal outcome is?

D. Justice responds that the FAA has mentioned that they are trying to get more air traffic controllers hired and trained. There are so many in training but 1400 are about to retire. We cannot have controllers working overtime. D. Justice provides the article and states its shocking. This is not the only close calls they are having. If Phoenix wants to bring all these planes in, and don't have traffic controllers who are trained and ready, we are destined to have a problem. The federal government needs to hear from all of us. They fly over our neighborhoods, so it is our problem. We have correspondence with FAA in the past. We need to do it again; we need to put pressure on them.

Shannon (Last Name) provides her public comment: I have lived in Tempe my whole life, and past TAVCO Chairperson. Would like to see City of Tempe be supportive of the concern to reduce the training of commercial pilots to using simulators versus real life situational training. If there are more near misses, similar to what Darlene Justice's concern is, we need pilots to have adequate training. If trainees are only going to learn these skills through a simulator than they will not be prepared for emergency situations. This issue couples the near miss issues and we are asking TAVCO to look into it and write to City Council expressing their concern so that City Council can advocate to Phoenix Sky Harbor and FAA. The FAA is getting ready to make that decision on training right now.

Fisher asks what their timeframe is on sending a letter to Mayor and Council. D. Justice responds that she would like to get the letter out by the end of next week.

Chair asks that D. Justice send her letter to Fisher so that TAVCO members can review the copy.

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Doiron asks if there are any objections/corrections to the minutes of the September Meeting? Member Waddell motioned to approve the meeting minutes, Mitnik seconded. Unanimous approval.

Agenda Item 4 – Aviation History Month Event, Saturday November 18

Mr. Doiron shares that he is collecting photos for the event. They will have discussion to go with it. Chair Doiron asks Mitnik if he has any updates. Mitnik states that he sent the Chair and Fisher PowerPoint slides and that formatting will be taken care of. He stated that Chair responded to the email that it looked good. Mitnik states that these would turn into posters and will be available for any questions of the information presented.

Fisher explains the photos in the package were provided by the Museum and will be on display for the event as well. Fisher asks that TAVCO members bring all the material they have for that event to the October meeting to get reviewed and finalized by all members.

Mitnik asks about a run through and roles for members. Chair responds and says we will need TAVCO members to be there early to welcome and be able to ask questions.

Lastly, Fisher states that she is working with Public Information Office about advertising for the event and making sure there is public advertising about it.

Agenda Item 5 – Tempe City Council Correspondence

Chair states that Member McBride was asked to draft a letter and asks if anyone has seen the letter.

Fisher states that she has not, however in looking back in the minutes and there might need to be clarification or more direction. Fisher states that the letter idea came out of a discussion TAVCO had in regard to the proposed stadium and the vote going out to residents. It was discussed that if voters approved, TAVCO was to draft a letter outlining their concerns and recommendations on moving forward. However, since the vote did not go forward, is there a need for the letter?

Chair states that the letter to Council should include, what they think TAVCO's job is, and what we think our job is.

Fisher states she is still working to get Mayor or Councilmember at next meeting.

Agenda Item 6 – Commissioners' Business

Chair states to keep several of these things on the agenda and include the topics from our public comments. Chair also states that he wants to put on notice the members of TAVCO that there will need to be a nomination for the next Chair of TAVCO because he is termed off.

Agenda Item 9 – Schedule Next TAVCO Meeting

The next TAVCO meeting will be on Tuesday, October 10.

Agenda Item 10 – Adjournment.

Commissioner Waddell motions to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Schelstraete seconds. Unanimous approval.

The meeting is adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Prepared by: Brianne Fisher

PHOENIX

'We need to turn immediately': 2 close calls at Sky Harbor as FAA deals with staff shortages

**Fernando Cervantes Jr.**

Arizona Republic

Published 6:15 a.m. MT Aug. 28, 2023 | Updated 7:49 a.m. MT Aug. 29, 2023

For at least the second time this summer at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, two planes came within less than a mile of each other, nearly causing a midair collision — at one point, almost closing a gap of a few hundred feet.

Flight records of the August close call show that both of the planes involved different models of Boeing 737s, with a combined capacity of 315 people. If an accident between the flights occurred, it would have been the largest aviation disaster in the United States, outdoing American Airlines Flight 191, which crashed while departing Chicago's O'Hare Airport on May 25, 1979, killing 256 passengers and 15 crew.

But close calls are happening across the U.S., and more frequently.

According to an investigation from The New York Times, close calls involving major airlines were happening multiple times a week — the recent close call in Phoenix was one of 46 reported across the United States in the last month. Human error, lack of training and staffing shortages of air traffic controllers were major factors.

In June, the Federal Aviation Administration announced a monthly safety campaign for traffic controllers, aimed at strengthening their proficiency and to reach a goal of "zero close-calls."

In response to the investigation, the FAA said it was working on hiring and training air traffic controllers — and investing \$121 million to improve safety at eight major airports — while highlighting that "the U.S. aviation system is the safest in the world."

In June, however, the Office of Inspector General for the Department of Transportation released a report that found the FAA made little effort to adequately staff major traffic control facilities across the U.S. and lacked a plan to address this critical issue, saying "a

The Times investigation found that these close calls involved commercial and private airlines alike. The same was the case in Phoenix. The two close calls analyzed by The Arizona Republic involved American Airlines, Southwest Airlines and a private medical transport plane.

June 16: 'American 2133, we need to turn immediately'

The June 16 close call involved three planes approaching Sky Harbor:

American Airlines Flight 2133 from Newark, New Jersey.

Private medical transport plane chartered by Elite Medical Transport LLC from El Paso, Texas.

American Airlines Flight 1083 from Austin, Texas.

Details of the incident were pulled from a recording of the communication between the pilot and the control tower, which is publicly accessible through liveatc.net, and flight tracking information, accessed through Flightaware.com.

During its final descent into Sky Harbor, AA 2133 was directed to land on Runway 8. The private plane, identified as “medevac” in the recording, was also given instructions to approach the airport.

As both flights began to turn toward the airport, AA 1083 was cleared to land on Runway 8, but this instruction was intended for AA 2133.

As the pilot of AA 1083 repeated the call, AA 2133 continued to fly toward the path of the medevac, not having received the clearance to turn and head toward Runway 8.

AA 1083 was cleared to land again, as air traffic controllers had not realized the miscommunication, and AA 2133 continued to fly perpendicular to the airport, still on a direct path toward the medevac.

“American 2133, we need to turn immediately,” the pilot of AA 2133 is heard saying in the recording. After this, the flight was cleared to land by air traffic control. At the same time, an automated alert system notified air traffic control of the close proximity between AA 2133 and the medevac.

According to FAA officials, both planes were at their closest distance only .83 miles apart.

“Both pilots had the other aircraft in sight as they approached Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport,” according to FAA officials.

“050, we have the King Air (medevac) in sight, American 2133 we were never cleared for approach,” the AA 2133 pilot is heard saying.

Air traffic controllers then asked AA 2133 to continue to maintain separation between itself and the medevac. Both flights were thanked by air traffic controllers for maintaining separation from each other.

“American 2133, thanks for the help. I think someone stepped on your readback when I issued the clearance. I think somebody else read it back,” an air traffic controller is heard saying in the recording.

Once AA 2133 landed at Phoenix Sky Harbor, the pilot requested contact with the tower to discuss the incident.

Aug. 7: '2286 if you need to turn left immediately do so'

The Aug. 7 call involved two planes departing Sky Harbor:

American Airlines Flight 1388 to New York.

Southwest Airlines Flight 2286 to Austin, Texas.

An air traffic transmission recording of the day of the incident showed that both planes departed Sky Harbor at about 5:07 p.m.

Details of the incident were pulled from a recording of the communication between the pilot and the control tower, which is publicly accessible through liveatc.net, and flight tracking information, accessed through [Flightaware.com](https://flightaware.com).

According to the transmission, AA 1388 had been given instructions to depart from Runway 25R and told to turn right after taking off. According to the recording, the pilot of the flight repeated instructions incorrectly, but air traffic controllers failed to catch the mistake.

At the same time, SW 2286 was given instructions to depart from Runway 26, which is parallel to Runway 25R. Both flights were then cleared for takeoff within seconds of each other.

As the planes began their ascent, AA 1388 began to bank left, straight toward the path of SW 2286. Another air traffic controller began to frantically give instructions to both flights alerting them of their proximity.

“American 1388, you are in conflict with Southwest 2286. Turn right immediately. Turn right immediately. Turn right immediately.”

is heard saying, “2286 if you need to turn left immediately do so.”

“It’s sitting right there, do you see the traffic?” the air traffic controller is heard asking AA 1388.

Both flights came within a third of a mile between each other horizontally, and 300 feet apart vertically, before turning away from each other, avoiding a midair collision.

Understaffed, undertrained to manage pre-pandemic travel, report says

The issue of understaffing is one that is bigger than Phoenix and has been spanning the last five decades since the 1980s, after the Reagan administration replaced thousands of striking air traffic controllers and decertified the once-standing Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization.

According to the report from the Office of Inspector General, since 2012, the number of certified professional air traffic controllers in the United States has been dropping. Eleven years ago, there were 11,753 controllers; now, there are only 10,578.

The report highlighted the fact that 77% of all major FAA facilities are below the agency’s 85% staff threshold.

It's complicated: Why didn't Phoenix's historic heat wave ground more Sky Harbor flights?

The staffing shortages, coupled with increased travel mirroring pre-pandemic levels and training halts also caused by the pandemic, are limiting the agency’s ability to properly staff its facilities, the report indicated.

The report also admits that the impacts of this slowdown will not be known for several years, as training for new controllers takes three or more years.

“Due to these uncertain training outcomes, FAA cannot ensure it will successfully train enough controllers in the short term,” the report said. “Moreover with veteran controllers leaving for various reasons, including retirements, FAA faces the challenge of ensuring critical facilities have the required number of controllers.”

In a news release from the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, the union representing air traffic controllers, the organization highlighted the staffing shortages that its union members have experienced.

"Air traffic controllers are doing an exemplary job in a very difficult situation, but this is not sustainable," association President Rich Santa said in the news release.

The union also expressed the need for further hiring and training of new air traffic controllers to curb the number of dangerous close calls across the United States.

"We need a long-term commitment to hiring and training that is based on the controller staffing targets recently developed by the Collaborative Resource Workgroup (CRWG)," Santa said. "NATCA is ready to work with the FAA to implement the CRWG's recommendations, which is a necessary part of the long-term solution to air traffic controller staffing."

Here's how it happened: Why is Sky Harbor so close to downtown Phoenix?

In both Phoenix close calls, The Republic was directed by Sky Harbor to the FAA for comment, and the agency responded by saying that it was committed to ensuring air traffic safety.

"The FAA and the aviation community are pursuing a goal of zero serious close calls, a commitment from the Safety Summit in March," a news release said.

According to the FAA, 1,500 hundred controllers have been hired by the agency, adding to the already 2,600 controllers currently being trained across the United States. But according to the Times investigation, more than 1,400 air traffic controllers are expected to retire in the next year.

AGENDA ITEM #4

Aviation History Month Event, Saturday November 18

Program development

1. Tempe History Museum (Poster Boards)
 - providing 6 images of historical airstrips and Sky Harbor; with captions

2. Aircraft Noise (Poster Boards)
 - Surveys – 1999; 2000; 2012; 2019
 - Noise Complaint process

3. Flight Procedures and IGA (presentation)
 - Flight procedure for jet and large turboprop aircraft
 - IGA on Noise Mitigation
 - 4 DME Procedure
 - Side-Step Procedure
 - Equalization

Final materials reviewed by TAVCO members at October 10 meeting.



1995.28.5: On the ground at the Tempe Airfield at Broadway Road and the railroad tracks, about 1940.



1995.28.3: Looking southwest over the Tempe Airfield in about 1940. Broadway Road and the railroad tracks are visible in the photograph.



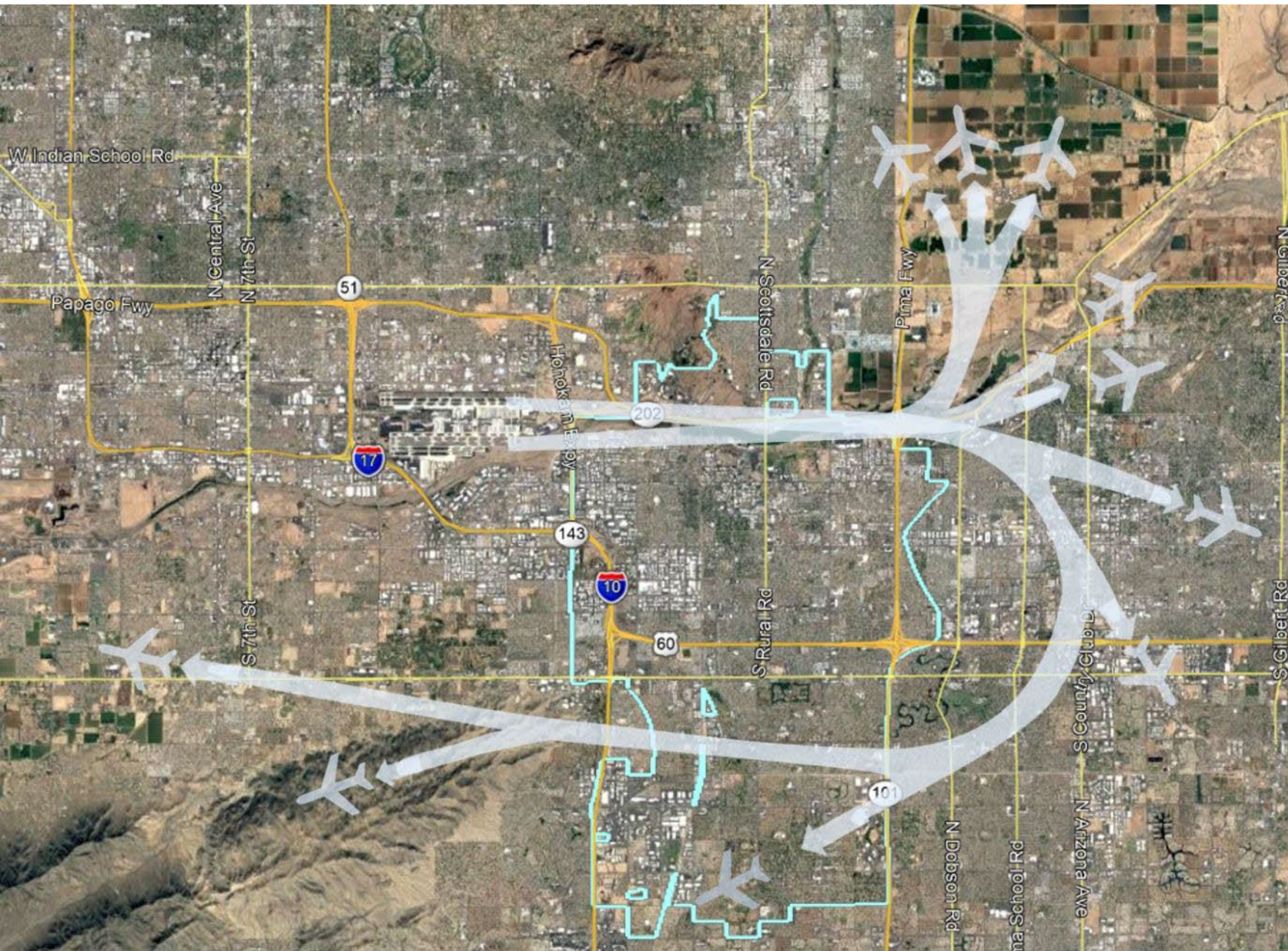
2016.5.181: American Airlines at Sky Harbor Airport, 1958



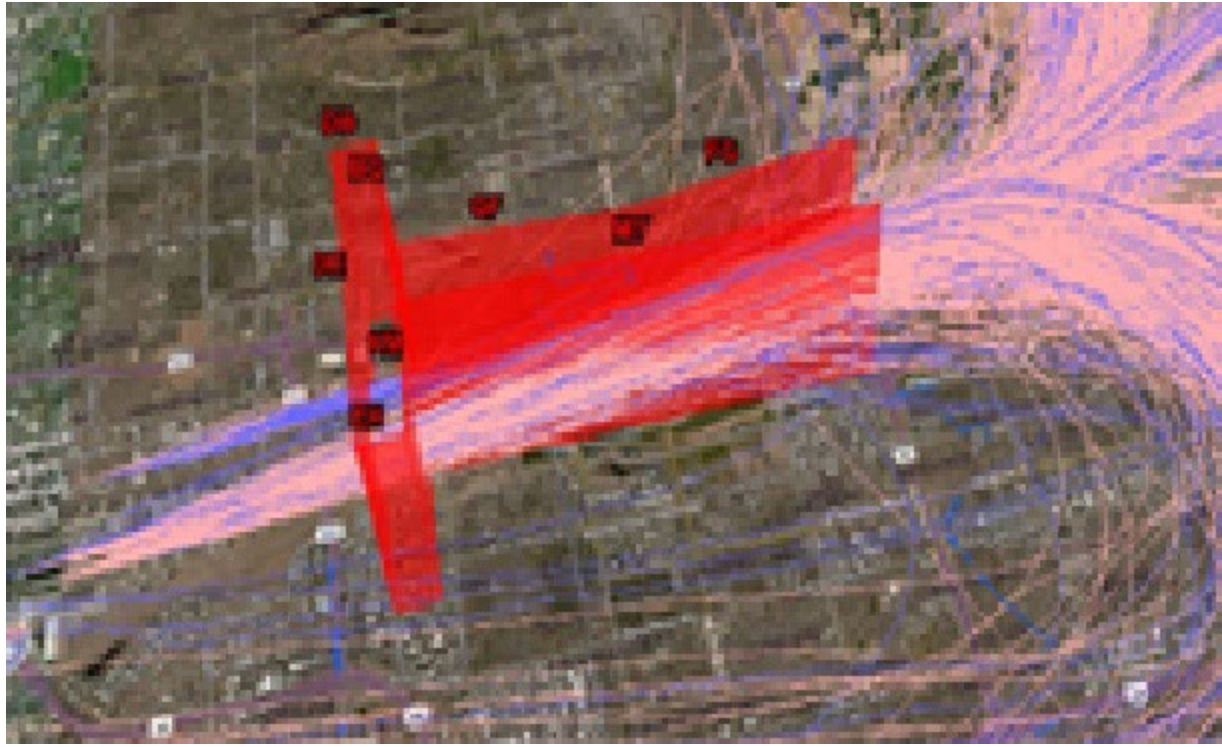
RSanders N44744: Sanders Crop Dusting dropping defoliant on a Tempe cotton field on Guadalupe Road between Rural Road and McClintock Drive in 1965.



RSanders N45106: Rowd Sanders had a crop dusting business in Tempe in the 1960s. His airstrip was on Priest Drive between Guadalupe Road and Elliot Road.

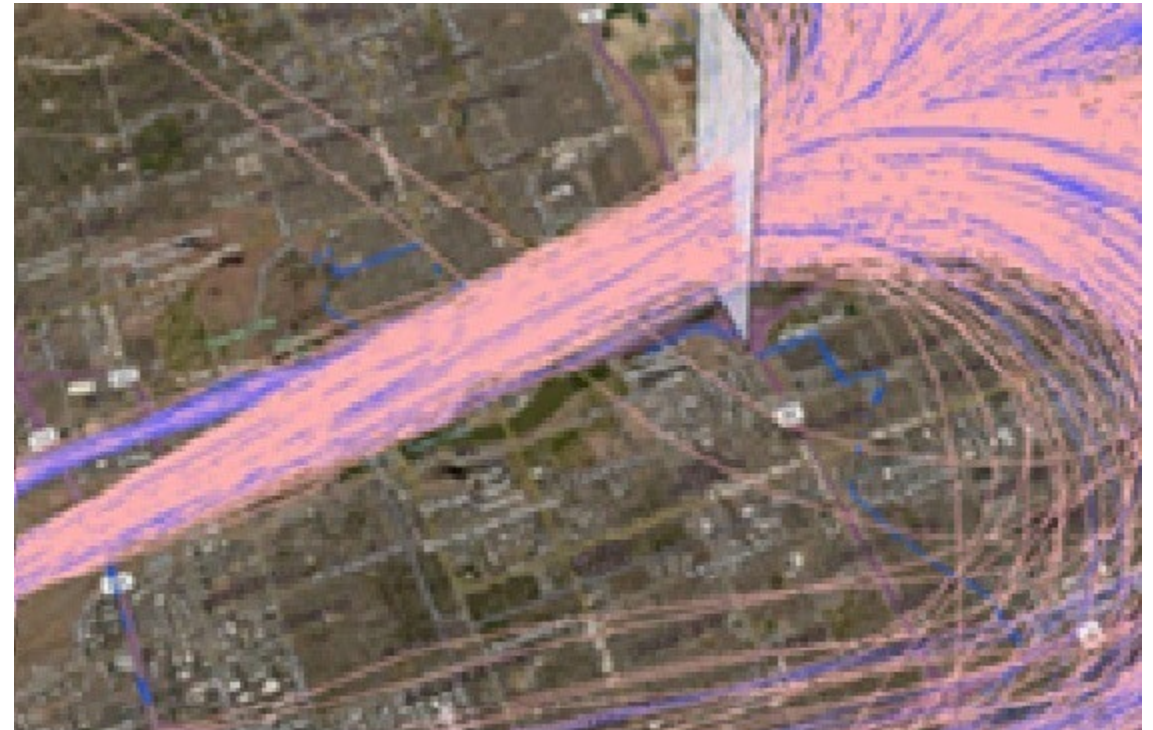


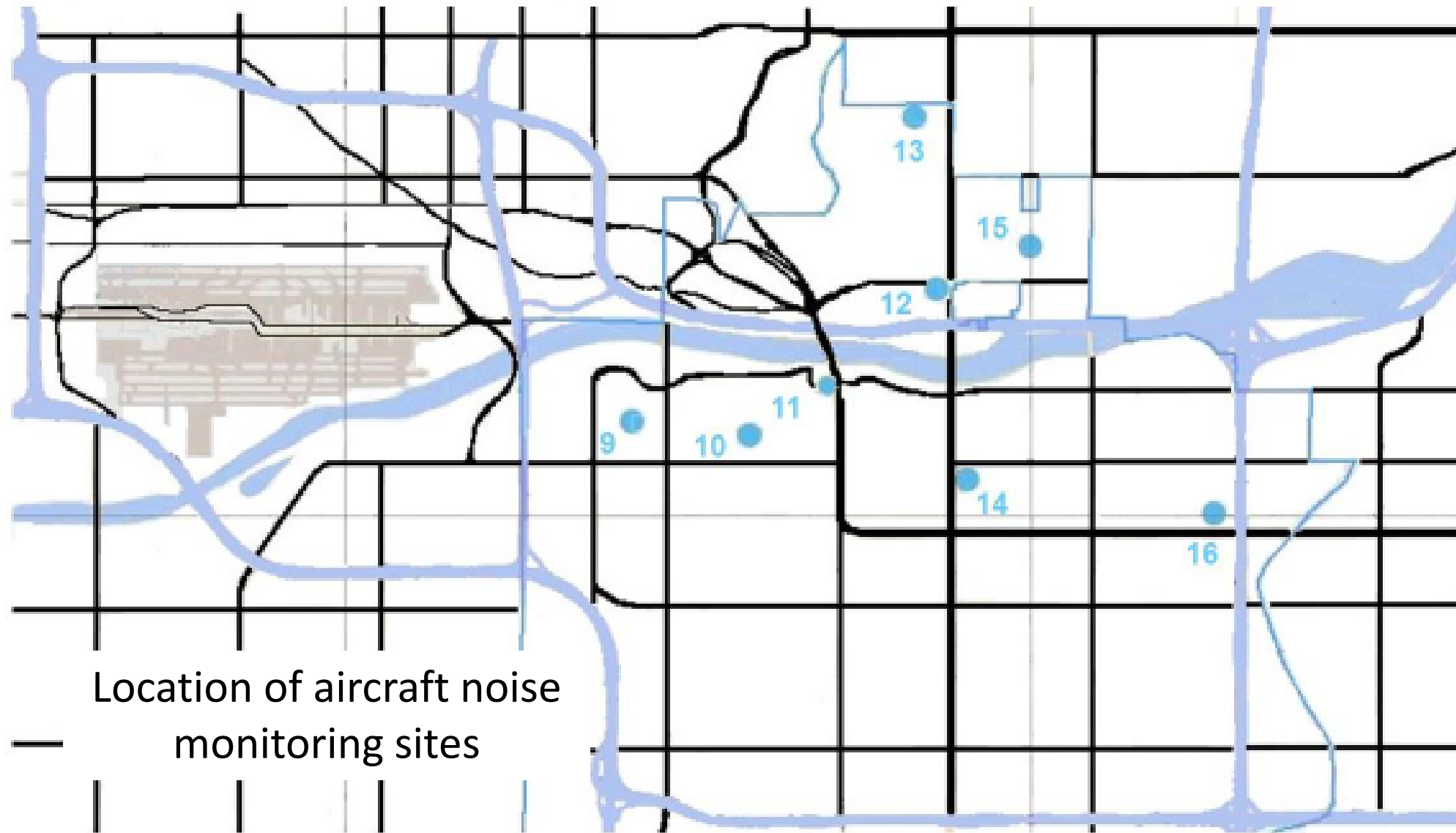
Established in September 2014, the Federal Aviation Administration implemented nine new satellite-based area navigation (RNAV) Standard Instrument Departure (SID) procedures at PHX. An expansion from previous seven SIDs. The RNAV SIDs have improved overall airline compliance with the 4-DME noise mitigation flight procedure over North Tempe, but caused narrower departure paths over South Tempe.

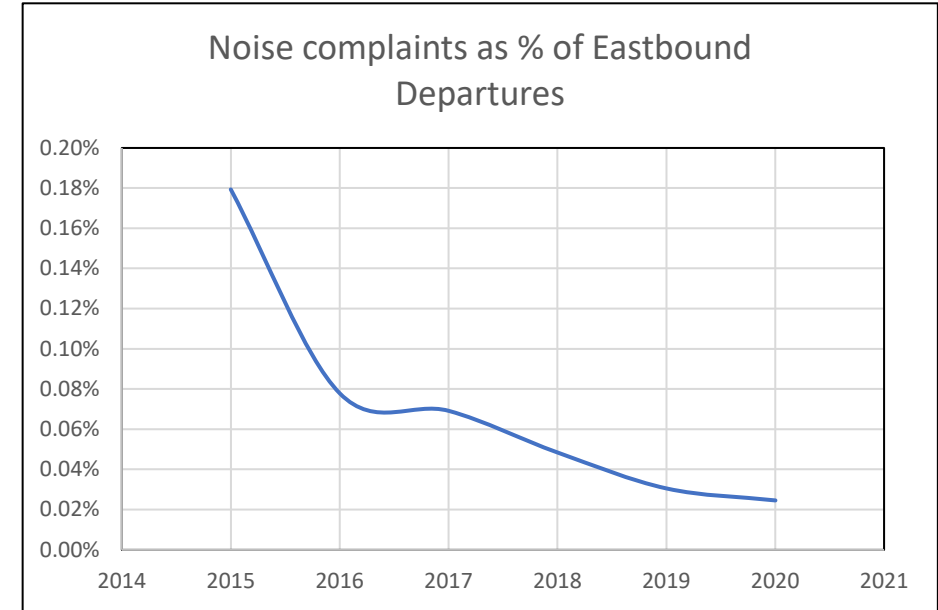
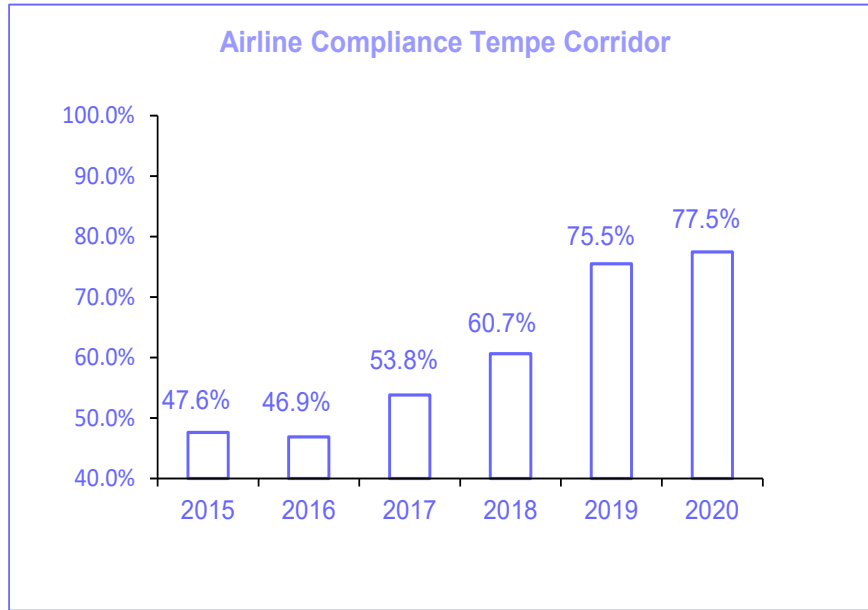


Red Gate System tracks aircraft departures outside the bounds of the north Tempe Salt River Bank

4 dme jet aircraft eastbound departure gate

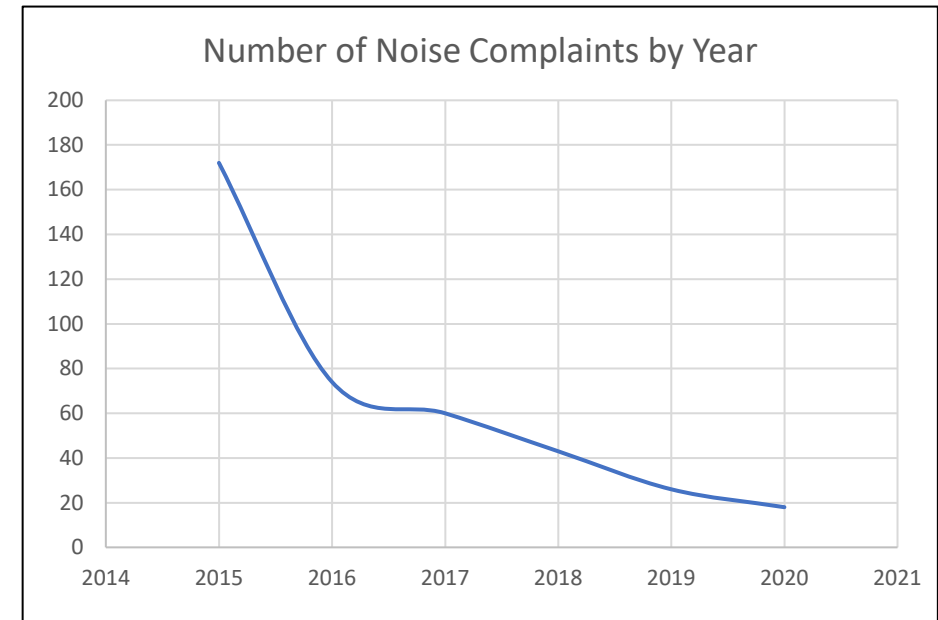






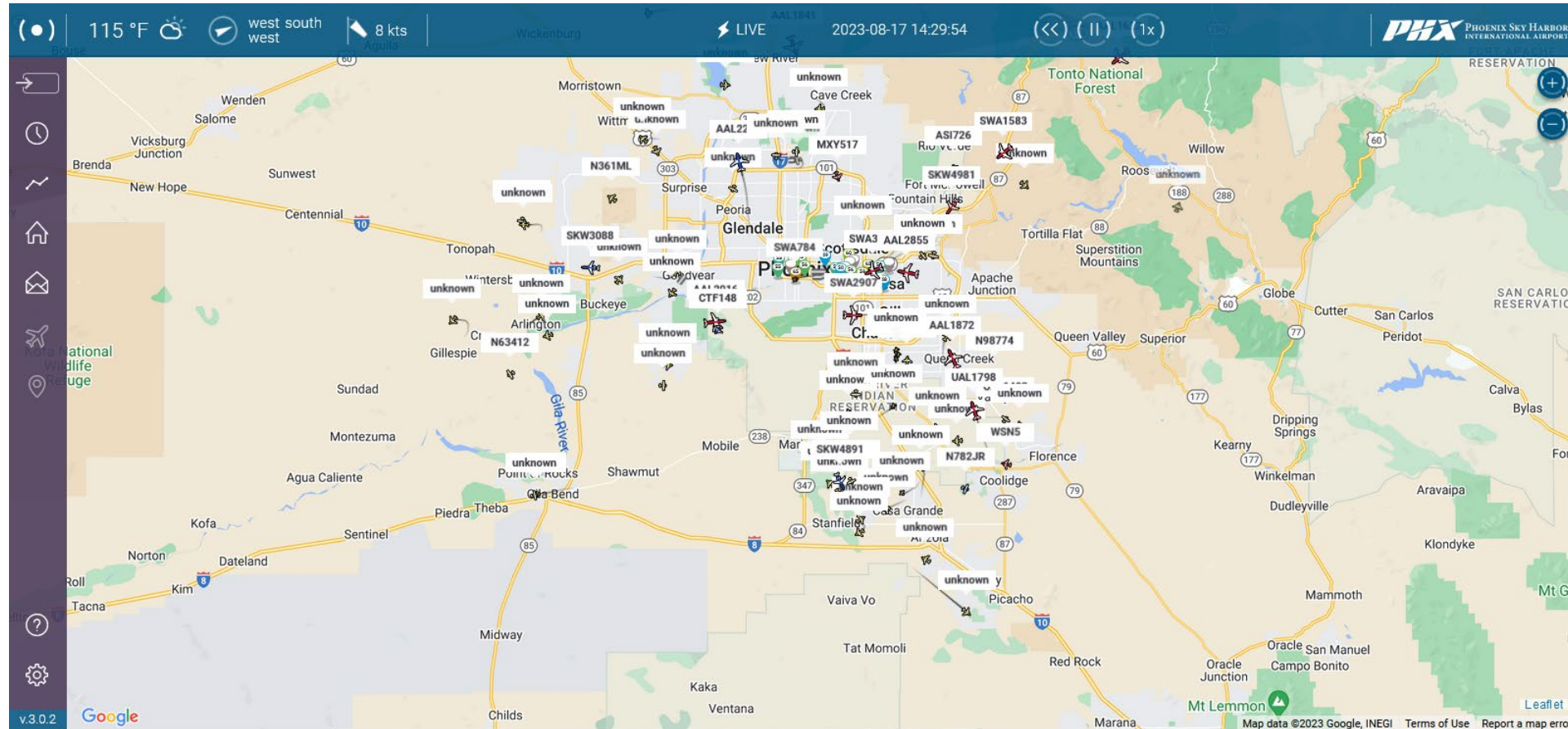
As compliance with aircraft departure requirements of the Phoenix-Tempe IGA have increased, number of complaints and percent of departures that generate complaints have been significantly reduced.

Note also that less noisy aircraft are continuously entering the commercial airlines fleets.



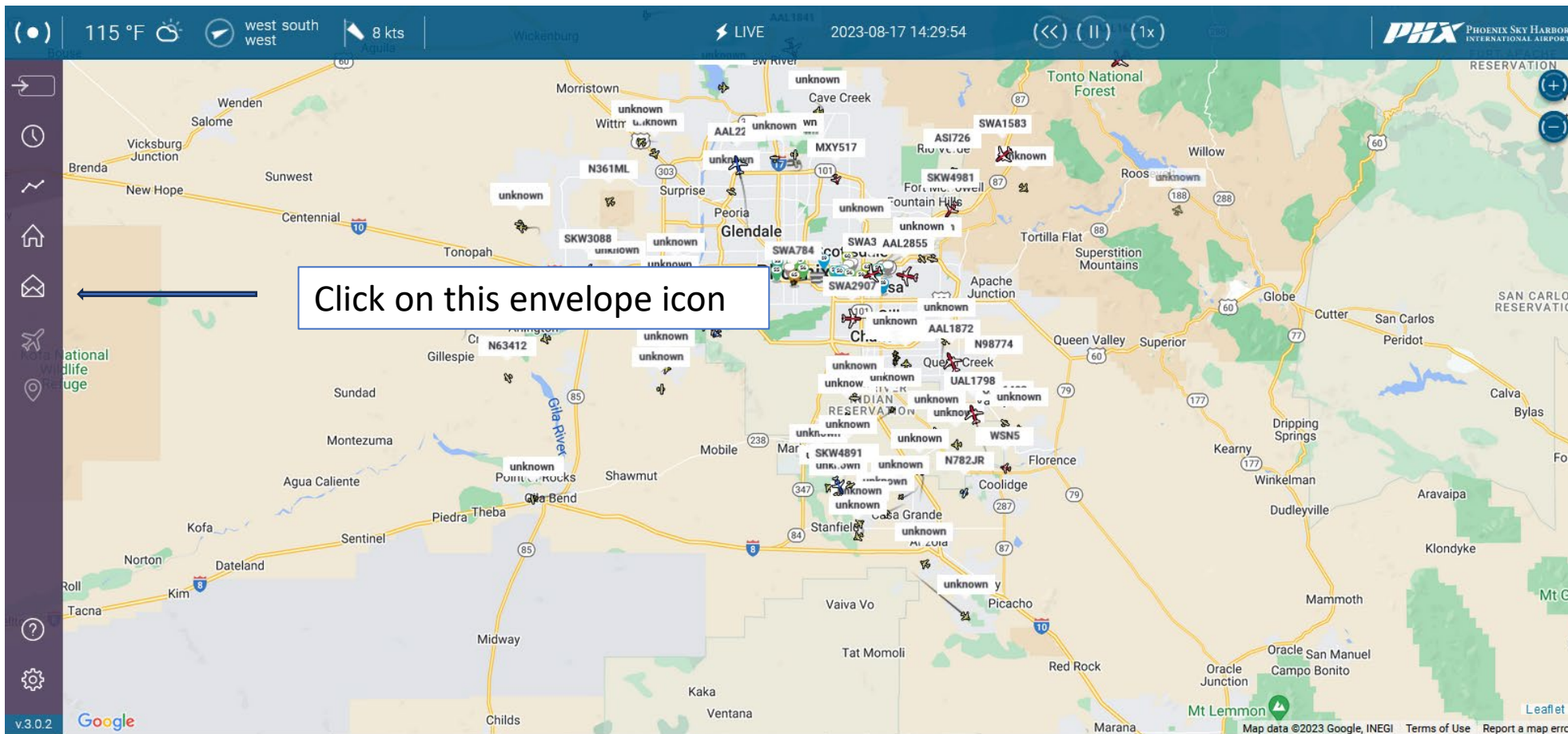
How to file an Aircraft Noise Complaint

- Go to website <https://flighttracker.casper.aero/phx/>



This is a real time picture of Phoenix Sky Harbor activity by airline and flight number

How to file an Aircraft Noise Complaint



How to file an Aircraft Noise Complaint

*mandatory field

First name*:	<input type="text" value="Please enter your first name"/>
Last name*:	<input type="text" value="Please enter your last name"/>
House/Unit #*:	<input type="text" value="Please enter your street number"/>
Street*:	<input type="text" value="Please enter your street"/>
City*:	<input type="text" value="Please enter your city"/>
Zip code*:	<input type="text" value="Please enter your zip code"/>
Email address*:	<input type="text" value="Please enter your email address"/>
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