



CITY OF TORRANCE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

DANNY E. SANTANA
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DIRECTOR

November 12, 2020

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Office of the Chief Counsel
800 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20591

Attn: Lorelei A. Peter, Assistant Chief Counsel, Regulations Division

Dear Ms. Peter:

Attached is a response from you to Mr. Jim Gates regarding Section 51.2.3(e) of the Torrance Municipal Code that states, "Aircraft taking off to the west shall not turn left until they have either reached the ocean or attained an altitude of fifteen hundred (1,500) feet." While the City of Torrance recognizes that the FAA has jurisdiction over aircraft in flight, there are two salient points we believe have bearing on the code section that were not contained within Mr. Gate's letter.

First, and most important, our noise ordinance is pre-ANCA, and, as such, it was always the City's understanding that the provisions of the ordinance were grandfathered and therefore enforceable. We have had conversations with FAA representatives in the past, including Reid Wahlberg of Flight Standards, who have assured us that we were, in fact, able to enforce this section, as it is an important part of the Torrance Airport (TOA) noise program.

Second, the reasons behind the code section in question are two-fold: the area to the south west of the airport that is impacted by early turns is predominately single family residential and therefore noise sensitive. In addition, the terrain to the southwest is steeply rising. The subject section was designed as a part of the noise abatement program to discourage pilots from flying over rising and noise sensitive terrain until reaching an altitude that would mitigate the noise exposure to the residents below.

In 2014, the City began sending notices of violation after a discussion with a Flight Standards representative, wherein the City was assured that the section, since it was pre-ANCA, was enforceable. Mr. Gates raised questions with the enforcement thereafter, and since that time, we have made several attempts to set up a meeting with FAA legal to confirm the status of this portion of our program, which we have had on hold, pending confirmation. Noise Abatement

staff have continued to send out informational notices under a "Fly Friendly" program, but have not labeled them as "notices of violation" or pursued any enforcement. Secondly, staff does not send a notice if they have confirmed that the turn was directed by the Tower and not simply requested by the pilot.

Although staff is not currently pursuing enforcement, we would appreciate feedback as to whether our pre-ANCA status does indeed allow enforcement of this code section, so that we may proceed appropriately when the Noise Abatement program returns to the Torrance Airport Commission and City Council for discussion.

Thank you for your guidance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Cessna".

Linda Cessna
Deputy Community Development Director

Cc: Patrick Sullivan, City Attorney

Attachments:
FAA Letter of February 18, 2020