



USATODAY.com USA TODAY Travel

Join USA TODAY Log in Become a member

[Home](#)
[Today in the Sky Blog](#)
[Forum](#)
[Airlines](#)
[Airports](#)
[Airport Guides](#)
[Flight Tracker](#)
[Shop for Flights](#)
[Deals](#)

Your favorite airport [Change](#)
 Weather [Delays by FlightStats](#)
 Search for flights, powered by Kayak.com [Advanced search](#)

Washington/Dulles, DC (IAD)
77°F
On Time
 From to

Plan to reroute NYC air traffic challenged

Updated 8/12/2008 12:31 AM | Comments [117](#) | Recommend [32](#) E-mail | Save | Print | [RSS](#)

TRYING TO UNCLOG THE SKIES

Plans include shifting some of LaGuardia's landing routes to the east. At Newark's airport, new routes will put jets over some of Elizabeth, N.J.'s most populated areas.



Source: Federal Aviation Administration
By Dave Merrill, USA TODAY

By Alan Levin, USA TODAY

Some of the nation's wealthiest neighborhoods are mounting a fierce legal challenge to block a government plan to untangle air traffic responsible for 75% of flight delays across the USA.

Still smarting from record delays at New York City's airports, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) says rerouting jets in New York and Philadelphia is the best hope for improvement. But the rerouting will mean more noise for some Connecticut, New York and New Jersey suburbs where many corporate CEOs live.

AIR FIGHT: New jet routes rattle residents

"The FAA needs to be brought under control," says Rudy Marconi, chairman of the Alliance for Sensible Airspace Planning and first selectman in Ridgefield, Conn., which has a median household income of \$134,000. Even though flights will be 6,000 feet and higher over the town, Marconi says the noise will "without a doubt" ruin its quality of life.

The FAA wants to move flights headed south toward New York about 25 miles to the east over southern Connecticut, home to Greenwich, Stamford and Westport. Those wealthy towns have influence that far outstrips their population. Their residents are

among top political donors, rivaling Beverly Hills and New York's Upper East Side, campaign-finance reports show.

Thirteen towns have sued to block the routes. Poorer communities, such as Elizabeth, N.J., where the FAA plans new jet routes, have also sued.

D.J. Gibbon, general counsel for the Department of Transportation, said the agency had fought off legal attempts to delay the effort.

"This is the single biggest choke point in the national system," says Massachusetts Institute of Technology aeronautics professor John Hansman. Federal statistics show that 58% of New York's flight delays were caused by congestion, more than twice the national average.

After 10 years of study, the FAA last year approved its plan to untangle the routes flights follow in the New York and Philadelphia regions. The plan would cut delays 20%, save airlines \$285 million a year in fuel and reduce average noise across the region, the FAA says.

[Yahoo! Buzz](#) [Mixx](#)

Posted 8/11/2008 9:13 PM

Updated 8/12/2008 12:31 AM

E-mail | Save | Print | [RSS](#)

To report corrections and clarifications, contact Reader Editor **Brent Jones**. For publication consideration in the newspaper, send comments to letters@usatoday.com. Include name, phone number, city and state for verification.

Guidelines: You share in the USA TODAY community, so please keep your comments smart and civil. Don't attack other readers personally, and keep your language decent. Use the "Report Abuse" button to make a difference. [Read more.](#)

- Share
- [Yahoo! Buzz](#)
 - [Add to Mixx](#)
 - [Facebook](#)
 - [Twitter](#)
 - [More](#)
 - [Subscribe](#)
 - [myYahoo](#)
 - [iGoogle](#)
 - [More](#)

Orange County Jet Charter
Private, Business or Pleasure
You Pay the Quote Guaranteed!
www.jetsetairline.com

Air Traffic Controller
School. Train with us. 12 mos.
OJT. Job Placement Asst.
advancedatc.com

Private Jet Charter
Guaranteed Pricing on Fixed Routes
24/7 Call 877-837-5387
www.starbasejet.com

Ads by Google

You must be logged in to leave a comment. [Log in](#) | [Register](#)


 Post this comment to Facebook?

Comments: (117) Showing: [Newest first](#) [New: Most recommended!](#)



NJCAAN (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 8/24/2008 6:47:49 AM

Minority Communities Disproportionately Impacted By FAA Airspace Redesign Plan

The Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA's) Metro Airspace Redesign proposals could result in "SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IMPACTS", except for the Ocean Routing and Future No Action (existing procedures) alternatives. The agency's "Preferred Alternative" is taken to the extent to discard long-established aircraft noise abatement procedures at Newark Airport by fanning departures. Although the FAA suggests that it has put mitigation in place to address these impacts, we are highly skeptical that the mitigation is adequate. In addition, the FAA's modeling data barely avoids triggering significant environmental justice (EJ) impacts and is suspect. We have listed specific language from the FAA's draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for this project that highlights these environmental injustices below.

"the significant noise impacts near EWR (Newark Airport) would constitute a disproportionate impact on a minority population." (p. 4-45)

"The Modifications to Existing Airspace Alternative, Integrated Airspace Alternative Variation without ICC, and Integrated Airspace Alternative with ICC all would result in disproportionate impacts to minority populations and, therefore, would result in significant environmental justice impacts." (p. 4-45)

Click the below links for the following documents that detail the environmental justice impacts from the FAA's dispersal headings for Newark Airport:

- 1) Elizabeth Noise Impacts: http://www.njcaan.org/resources/Elizabeth_Aircra ft_Noise_Impacts.doc
- 2) Ironbound Noise Impacts: http://www.njcaan.org/resources/Ironbound_Aircra ft_Noise_Impacts.doc
- 3) EWR EJ Summary Report: http://www.njcaan.org/resources/EWR_EJ_Summary_R eport.pdf

NJCAAN Media Contact
Jerome Feder
www.njcaan.org

[Recommend](#) | [Report Abuse](#)



ExFed (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 8/14/2008 1:14:07 PM

Zippy, there are many controllers who work involuntary OT. I do agree with you that the FAA is broken. The article says that wealthy people are the ones fighting this. The neighborhood that will be overflowed in the Philly area is composed of working class people, not the ultra wealthy. It used to be journalism required a little background research. This could've been written by Booby the Stooge himself. ATC is facing a meltdown. From the AFSS debacle, "Fix on Fail" maintenance doctrine, to ramming unnegotiated work and pay rules down the controllers throat causing mass retirements and resignations, the system is in grave danger!!!

[Recommend](#) **2** | [Report Abuse](#)



Jim Brady (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 8/14/2008 8:53:00 AM

I am writing this letter as a concerned citizen of Rockland County, NY. I and many of my fellow citizens are STRONGLY opposed to the FAA's Flight Redesign Plan. The FAA is trying to force this on our counties and we DO NOT WANT IT!!! There has not been any effort to identify safety issues, environmental issues, quality of life issues and a host of other concerns. . The FAA is trying to slam their plan in on us BEFORE the GAO can conduct their study (which will surely show that the FAA's redesign plan is dangerous, careless and useless). In all of its dealings the FAA is deceitful, unscrupulous and uncaring having absolutely no interest in listening to any state senator, group or individual who questions this absurd 'plan'. As a starting point the entire FAA leadership should be canned immediately and replaced with reasonable, HONEST individuals.

Jim Brady

[Recommend](#) **1** | [Report Abuse](#)



socalatc (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 8/13/2008 10:52:42 PM

Mr. Zippy,

I assume from your rants you're a paper pusher type at 800 Independence (AKA FAA HQ) and haven't the foggiest clue what you're talking about. I work at the busiest ATC facility in the world in Southern California. When I got here eleven years ago, this facility had over 260 CERTIFIED controllers (not trainees) and my particular area had 42. Today, as I write this, our facility has less than 180 fully qualified controllers and my area is down to 24 with five currently eligible to retire. Six day work weeks are mandatory for everyone, vacation time is denied because of staffing, supervisors are in charge of areas of which they aren't even qualified to work on the scopes, etc. Please get some experience watching two airplanes aimed at each other while your radios quit working and then spout off. Otherwise, you have no right to tell me or ANY of brothers and sisters what our life is like!

Recommend 7 | Report Abuse



radarrat (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 8/13/2008 9:56:21 PM

Zippy, That is your real name isn't it! Overtime is a fact of life in many facilities....MCO--that's Orlando International for you desk pushers--for one, and if staffing isn't an issue than why is the FAA offering up to \$100,000 to transfer to some facilities.

As for being in contract negotiations, well that was answered. According to the FAA we have a contract and they put it into effect in 2006. As for controllers being a henderance to new equipment, well since the FAA started their new contract they also said we don't need the controllers help in any project and sent them home, so don't blame the controller. The fact is NextGen is mainly ideas on paper with not even a prototype developed. Yes, they do have some aspects ready but not everything. But the FAA will speak of it as if it is sitting on a shelf ready to be turned on and that is will save everything. They also have not addressed the issue of dealing with solar flares/storms and their impact on a satellite based system--in case you didn't know bad things can happen to a satellite during a solar storm/flare.

Zippy, you picked a bad week to stop sniffing glue.

Recommend 2 | Report Abuse



AirportGuru (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 8/13/2008 7:24:52 PM

LOL... Santa Barbara...

Recommend | Report Abuse



lowskillset (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 8/13/2008 6:13:02 PM

Zippy,

I know more than one controller personally who is REQUIRED to work at least 8 hours of overtime per week at Santa Barbara Airport alone. If you don't, you're not well enough informed. There are some FAA facilities where forced overtime is not required but in many facilities, there is mandatory overtime. Get back to your cubicle and I'll go put my headset back on.

Recommend 1 | Report Abuse



AirportGuru (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 8/13/2008 4:40:53 PM

BTW ModeC... SOrry for all the typo;s. Didn't meen to offend. :-)

Recommend | Report Abuse



AirportGuru (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 8/13/2008 4:37:47 PM

Ah ModeC.... Common, you can do better than tow a union tag line or share the talking points. The FAA is broken, if you're a part of the FAA, then you are part of the problem and that includes the controllers. Not one of you can escape the organizational incompetence. It is far too reaching.

Recommend | Report Abuse



ModeC (0 friends, [send message](#)) wrote: 8/13/2008 3:57:49 PM

Zippy's ignorance is only outdone by his inability to spell

Recommend 2 | Report Abuse

More comments on this story: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Next ▶

TOP TRAVEL STORIES

■ Most read

■ Most e-mailed

1. Virgin blames Customs for delay

2. Police: Woman on Southwest flight grabs boy who kicked her seat
3. Airline schedule changes at 300 U.S. airports
4. The 10 most common travel booking mistakes
5. Greenvilleonline - Iwo Jima flag raiser's body 'was never sent to rest'

AAA Members, get a free double upgrade on Hertz weekend rentals. Plus your regular AAA discount.

[Book Now ▶](#)

Get More. Get AAA.



Hertz

[Home](#) [Today in the Sky Blog](#) [Topics](#) [Forum](#) [Airlines](#) [Airports](#) [Deals](#) [Shop for Flights](#) [Sweepstakes](#)

[RSS](#)

Copyright © 2009 USA TODAY, a division of Gannett Co. Inc.

[Contact us](#) [Privacy policy](#) [Terms of Service](#) [Reprints and permissions](#)