

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS RE:
Federal Aviation Administration: Southern California Metroplex Project
Prepared by John Wayne Airport, Orange County
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1. What is “NextGen”?

In 2003, Congress directed the development of a “Next Generation Air Transportation System.” NextGen, as it is now called, was intended to improve aviation safety and efficiency through the use of ground-based and, increasingly, space-based technology. An important part of the NextGen initiative is the development of new airspace and air traffic procedures.

2. What is the Southern California Metroplex Project?

The Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA) approach to the mandate from Congress was to divide the United States into 21 “metroplexes.” John Wayne Airport (JWA), along with Burbank, Long Beach, Ontario, Los Angeles and a number of other airports comprise the “Southern California Metroplex.”

The Southern California Metroplex Project is the FAA’s proposal to improve the efficiency and safety of air traffic into and out of the Southern California area. A key feature of the Southern California Metroplex Project is to create more repeatable and predictable flight paths, both vertically and laterally.

3. When will Metroplex procedures be implemented?

FAA’s implementation schedule for the most frequently used arrival and departure Metroplex procedures for JWA is:

Departures	Implementation Date
PIGGN ONE ¹	March 2, 2017
HHERO ONE ²	April 27, 2017
FINZZ ONE ³	April 27, 2017
Arrivals	Implementation Date
DSNEE ONE/ROOBY ONE ⁴	March 2, 2017
OSHEA ONE/TILLT ONE ⁵	April 27, 2017

4. Will flight paths be different from what they are now?

FAA has indicated that most aircraft will follow historical flight paths. However, JWA believes that some people may see aircraft where they previously had not because some changes in flight paths are expected to occur and because satellite-based procedures tend to create more concentrated (less disperse) flight paths.

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1. Departure to the east, i.e. Phoenix, Chicago and Newark.
 2. Departures to Northern California and the Pacific Northwest.
 3. Departures to the northeast, i.e. Las Vegas, Salt Lake City and Denver.
 4. Arrivals from the east, or reverse flow arrivals.
 5. Arrivals from Northern California and the Pacific Northwest.

5. Some aircraft “turn early” on their approach to, or departure from, John Wayne Airport. Will that still occur when Metroplex procedures are implemented?

Traditionally, pilots could request – or be instructed by air traffic control – to fly differently on FAA’s design flight path. Such changes are/were for safety reasons (e.g. to provide more spacing between aircraft) or for efficiency reasons (to reduce flight time). Once Metroplex procedures are implemented, pilots will still be able to request, and air traffic controllers will be able to require, early turns.

6. Will implementation of the Metroplex affect the departure procedures the airlines use at JWA?

Some commercial aircraft operating at JWA use Noise Abatement Departure Procedures (NADPs) – which may include a power cutback – to meet the Airport’s stringent noise limits. NADPs are not required by JWA; they are developed by the airlines and approved by the FAA. It is important to note that many of the newer, quieter aircraft do not need to use such procedures to meet the Airport’s noise standards.

7. Will implementation of the Metroplex affect the curfew at JWA?

No. The curfew will not be affected by implementation of the Metroplex.

8. Will implementation of Metroplex procedures result in aircraft flying at lower altitudes?

A preliminary review of FAA’s proposed procedures suggest there will be few appreciable changes in aircraft altitude. However, once Metroplex procedures are in place, the Airport will review the new flight tracks and compare them with pre-Metroplex flight tracks to confirm what, if any, changes have occurred.

9. Did FAA study the possible environmental impacts of the Southern California Metroplex Project?

Yes. In June 2015, the FAA issued a “Draft Environmental Assessment” (Draft EA) which described its proposal for the entire Southern California Metroplex. The FAA concluded that its analysis showed there would be no significant impacts resulting from the proposed changes.

10. What is the status of the County’s legal challenge to the Metroplex?

The County’s concern regarding the inadequacy of the FAA’s environmental review led the Board of Supervisors to file a lawsuit challenging FAA’s “Finding of No Significant Impact” and “Record of Decision.” The Cities of Laguna Beach and Newport Beach have also filed lawsuits on similar grounds. The Washington, D.C. Court of Appeals has granted the County’s petition to intervene in the City of Newport Beach’s lawsuit. The County intends to work with Laguna Beach and Newport Beach as the litigation moves forward.

For information and video presentations on the FAA’s Metroplex procedures for John Wayne Airport, please visit the FAA’s Community Involvement Web page at: www.faa.gov/nextgen/communityengagement/socal.