

To DC Metroplex Community Roundtable Members, partners, the Maryland Aviation Administration, State and local representatives, and the Roundtable community.

This update provides information that the DC Metroplex BWI Community Roundtable can share about the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) flight path changes at the Baltimore Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport. These changes took place on July 11, 2024, for departures, and on September 5, 2024, for arrivals.

In 2017, the FAA was tasked by Congress to create Roundtables at major airports implementing the NextGen approach to flight navigation and management. This is when the DC Metroplex Community Roundtable was created, with the Maryland Aviation Administration (MAA) as its technical partner.

NextGen would use a GPS system to direct and manage air traffic to and from the airport, eventually replacing the existing radio vectoring system. Using GPS would present a consistent flight procedure plan that airplanes would have to fly that should reduce fuel cost, use the air space more efficiently, and reduce reliance on air traffic control to manage flight traffic. The result of implementing NextGen was a condensed airplane highway over the areas under the new NextGen flight procedures; traffic over areas that, in the past, had infrequent overhead traffic, increased to possibly 300 airplanes per day either landing or departing.

The DC Metroplex BWI Community Roundtable (the Roundtable) has been working with the MAA since its inception, gathering data on flight procedures and sound analyses, listening to the residents in Anne Arundel and Howard Counties, and reviewing options with the FAA to make improvements on the effects of the highway in the skies over their homes. This is the only Roundtable that has met with the FAA to show its engineering and flight control staff where the pain is being felt, and to ask what can be done to spread the flight paths for departures and arrivals to give some relief to residents.

To follow up on the July and September 2024 changes, the Roundtable has asked the FAA to present, for the Roundtable's review, the final procedures developed and implemented since our meetings in 2021 and 2022. The FAA representatives have declined to provide this information until they complete their DOT41 study, but they have stated that the airplanes are flying the new procedures. Based on past Roundtable/FAA meetings, the MAA has posted examples of what the flight procedures should be on the MAA Airport Noise section of its website.

Moving forward, the Roundtable asked the FAA in September for a review of the airplane arrivals and departures following the new flight procedures for the last quarter of calendar year 2024, and to provide a comparison to the same time frame of 2023, to show how the flight paths have changed. The FAA has responded that it is in the final phase of the DOT41 process, which is a six-month review of the proposed changes. Following this review, FAA will take a 45-day period to prepare its final report and presentation to the Roundtable and the MAA. Based on this response, it will be April 2025 before the Roundtable is expected to have a report from the FAA.

In September 2024, the Roundtable requested the FAA to coordinate a meeting with the Roundtable Technical Committee, the MAA technical staff, and the FAA within 60 days to review the parameters of the data the FAA is collecting and how it is to be presented.

The MAA has decided to introduce a Part 150 federal noise study of the BWI airport once the FAA has presented its report from the DOT41 process in April of 2025. The MAA Part 150 study will be a collaboration with the Roundtable and other BWI stakeholders.

Other Roundtable Activities

The Roundtable has contracted with Vianair corporation as a second source to help us review the impact of the new flight paths. Our Technical Committee will be working with Vianair in the coming months to establish the criteria for flight data collection. Vianair has agreed to provide this data in a report in January 2025, which will compare arrivals and departures for the last quarters of 2023 and 2024. You may ask: Why can Vianair provide a report, and the FAA has to wait until April? The FAA must follow specific DOT41 guidelines to review and present data. Vianair, as it is an independent company that services airports and communities across the country, does not have to follow these guidelines.

The Roundtable expresses our great thanks to the local county representatives that have been able to secure funding for the services Vianair provides, and the Roundtable looks forward to securing future funding for this valuable resource.

In addition, we ask our residents in the affected counties and communities to please continue to go to the MAA Noise website [Noise Complaints - Maryland Aviation Administration](#) to report airplane noise over your homes. Flight path data and models can give us an idea where the planes are flying but they cannot tell us how this is affecting you. We ask that you never assume someone else has called in to report the noise, and we ask you to encourage your neighbors to report. This will serve to improve our pool of data and our ability to advocate for you. You are part of the solution when you report.

While the DC Metroplex BWI Community Roundtable continues to work on behalf of the public, we thank all our Federal, State, and County representatives that continue to support us. We also thank our partners in the Maryland Aviation Administration—MAA Director Mr. Ricky Smith, Chief of Engineering Mr. Paul Shank, and their technical team.

Regards

Howard Johnson DC Metroplex Community Roundtable Chair

The DC Metroplex Community Roundtable Members