



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

Western-Pacific Region  
Office of the Regional Administrator

15000 Aviation Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90009-2007

September 20, 2017

The Honorable Glenn Hendricks  
Mayor of Sunnyvale  
456 West Olive Avenue  
California 94086

Dear Mayor Hendricks:

Thank you for your May 25, 2017, letter to the Western-Pacific Regional Administrator's office regarding the Surf Air's Bayside Visual Approach (BVA) into the San Carlos Airport.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is aware of concerns that Sunnyvale residents have, with respect to the BVA flight path. I appreciate this opportunity to address your concerns and to provide background on Surf Air's use of the BVA flight path.

On January 7, 2017, Surf Air submitted a request to have the BVA procedure published, and the proposed publication date is November 2018. Surf Air's request involved submitting an Instrument Flight Procedures (IFP) Gateway entry for a public Chartered Visual Flight Procedure (CVFP) into San Carlos Airport (SQL). The FAA is obligated to consider, and work with any proponent, including Surf Air, on IFP Gateway requests.

Your letter requests the FAA's status and a high-level project plan for reviewing the BVA, including decision-making timeframe and criteria. The Northern California airspace is very complex with traffic from several major airports, smaller regional airports and military activity. All arrival and departure procedures within the Northern California airspace are interconnected, interdependent, and were designed to improve safety and efficiency within the National Airspace System (NAS). While safety remains the FAA's highest priority, the agency does, however, attempt to address noise impacts by designing procedures over water and industrial areas when safety and efficiency permit. The FAA is also mindful, while changes to a procedure may solve a noise issue in one area; a change may simply shift the noise concern from one location to another. As a result, all IFP Gateway requests, including Surf Air's BVA procedure publication request, are subject to the FAA's procedure development process, which carefully considers all operational, safety and environmental issues. The FAA also considers input from affected communities which leads into your "public meeting/hearing" inquiry.

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Although not legally required for Surf Air's BVA published procedure request, the FAA encourages "public workshops" to give the public an opportunity to better understand a proposed action. Here, the Office of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors helped to find a suitable location. There will be a public workshop on Wednesday, September 27, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Isaac Newton Center (70 W. Hedding Street, San Jose, CA). Further, to the extent your office has a specific, technical solution that addresses the "entire Sunnyvale Surf Air flight issue—not just the BVA"—please consider submitting or discussing such an alternative proposal during the September 27, 2017 Public Workshop.

In response to your contact information request, please consider sharing the following email address with your constituents who are interested in providing input on the BVA procedure request: [9-awp-sql-cvfp@faa.gov](mailto:9-awp-sql-cvfp@faa.gov).

I also want to clarify Surf Air's resumption of BVA flight path without final FAA approval of the BVA six-month operational test. While the FAA has not published the BVA procedure, Surf Air may fly the BVA flight path, in visual flight rules (VFR) conditions, when weather permits. This process involves Surf Air canceling its Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) flight plan and requesting "flight following" from the Northern California Terminal Radar Approach Control Facility (NCT). "Flight following" is a service provided by the FAA to any pilot who requests it, when workload permits. When a pilot requests "flight following," Air Traffic Control (ATC) is required to provide traffic advisories. However, the responsibility for maintaining separation from other aircraft and/or obstacles still remains with the pilot. In the case of Surf Air, they may fly the BVA route in VFR conditions when receiving "flight following" from the NCT.

To the extent you and other North Sunnyvale residents have an interest, please consider signing up for email alerts for the BVA procedure, as well as any other procedures, at: [https://www.faa.gov/air\\_traffic/flight\\_info/aeronav/procedures/application/?event=procedure.results&tab=productionPlan&nasrId=SQL#searchResultsTop](https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/flight_info/aeronav/procedures/application/?event=procedure.results&tab=productionPlan&nasrId=SQL#searchResultsTop).

Constituents can also follow the development of procedures, request email alerts and provide comments of the Instrument Flight Procedures (IFP) Gateway at [https://www.faa.gov/air\\_traffic/flight\\_info/aeronav/procedures/](https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/flight_info/aeronav/procedures/).

The FAA also has an established noise reporting system through its Noise Ombudsman: [http://www.faa.gov/about/office\\_org/headquarters\\_offices/apl/noise\\_emissions/airport\\_aircraft\\_noise\\_issues/noise\\_ombudsman/](http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/apl/noise_emissions/airport_aircraft_noise_issues/noise_ombudsman/).

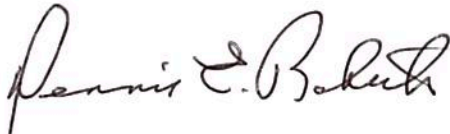
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The FAA does not have information responsive to your request for a list of organizations (including cities, airports, or counties) that are on record as supporting the BVA and have requested it become permanent. Consistent with its statutory mission, the FAA continues to work to ensure the safe and efficient use of our national airspace system.

Thank you for this opportunity to answer your inquiries.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis E. Roberts". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and 'R'.

Dennis E. Roberts  
Regional Administrator