

City Council Meeting  
February 1, 2011

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

Honorable Mayor and Members  
of the Torrance City Council  
City Hall  
Torrance, California

**Members of the Council:**

SUBJECT: Supplemental Material to City Council Agenda 12A

1. Attached is correspondence which was received after the original item was prepared. Also attached is an email received November 4, 2010 intended for the Helicopter Committee, which was not included in the original Airport Commission Agenda item of January 13, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

SHERYL BALLEW  
General Services Director

  
By Shant Megerdichian  
Facility Operations Manager

CONCUR:

  
Sheryl Ballew  
General Services Director

NOTED:

  
LeRoy J. Jackson  
City Manager



**ROBINSON  
HELICOPTER COMPANY**

2901 Airport Drive, Torrance, California 90505

Phone (310) 539-0508 Fax (310) 539-5198

January 31, 2011

Honorable Mayor and Members  
of the City Council  
City Hall  
Torrance, California

Re: Changes to the Letter of Agreement – Helicopter Operations

Members of Council:

Robinson Helicopter Company, Inc. ("Robinson") opposes any increases in the altitude language set forth in the current Helicopter Letter of Agreement (LOA). Increasing minimum altitude levels would adversely impact safety by increasing the possibility of mid-air accidents, have a negative economic impact on Robinson's business and would not address the noise concerns which originally led to the formation of the Helicopter Committee.

Specifically any new Helicopter LOA would not affect private owners, transient aircraft, law enforcement, fire support, Coast Guard, news agencies or any other helicopter owners or operators identified as the source of noise issues. Robinson, in fact, already maintains policies and procedures to insure compliance with the Helicopter LOA and minimize the noise impact on the South Bay area. Reducing the amount of airspace between fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters would increase the chance of a fatal accident.

We appreciate your careful consideration in this important matter.

Sincerely,  
Robinson Helicopter Company, Inc.



Kurt Robinson  
President

**Herbers, Sue**

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**From:** Scotto, Frank  
**Sent:** Monday, January 31, 2011 8:59 PM  
**To:** Herbers, Sue  
**Subject:** Fw: Tuesday Council meeting regarding Helicopter Operations  
**Attachments:** Torrance Council Ltr regarding Helicopter Operations Agreement.PDF

-----Original message-----

**From:** Kurt Robinson <klr@robinsonheli.com>  
**To:** "Scotto, Frank" <FScotto@TorranceCA.gov>  
**Sent:** Tue, Feb 1, 2011 01:12:57 GMT+00:00  
**Subject:** Tuesday Council meeting regarding Helicopter Operations

Mayor,

Please find attached Robinson Helicopter Company, Inc's letter in opposition to any increases in the altitude language set forth in the current Helicopter Letter of Agreement. I plan to attend the City Council Meeting on Tuesday, Feb 1, 2011 to speak in opposition to the Helicopter Committee's recommendation to modify and increase the altitude language currently contained in the Helicopter Letter of Agreement.

Regards,  
Kurt Robinson  
President

**Herbers, Sue**

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**From:** Brewer, Tom  
**Sent:** Monday, January 31, 2011 1:40 PM  
**To:** Herbers, Sue  
**Subject:** Fw: helicopter noise

**Regards, Tom Brewer,  
 Council Member, City of Torrance**

-----Original message-----

**From:** Ann Bosma <bosmom@verizon.net>  
**To:** "Scotto, Frank" <FScotto@TorranceCA.gov>, "Numark, Cliff" <CNumark@TorranceCA.gov>, "Rhilinger, Susan" <SRhilinger@TorranceCA.gov>, "Sutherland, Bill" <BSutherland@TorranceCA.gov>, "GBurnett@TorranceCA.gov" <GBurnett@TorranceCA.gov>, "Brewer, Tom" <TBrewer@TorranceCA.gov>, "Furey, Pat" <PFurey@TorranceCA.gov>  
**Sent:** Mon, Jan 31, 2011 21:20:08 GMT+00:00  
**Subject:** helicopter noise

Dear Mayor Scotto,

My husband and I have lived at 4066 Bluff Street for the past 35 years. During that time, particularly in the last 15 years, we have noticed a progressively increasing amount of noise from the greater number of helicopter flights from the Torrance airport. The majority of these flights are Robinson Helicopter test flights, along with training flights of the Helicopter Pilot School and the occasional Coast Guard exercise. After logging helicopter flights and writing Noise Abatement a number of years ago, we were basically told that there was nothing the airport could do and to 'call Robinson' with complaints. After that, we were pretty much resigned to having our peace subject to constant disturbance, with no recourse.

For that reason, we were both very pleased to see that, with the formation of the Helicopter Committee, some serious attention was finally going to be paid to alleviating the stress brought about by noisy helicopter flights. The inclusion of citizens, aviation experts and government officials would, we hoped, be able to come up with a solution that would allow helicopters and light aircraft to fly safely, but with the least noise impact on the residential areas below. The Committee put in long hours of conscientious work, and drafted a proposal that covered all issues, regarding both noise and operational safety and efficiency. We felt encouraged that the political process was working and that our concerns would at last be addressed. We were then much dismayed upon hearing that the Airport Commission had arbitrarily, at the instigation of one individual, dismissed the portion of the proposal that would raise the height of helicopter flights, thus negating the noise reduction aspect of the recommendation.

This decision seems indefensible to me. The Helicopter Committee is made up of qualified individuals who, for a number of reasons not limited to knowledge, liability and common decency, made 'safety first' the primary guiding principle of their deliberations. The disrespect given to the individuals and the process of the Helicopter Committee is incomprehensible. We urge you to follow the advice of the Committee and your own city staff and overrule the decision of the Airport Commission by adopting all recommendations of the Helicopter Committee. You and many of your fellow council members were elected because the citizens of

Torrance wanted to have a government that was more in tune with the desire of the citizens to preserve and improve the quality of life in our community. Please demonstrate that concern by voting for the proposal of the Helicopter Committee

Thanks you,

Ann & Steve Bosma  
4066 Bluff St.  
Torrance, CA 90505

**Herbers, Sue**

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**From:** Brewer, Tom  
**Sent:** Monday, January 31, 2011 1:40 PM  
**To:** Herbers, Sue  
**Subject:** Fw: Helicopters flight altitude changes

**Regards,  
Tom Brewer,  
Council Member,  
City of Torrance**

-----Original message-----

**From:** "joarc22@aol.com" <joarc22@aol.com>  
**To:** "Scotto, Frank" <FScotto@TorranceCA.gov>, "Barnett, Gene" <GBARNETT@TorranceCA.gov>, "Brewer, Tom" <TBrewer@TorranceCA.gov>, "Furey, Pat" <PFurey@TorranceCA.gov>, "Numark, Cliff" <CNumark@TorranceCA.gov>, "Rhilinger, Susan" <SRhilinger@TorranceCA.gov>, "Sutherland, Bill" <BSutherland@TorranceCA.gov>  
**Sent:** Mon, Jan 31, 2011 20:57:25 GMT+00:00  
**Subject:** Helicopters flight altitude changes

Dear Council Members,

I would like to let you know I read all the material included in the agenda item--even a letter to the Council from Mr. and Mrs. Braun. I am in support of the staff recommendation, which I consider logical, to approve the Helicopter Committee-recommended altitudes changes for helicopters. This is not the end of the world. The item still has to go through a channel of experts for safety analysis.

Joe Arciuch

**Herbers, Sue**

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**From:** Scotto, Frank  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 29, 2011 2:50 PM  
**To:** Herbers, Sue  
**Subject:** Fw: Helicopter re-routing

-----Original message-----

**From:** Nancy Hubbell <nancyhubbell@cox.net>  
**To:** "Scotto, Frank" <FScotto@TorranceCA.gov>, "Numark, Cliff" <CNumark@TorranceCA.gov>, "Rhilinger, Susan" <SRhilinger@TorranceCA.gov>, "Sutherland, Bill" <BSutherland@TorranceCA.gov>, "Barnett, Gene" <GBARNETT@TorranceCA.gov>, "Brewer, Tom" <TBrewer@TorranceCA.gov>, "Furey, Pat" <PFurey@TorranceCA.gov>  
**Sent:** Sat, Jan 29, 2011 21:34:36 GMT+00:00  
**Subject:** Helicopter re-routing

To the mayor and members of the city council,

As residents of the Montecillo neighborhood in Rolling Hills Estates, thank you for considering the proposed changes to the Southeast route and the higher altitude requirements. The noise and proximity of these aircraft are disruptive and we sincerely appreciate your efforts to alleviate this issue.

We support the proposed new flight route and we hope that you rule favorably to adopt it.

Thank you,

Nancy Hubbell Fournier

**Herbers, Sue**

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**From:** Scotto, Frank  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 29, 2011 2:51 PM  
**To:** Herbers, Sue  
**Subject:** Fw: City Council Meeting - February 1, 2011 - Support of General Services Director Recommendation

-----Original message-----

**From:** Richard May <rimay@verizon.net>  
**To:** "Scotto, Frank" <FScotto@TorranceCA.gov>, "Numark, Cliff" <CNumark@TorranceCA.gov>, "Rhilinger, Susan" <SRhilinger@TorranceCA.gov>, "Sutherland, Bill" <BSutherland@TorranceCA.gov>, "Barnett, Gene" <GBARNETT@TorranceCA.gov>, "Brewer, Tom" <TBrewer@TorranceCA.gov>, "Furey, Pat" <PFurey@TorranceCA.gov>  
**Sent:** Fri, Jan 28, 2011 21:04:52 GMT+00:00  
**Subject:** City Council Meeting - February 1, 2011 - Support of General Services Director Recommendation

Mayor Scotto and Council Members:

I would like to voice my strong support of the recommendation of the General Services Director that the City Council approve modifications to the Helicopter Letter of Agreement (LOA) as proposed by the Helicopter Committee. However, with the addition of specific "good neighbor" encouragement for pilots to fly above 1200 feet, for noise abatement, whenever safety allows.

According to Google Earth, my home on Via el Chico is about 280 feet above sea level. The Committee's proposal calls for flights at or above 1200 feet above sea level. Unless encouraged to fly higher, most pilots will most likely fly at the minimum which will still create excessive noise at the altitude of my home. However, with "good neighbor" encouragement for pilots to fly above 1200 feet, it will raise the awareness of pilots and the impact they are making relative to noise in a residential area.

Please use this opportunity to enact these sensible recommendations.

Thank you,

Richard I. May  
 444 Via el Chico  
 Redondo Beach, CA 90277

**Megerdichian, Shant**

**From:** Jeff Cohlberg [cohlberg@csulb.edu]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 28, 2011 2:54 PM  
**To:** Scotto, Frank; Numark, Cliff; Rhilinger, Susan; Sutherland, Bill; Barnett, Gene; Brewer, Tom; Furey, Pat; Megerdichian, Shant  
**Subject:** Helicopter noise  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Blue

To the mayor and members of the city council,

I live at 21 Encanto Drive in Rolling Hills Estates. My wife and I are frequently bothered by helicopters flying directly over our property. When sitting in our back yard, we sometimes have to interrupt our conversations while helicopters are overhead.

I attended some of the meetings of the committee that considered remedies to the noise situation. We strongly support the proposed changes in the Southeast route and in the height restrictions.

-- Altering the flight route to take helicopters down Narbonne Avenue and Palos Verdes Drive East to the reservoir before turning east would divert helicopter traffic from our residential neighborhood to a route that avoids flying over houses.

-- But helicopters often deviate slightly from prescribed routes. Raising the height limit as recommended by the committee is another important step in reducing noise. Most houses in my neighborhood are around 300 feet above sea level. Flying at 600 feet above sea level allows helicopters to be only 300 feet above houses. The loud noise that residents experience as a result needs to be eliminated.

In summary, please give your careful consideration to the proposed changes. My wife and I hope that you will adopt them.

Jeffrey A. Cohlberg

**Megerdichian, Shant**

**From:** Cliff dawes [cliffdawes@sbcglobal.net]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 28, 2011 1:43 PM  
**To:** Scotto, Frank; Numark, Cliff; Rhilinger, Susan; Sutherland, Bill; Barnett, Gene; Brewer, Tom; Furey, Pat  
**Cc:** Megerdichian, Shant  
**Subject:** reducing the noise of helicopters  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Blue

To Mayor and Council members,

I am a resident of Rolling Hills Estates and am negatively effected by the noise of helicopters that use the current South East route. I attended many of the Helicopter Committee meetings and voiced my ideas and concerns to the panel which consisted of many experts in the field of aviation and airspace safety. The Helicopter Committee panel always regarded safety as paramount and took fixed wing aircraft and their traffic routes into consideration when analyzing any change or suggested modification. It's obvious that we do have a problem with the noise generated by helicopters using Zamperini Field in Torrance. I believe that the proposed modified South East route will have a **positive effect** in reducing the noise of helicopters heard by many of the residents of Rolling Hills Estates.

Thank you.

Cliff Dawes

**Herbers, Sue**

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**From:** Scotto, Frank  
**Sent:** Friday, January 28, 2011 12:00 PM  
**To:** Herbers, Sue  
**Subject:** FW: Airport noise

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*From: Bernie Keach [callingbernie@gmail.com]  
Sent: Friday, January 28, 2011 9:12 AM  
To: Scotto, Frank  
Subject: Airport noise*

*Honorable Mayor,*

*In reference to the Torrance City Council Agenda for Tuesday, February 1, 2011, specifically Item 12A: consideration of the Helicopter Committee's recommended route changes, as a citizen of Torrance for 55 years, I ask that you support the citizens of this great city, desire for higher altitudes for all air traffic out of the airport as was recommended by airspace safety experts on the Committee. Your constituents are relying on you to do what is best for those who live under the airport take off path and put up with the associated annoying noise.*

*Your attention concerning this item is very much appreciated.*

*Regards,*

*Bernie Keach  
4702 Newton St  
Torrance CA 90505*

**Herbers, Sue**

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**From:** Brewer, Tom  
**Sent:** Friday, January 28, 2011 9:33 AM  
**To:** Herbers, Sue  
**Subject:** Fw: Helicopter Noise

**Regards,  
 Tom Brewer,  
 Council Member,  
 City of Torrance**

-----Original message-----

**From:** klent1472 <klent1472@earthlink.net>  
**To:** "Scotto, Frank" <FScotto@TorranceCA.gov>  
**Cc:** "Numark, Cliff" <CNumark@TorranceCA.gov>, "Rhilinger, Susan" <SRhilinger@TorranceCA.gov>, "Sutherland, Bill" <BSutherland@TorranceCA.gov>, "Barnett, Gene" <GBARNETT@TorranceCA.gov>, "Brewer, Tom" <TBrewer@TorranceCA.gov>, "Furey, Pat" <PFurey@TorranceCA.gov>  
**Sent:** Fri, Jan 28, 2011 07:45:38 GMT+00:00  
**Subject:** Helicopter Noise

Dear Mayor Scotto and City Council Members,

As Riviera residents living near the ocean we are privy to MUCH helicopter noise. The intruding noise and activity is not just that coming from Torrance Airport or Robinson Helicopter – but sightseers, news people, etc. Many of these intrusions would be difficult to regulate of course. However, we should insist on regulating all the flights possible so that we can enhance the best of beach serenity and beach living with all it's charms and beauty. The noise of helicopters, even the sight of them flying low over the ocean is an intrusion to the senses.

We trust that you will vote with the recommendation of the Helicopter Commission to raise flight altitudes and to follow the other reasonable recommendations of that group. Additionally, we would also hope to see an efficient method to report "un- neighborly" flights.

Please help us preserve our "paradise" for all!

Thank you.

Karen (& Keith) Lent  
 535 Paseo de los Reyes  
 Redondo Beach 90277  
[Klent1472@earthlink.net](mailto:Klent1472@earthlink.net)  
 310.375.6539

**Megerdichian, Shant**

**From:** GatesJH@aol.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 04, 2010 8:38 PM  
**To:** Megerdichian, Shant  
**Cc:** kkfitch@att.net; klr@robinsonheli.com  
**Subject:** Helicopter Committee

11/4/2010

Shant Megerdichian and members of the Helicopter Committee

Re: Handout: What is a "Neighborly" Noise Level?

I spoke this afternoon with Ms Ricarda Barnnet, co-chair of the Accoustic & Environmental Committee of Helicopter Association International. Their pamphlet was used as the basis of the claim that *"to be 'neighborly' single event helicopter noise incidents . . . should be kept below 60db."* She discussed this pamphlet, including specifically the graph that the presenter used to support his call for helicopters to remain above 2000 AGL. She said that the "Low Ambient Noise Areas" referred to areas like National Parks, National Wildlife Areas, Waterfowl Refuges, etc. She stated specifically that it did not refer to a city environment like Torrance. Furthermore, she said that the **altitude recommendations apply only to open country cruise flight and could not be construed to be a recommendation that applied to an airport area environment where such altitudes would conflict with fixed wing traffic.**

Jim Gates  
Torrance Airport Association  
142 Via Pasqual  
Redondo Beach, CA 90277  
310-373-7640