



The Westchester County Airport Environmental Department is committed to reducing the impacts of aircraft noise.

The Voluntary Restraint From Flying (VRFF) Program Fact Sheet

Legal History: In September 1981, the Westchester County Board of Legislators passed Act 54-1981, establishing a mandatory curfew at the airport from midnight to 7 a.m. In October 1981, the Curfew was implemented. The County was subsequently taken to Federal Court by the National Business Aircraft Association (NBAA), followed by fixed based operator, Panorama Flight Service, and by the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA). The NBAA then had the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) ordered in as an involuntary plaintiff to the suit.

In August 1983, Judge Ward of the U.S. Federal District Court declared the curfew unlawful, and issued a permanent injunction against the County of Westchester from enforcement of the curfew. In September 1983, the Westchester County Board of Legislators endorsed a voluntary restriction on nighttime operations from midnight to 6:30 a.m. and the Westchester County Airport asked all operators to abide by this voluntary restriction which is the Voluntary Restraint From Flying (VRFF) Program.

Program: The Voluntary Restraint From Flying (VRFF) Program is in effect daily, from midnight to 6:30 a.m. In an effort to reduce aircraft operations at night, all operators are requested to avoid flying during these hours in order to keep the noise down during this sensitive time and to be good neighbors. This is by far our most important noise abatement program and does receive the most scrutiny and attention by the public and local press. Also, pursuant to the Freedom of Information Law (“FOIL”), citizens have access to copies of their noise complaints along with the name and address of the operator, if and when, requested by the complainant.

Monitoring: The Environmental Department identifies all operators who arrive or depart during the Voluntary Restraint From Flying (VRFF) period. The Environmental Department publishes all noise, VRFF operational and noise complaint data in the monthly Airport Monitor newsletter. Most of these operations are conducted by transient corporate aircraft, fractional owned and operated aircraft and by the airlines. Based aircraft operators typically account for only around 5% of the monthly total of VRFF operations.

Program Follow-up: Every operator is contacted by the Environmental Department in writing to remind them about the program and asked for their cooperation and compliance with this program. The letter informs the operator of the date and time of their operation or operations over the month and also notes if any noise complaints were received on any of those flights.

Outreach: Information about the VRRF Program is made available at each airport FBO and also disseminated in various publications and websites to make sure that the aviation community is aware and knowledgeable about the program. In an effort to broaden this outreach, a brochure was developed to target the actual passengers/owners/customers of the corporate, chartered and fractional shared VRRF flights as a reminder to them to adjust their trip times around the VRRF Program time in the future, whenever possible.

Awards: The Environmental Department also has a motivational award, called the Spirit of Noise Abatement Awards which is awarded to those based operators of helicopter, turboprop and/or jet aircraft who do not operate any flights during the VRRF for the preceding calendar year and do not cause any noise events of 90.0 decibels (dBA) or higher at any noise monitors as part of our High Range Noise Event (HRNE) Program.

The County of Westchester and the Environmental Department truly understand the aircraft noise concerns of the surrounding residents. The Environmental Department is committed to working in a cooperative effort with the community and aircraft operators to research and implement all possible methods to minimize aircraft noise.

*For more information contact or visit the Environmental Department.
Office Hours 7am -5pm weekdays • located on the second floor of the main terminal
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