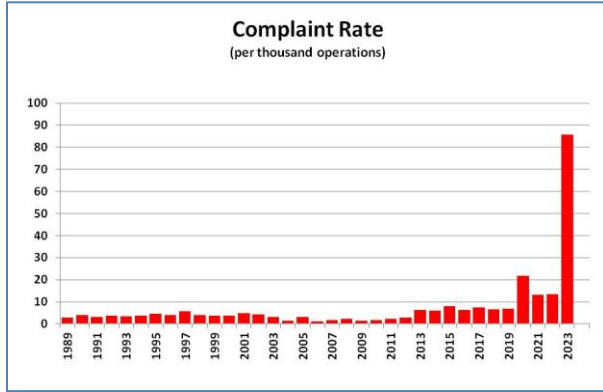


Airport complaint and violations analysis 2023Q2

Jim Gates

Compared with historical data, the complaint rate per thousand operations saw a huge spike in

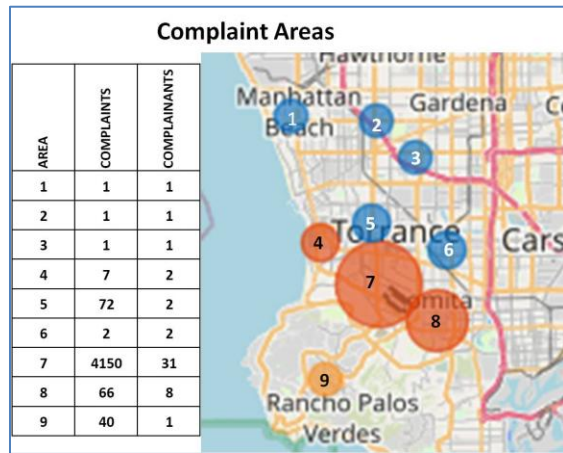


2023Q1 and that trend continued during the 2nd quarter to more than 85 per thousand operations. That is more than **17 times the historical average over the last 34 years.** This clearly indicates a recent attempt to flood the system with thousands of bogus complaints.

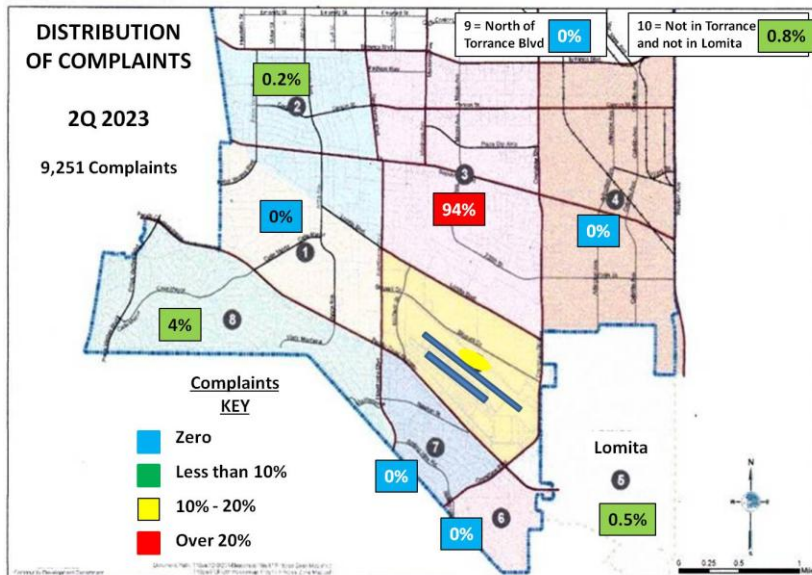
The number of complainants recorded by the Casper System increased from 22 during

2023Q1 to 49 during 2023Q2. There were 31 complainants from Torrance; 18 were outside of the city.

The geographical area from which complaints were received expanded to the north to Manhattan Beach and Gardena and south to include Rancho Palos Verdes. Both of these new areas are many miles from the Torrance Airport.



The complaint "hot spots" in 2022 were Zones 6,7,and 8 (south of the airport). Approximately 40% of the complaints came from this area under the south traffic pattern.



In the second quarter of 2023, as in the first quarter, Zone 3 eclipsed all other Zones in Torrance as THE "hot spot" with 97% of the complaints. Since the Casper System also records the complainant's zip code, it was possible to further refine the "hot spot" to be the area bounded by Hawthorne Blvd, Crenshaw Blvd, Sepulveda Blvd and Lomita Blvd--just north of the airport. Only 4% of the complaints came from

Zone 8 and a few from half of the remaining Zones.

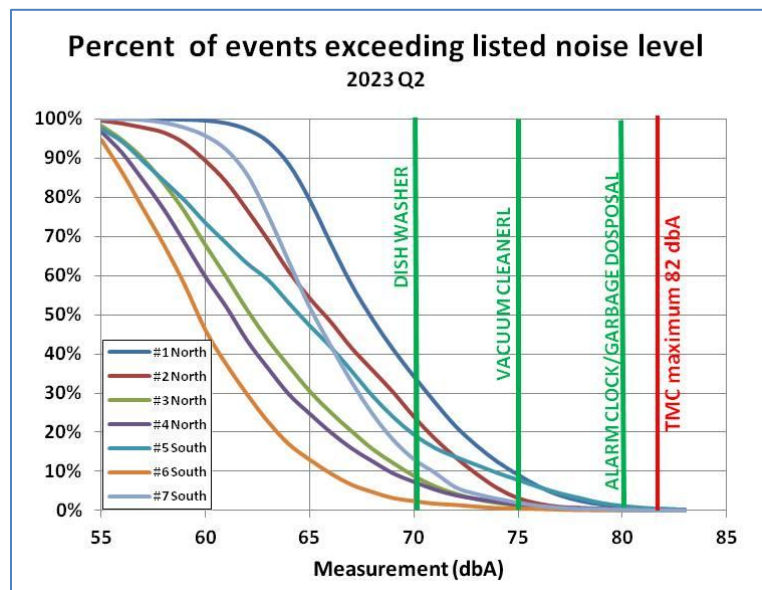
The topics of the complaints in 2023Q2 were typical:

- 29% of the complaints claimed that aircraft are "too low." FAA Regulations state that the minimum altitude (1,000 feet above structures) does not apply to aircraft taking off or landing at an airport. So, if the complainant judged the aircraft to be "too low," it is likely because they are not familiar with those regulations.
- 28% of the complaints are about "training." For pilots, every flight is an opportunity to learn something. Further, periodic "training" is required by Federal Aviation Regulations. This category of complaint, although very popular, makes no sense.
- 42% of the complaints said the aircraft were "too loud." It is possible to evaluate the "too loud" complaints by examining the public on-line records of the Casper system. This system lists the maximum sound level for each "Aircraft Noise Event" (ACNE) recorded by each monitor (#2 through #4 for the north pattern and #6 and #7 for the south pattern, with #1 and #5 located at the east and west ends of the runways, respectively).

This graphic shows the sound level profile for each monitor during the second quarter of 2023.

For example, Monitor #6 recorded that only 12% of the flights over it exceeded 65 dbA while Monitor #1 recorded that 80% of the flights over it exceeded 65 dbA.

Torrance Municipal Code defines any aircraft flight that exceeds 82 dbA as a violation. Those that do not exceed that level are NOT violations. The graphic reveals that very, very few flights may have exceeded 82 dbA and that NO VIOLATIONS occurred in the north pattern (N #3 and N #4) or south pattern (S #6)--including the hot spot area.



The Community Development Department provided copies of violation letters for January (11 letters) and February (5 letters). These 16 violations compare to 51 ACNEs recorded by the Casper System as exceeding 82 dbA on monitors #1 and #5 for the same period. During 2023 2Q, 79 ACNEs exceeded 82 dbA on those monitors.

Some of the ACNEs recorded by the system microphone and exceeding 82 dbA may have been contaminated by a loud motorcycle or other terrestrial source, by over flights by aircraft not using our airport, or as the result of multiple aircraft taking off at the same time. Before issuing

a violation, Noise Abatement says they listen to the recording to validate that it is an aircraft and that the measurement has not been contaminated with other noise.

The Casper system also records an altitude for each ACNE ranging from 0 to 9,000 feet. During 2023 Q2, 777 of the ACNEs were recorded with altitudes over 2,000 feet. These measurements are clearly not from aircraft taking off from Torrance Airport.

A request for Second Quarter 2023 violations was made under the California Public Records Act: "*A list of all aircraft noise violations during the period showing the date, time, noise monitor reading, and N-number*". Although the Department has previously provided this information, the response was: "*The City of Torrance Community Development Department has reviewed its files and have determined there are no documents responsive to your request. Per the Senior Environmental Quality Officer: 'Environmental has no responsive records. No report in that format exists.'*"

While the noise ordinance violation rate is typically around 2 violations per thousand operations, having none for a whole quarter is **unprecedented** and **not believable!**

For more information, go to
[TorranceAirport.org](https://torranceairport.org)