



## Actions to Address Noise Concerns at Qualicum Beach Airport

The *Aeronautics Act* is a federally regulated document that governs civil aviation in Canada and establishes the Minister of Transport's responsibility for the development and regulation of aeronautics in Canada, and the supervision of *all matters* connected to civil aviation.

Authority of decision making for airports, including those that are municipally owned, such as Qualicum Beach's Airport, largely falls to federal jurisdiction. Given this federal authority, local governments have extremely limited ability to influence federal regulations, as evidenced by case law.

Municipal tools such as bylaws and business licences are subject to challenge if used to restrict airport operations and related uses such as flight training, airport related businesses, or impacts of noise associated with aeronautics outside of a Federally approved Noise Abatement Procedure.

As a consequence, the Town cannot:

- ✘ Restrict the volume of air traffic arriving at, or departing from, the Airport.
- ✘ Require a pilot to fly a route they deem to be unsafe based on current conditions.

Qualicum Beach is one of the few airports of its size, within uncontrolled airspace, to have a Noise Abatement Procedure approved by Transport Canada (Federally Regulated). In 2016, the Town of Qualicum Beach successfully made application for adoption of the current Noise Abatement Procedure. The Qualicum Beach Airport also has night restrictions which apply between 10:00PM and 6:00AM (with no flights inside these hours except for Medevac or with the Airport Manager's prior approval) as another noise mitigation requirement.

### **AIRPORT SUCCESSES**

Over the past 18 months, Council has continued to devote significant capacity and resources to the Airport. These deliverables include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- developing a common knowledge base about the Airport, associated operations, and the Noise Abatement Procedure through the Airport Consultation Process;
- retaining a dedicated Airport Manager to ensure compliance with federal regulations and a high level of operational excellence at the Airport;

- developing communication materials to support public engagement, including mapping;
- implementing the practice of quarterly public reporting (beginning in July 2024);
- committing to a regularly scheduled Airport forum (Committee of the Whole - Open House) to ensure the public has direct access to Council to discuss Airport concerns;
- implementing an optimized noise complaint process;
- developing and implementing an Airport event tracking system to document noise complaints and other public concerns about Airport operations; and,
- the in-stream implementation of a “Good Neighbour” program at the Airport to encourage pilots to fly “Neighbourly.”

## **NOISE COMPLAINT PROCESS**

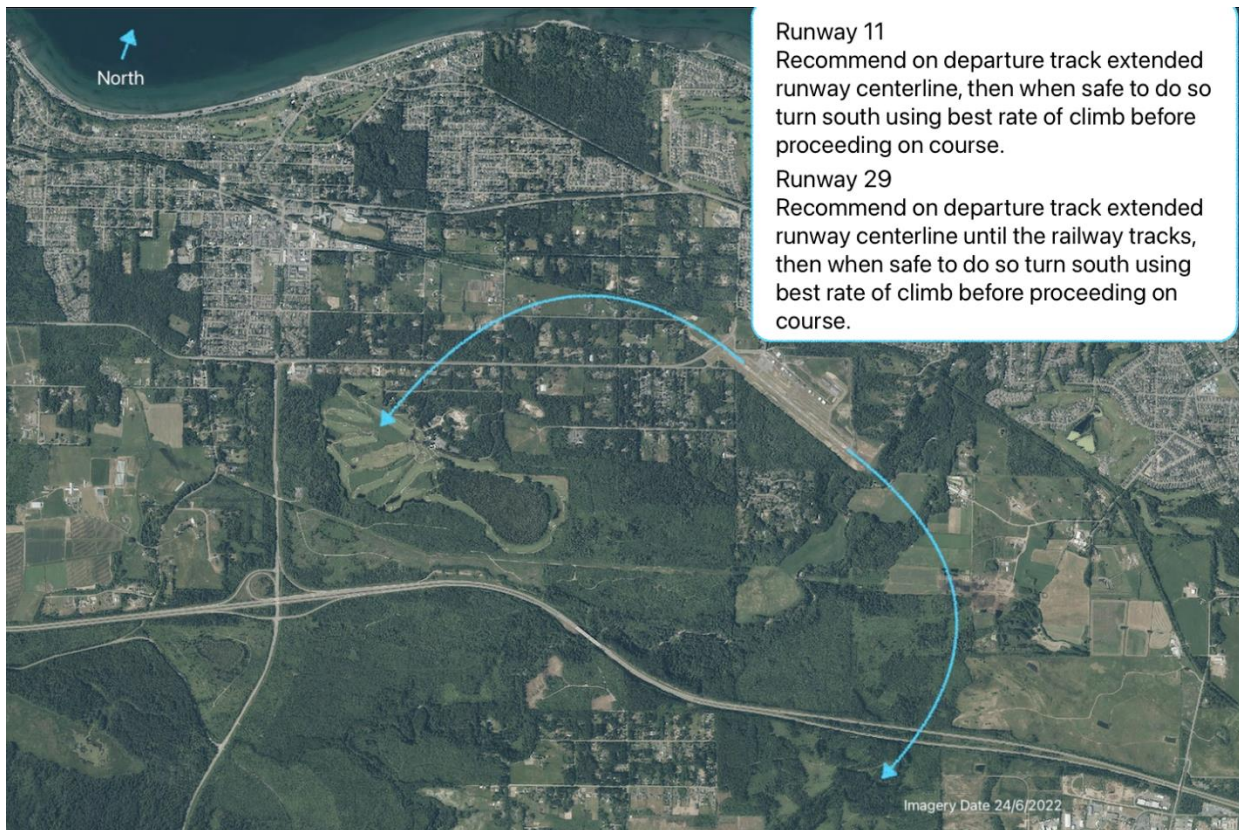
Noise complaints are complaints received about a specific aircraft and its operation in relation to the Noise Abatement Procedure. Please note that general concerns on noise associated with Airport-related operations are tracked separately as correspondence, not as a noise complaint, and will be reported to Council and the public quarterly.

When a noise complaint about a specific aircraft is received by the Town, the complaint is logged and assigned a tracking number and the Town (Airport Authority) investigates accordingly. If no breach of the Noise Abatement Procedure (NAP) is observed upon review of the Closed-Circuit Video (CCTV), the complainant is advised that no further action will be taken by the Airport Authority.

Conversely, if a breach of the NAP is observed, the Airport Authority corresponds with the registered owner of the aircraft and seeks voluntary compliance with the Noise Abatement Procedure. If this approach is unsuccessful, the Airport Authority forwards the information to Transport Canada. It should be noted that once the matter has been directed to Transport Canada, this Federal body does not provide investigation outcomes back to the Airport Authority.

## **“GOOD NEIGHBOUR” PROGRAM**

The “Good Neighbour” Program encourages pilots to fly the route that most pilots are already flying in and out of the Qualicum Beach Airport. Most aircraft in and out of Qualicum Beach fly the south bound pattern over more rural areas (see Figure 1 below). This blue lined circuit illustrates aircraft making southbound turns, when safe to do so, 0.5 kms east of Village Way at the railway tracks. The “Good Neighbour” Program is promoted through the Town’s website, signage at Airport fueling stations, signage at runway hold lines, and handouts to Airport users.



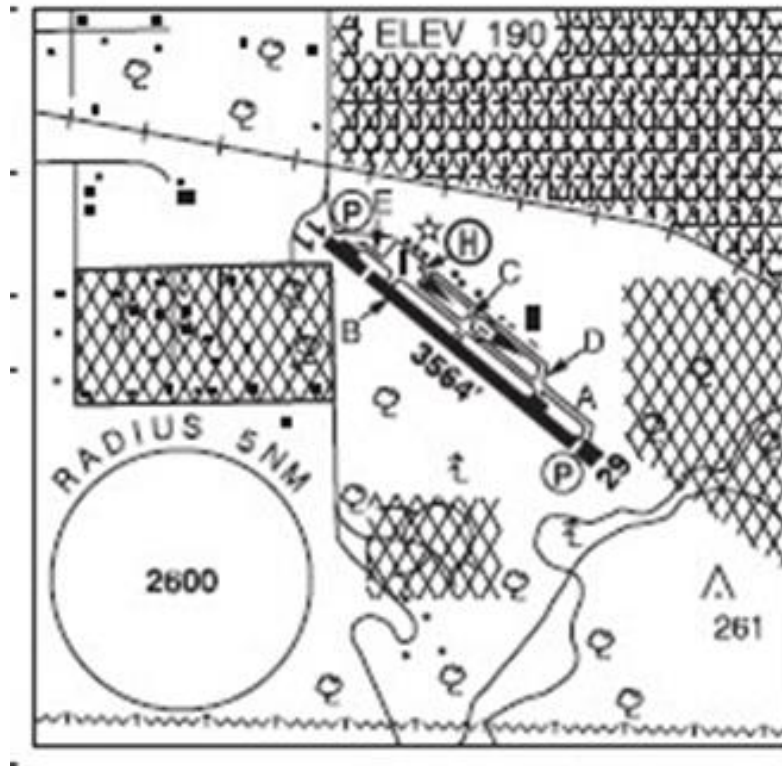
**Figure 1 - Normal Departure Route and Circuits for Light Aircraft (Turns to the South)**

Note – Normal Departure Routes and Circuits with turns to the South, over more rural areas as shown above, are not subject to the Noise Abatement Procedures (which apply to turns to the North as shown in Figure 3 below).

- Turns to the South (Lefthand circuit) and turns to the South (Righthand circuit) are considered acceptable at any time when safe to do so.
- Pilots are requested to make South (Lefthand circuit) and South (Righthand circuit) turns as per the blue lines on the map.
- South turns (Lefthand circuit) when safe to do so as illustrated by the blue line, turn back over Rupert Road directly over Pheasant Glen Golf Course.
- South turns (Righthand circuit) when safe to do so as illustrated by the blue line .

## NOISE SENSITIVE AREAS

Beyond the encouragement of the “Good Neighbour” Program, pilots are encouraged to avoid overflight of Noise Sensitive Areas as shown in the crosshatch of Figure 2.



**Figure 2** - Noise Sensitive Areas Identified For Pilot Information  
(as published in the Canadian Flight Supplement Flight Procedures)

## HELICOPTERS

Turbine equipped helicopters are prohibited from flying continuous circuits unless prior approval is obtained from the Airport Manager. All helicopters are prohibited from arriving or departing over the Noise Sensitive Areas (see Figure 2 - Noise Sensitive Areas) below 1000 feet above ground.





**Figure 3** Noise Abatement Procedure (NAP) for turns to the North pursuant to CAR 602.105

- Noise Abatement Procedure (NAP) of both runways (East and West).
- Pilots must track extended runway centerline out two nautical miles (2nm) or 1000 feet above sea level before making a turn Northward (NW).

### General Summary of the Noise Abatement Procedure

- ✓ The Noise Abatement Procedure applies to **ALL** aircraft operating under *visual flight rules* during weather conditions of two or more miles of visibility.
- ✓ Arriving aircraft must be established on, or South of, the extended runway centerline when within two nautical miles of the runway threshold.
- ✓ Pilots must track extended runway centerline out two nautical miles (2nm) or 1000 feet above sea level before making a turn **Northward**.
- ✓ There are no restrictions on turns to the South as shown in Figure 1, which is the route most aircraft fly.
- ✓ The Noise Abatement Procedure can only be changed with permission from Transport Canada.
- ✓ The process to make application for amendment to the current NAP requires extensive stake holder and public consultation, and is estimated to take up to two years, with no clear outcome for further noise mitigation.

**Note – A Civil Aviation Safety Inspector from Transport Canada has reviewed this document**