

CONSIDERATION OF HAZARDOUS NOISE: FINAL INTERIM AUDIT REPORT N2009-2008)

The Naval Audit Service began a broad audit in 2008. Evaluators conducted this audit of the "Consideration of Hazardous Noise in the Acquisition of the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet and EA-18G Growler Strike Fighter Variants" in 2008 -2009.

The Navy's Auditors found:

1. Most military jet aircraft emit noise levels between 140-150 dB.
2. According to Navy evaluators, the EA-18G will emit, a maximum of 150 dBs, which is well above the noise level considered hazardous to hearing.
3. The normal human pain threshold is around 120dB. According to DOD Instruction 6055.12, at a noise level of 150 dB, the maximum daily exposure time with current technology hearing protection worn correctly is only 8.9 seconds before permanent hearing loss occurs!
4. The Navy did not attempt to mitigate jet noise hazard in the initial design and development of the aircraft, did not follow required guidance relating to risk levels and risk acceptance authority levels, and did not track the flight-line/deck jet noise hazard and its residual mishap risk.
5. These conditions may contribute to a hazardous environment of high noise exposure associated with jet aircraft that, according to the Naval Safety Center, increases the likelihood of permanent hearing loss to sailors and Marines. Mitigation of these known noise levels was not pursued, as noted in this report, because of the costs to retrofit these aircraft.

IMPACTS OF NOISE FOUND BY NAVY

Noise Effects on Children: Studies suggest aircraft noise can affect the academic performance of schoolchildren. Studies involving the testing of attention, memory, and reading comprehension of schoolchildren located near airports showed their tests exhibited reduced performance results

CITIZENS OF THE EBEBY'S RESERVE FOR A HEALTHY, SAFE AND PEACEFUL ENVIRONMENT

compared to those of similar groups of children who were located in quieter environments. (Evans, et al. 1995; Haines, et al. 1998)

More than 800 children go to school in Central Whidbey, have outdoor sports, and have homework to do at night in a high noise environment. Citizens for the Reserve are getting maximum readings as a jet crosses overhead of 100-119dB and 90dB to over 100 dB's.

Noise Effects on Historical and Archaeological Sites: Because of potential for increased fragility of structural components of historical buildings and other historical sites, aircraft noise may affect such sites more severely than newer, modern structures. (Hanson, et al.1991).

Historic Structures in Ebey's Reserve are being restored yet cannot be protected from overflight vibration of the low-flying aircraft from OLF. *Windowpanes may vibrate when exposed to high levels of airborne noise. In general, such noise-induced vibrations occur at peak sound levels of 110 dB or greater.*

Property Values: *According to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), FHA, and Veterans Administration (VA) guidance sites are acceptable for program assistance, subsidy, or insurance for housing in noise zones of less than 65 DNL, and sites are conditionally acceptable with special approvals and noise attenuation in the 65 to 75 DNL noise zone and the greater than 75 DNL noise zone.*

Other Communities Respond To High Noise:

The Navy announced in 2011 it would not pursue a new OLF in NC. Instead, the search for a site will turn to the west coast, according to a Navy spokesman. Gov. Bev Purdue, former Gov. Mike Easley, senators Richard Burr and Kay Hagan all were outspoken opponents of the OLF in NC.

Citizen's Fact Sheet for the Outlying Field in Coupeville

The Outlying Field (OLF) in Coupeville was built in 1943 as an auxiliary field and covers 677 acres. Island County's population was 6,098 in 1940.

OLF, Coupeville is 5400' long x 200' wide. By contrast, Alt Field's 2 runways are 8,000' long. OLF now nearly touches State Route 20, the main north/south road and is located 3 miles SE of Coupeville. Full stop landings are not authorized unless there is an emergency, as this field is shorter than the 6,000' minimum standard designated for post WWII Naval aircraft.

OLF was lightly used for about 70 years. The Introduction of the EA-6B Prowlers and their use of OLF for Carrier Landing Training in the 1980's caused concern in Central Whidbey and WISE, a local community group, was formed to address noise and safety issues at OLF – disbanding in the late 1980's. A new group, Citizens of the Reserve, formed in late 2012 to address the same issues and to work for the closure and relocation of OLF.

The town of Coupeville, just 3 miles NW of OLF, is the County seat, housing administrative and government offices. The new federally funded **Whidbey Island Transit Complex** built directly north of The OLF (seen at the top of this photo) is in a crash zone. The population of Island County is now 78,500 and persons per square mile in this County is 377 compared to the rest of Washington's 101 per square mile. Also, the Island's major hospital, a primary school, middle school and high school totaling about 800 children are located within the OLF over flight zone.

In 2008, the EA-18G Growler arrived on Whidbey. There are **now 8 active duty squadrons of EA-18G Growlers at NASWI**. Although the



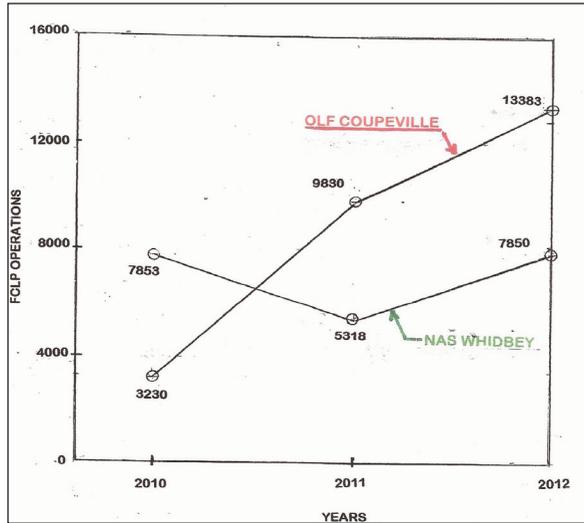
Outlying Field, Coupeville, WA

Growlers were built to replace the EA-6B Prowlers, there are still 7 active duty Prowler squadrons at NASWI. The transition from EA-6B Prowlers to EA-18 G Growlers will continue until completed because of a 2005 Navy Environmental Assessment (EA). Both the EA-6B Prowlers and EA-18G Growlers utilize OLF-Coupeville for 'Touch & Go' (T&G's) trainings.

Concerned? What Can You Do?

1. Join Citizens of the Reserve.
2. Relocate OLF to a safer location.
3. SignOn.org <http://signon.org/sign/citizens-group-to-take>.
4. Email: citizensoftheebeyreserve2@gmail.com
5. Visit our web site: Citizensoftheebeyreserve.com
6. Visit our blog: <http://citizensofthereserve.wordpress.com/>

All information on this fact sheet has been taken from US Navy and US Department of Defense sources.



Operations: Field Carrier Landing Practice:2010-12

Local residents noticed increased use of OLF during the summers of 2011 & 2012 -- as the number of T & G operations at OLF rose to over 13,300, increasing sharply from 3,200 in 2010. This is a 314% increase in flight activity in Central Whidbey and a significant increase in the area and level of noise exposure.

The Navy's 2005 EA that called for the transition from Prowlers to Growlers stunned the Coupeville community in the wake of increased flights by louder aircraft. Few knew in 2005 what an EA18G Growler was --- or the impact it would have on people, place and property.



Navy LINGO You Need to Know!
Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) Program is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of those living near a military airfield while preserving the operational capability of the airfield. This impacts all of Central Whidbey. The 2005 AICUZ Noise Study made predictions about the noise contours of the Growlers for 2013 and found no impact on the assumption that there would be fewer flight operations at OLF.

If the Central Whidbey Community can document that there is a 5% increase in noise from that predicted, this may be sufficient grounds to reopen the Navy's 2005 EA -- and a 5% increase seems to have been well surpassed. The Navy, under NEPA regulations, will then have to reopen their 2005 EA that allows for the transition to EA-18G Growlers at NASWI.

The Navy's NEPA regulations lay it out. The Navy has a duty to prepare a new EA or EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) for "continuing projects" where (1) the currently occurring impacts have not been documented in an EA or EIS and there is a discovery that substantial environmental degradation is occurring as a result of the ongoing operation; or (2) there is discovery that the environmental effects are significantly and qualitatively different or more severe than predicted in an earlier NEPA document.

There has never been an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) done on the impact of these large jets on the local environs.

Citizen concern today is focused on noise & safety and the number and duration of flights at the OLF --- not about receiving 'better communications' about flight training schedules.

An alternative site with modern runway and technology is urged for a new OLF for training US Navy personnel.

What is an APZ and why should YOU care?

APZs (accident potential zones) are areas where an aircraft mishap is most likely to occur.

APZs follow departure, arrival, and flight pattern tracks and are based on analysis of historic data. The AICUZ includes three APZs -- the Clear Zone, APZ I, and APZ II. The **Clear Zone** extends 3,000 feet beyond the runway and has highest potential for accidents. **APZ I** extends 5,000 feet beyond the Clear Zone. **APZ II** extends 7,000 feet beyond APZ I.

Per the 2005 AICUZ, the OLF is a class B runway. The APZI area for a class B is 3000' wide by 5000' long. The APZII area is 3000' wide by 7000' long. Neither APZ designations have been created for the OLF. Nevertheless, the Navy criteria for establishing APZ zones have been exceeded at OLF Coupeville. The Clear zone is 3000' long. Some of the Clear Zone at OLF is privately owned.

Island County has allowed development around OLF, including the Whidbey Island Transit District's building, which is in an APZI crash zone. Admirals Cove, another example, is a 400 home housing development, which by current safety regulations, should be an APZI. A recreational County Park, a dog park and a commercial zone are all located in potential crash zones.

How Loud is the EA-18 G Growler?

Commercial aviation authorities have instituted noise limits for airports and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) implemented its own rules in Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Part 36. **Military aircraft are exempt from FAR Part 36 and all other noise limitations.** Military aircraft noise has come under scrutiny with the implementation of Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) recommendations and subsequent requirements for Environmental Impact Assessments and Statements. In short

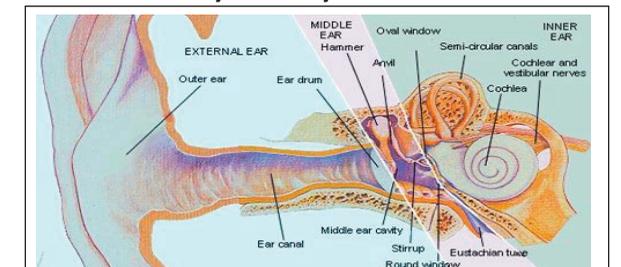
order in the 90's, "Sound of Freedom" supporters were challenged by angry citizens concerned about military aircraft noise that was impacting the quality of their lives in their homes and work places beyond military airfield boundaries.

Military planners have relied on locally instituted noise abatement procedures, i.e., flight patterns and power settings, to reduce noise signatures. These procedures will be inadequate to compensate for the higher noise footprints associated with aircraft like the EA18 Growler producing 150 decibels at take off.

How does the Navy Calculate Noise?

The Navy describes noise exposure using the Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL). The DNL metric expands daily noise events into a 24-hour average for an entire year. **DNLs do not tell us what the loudest event is in a 24-hour period, nor how many noise events there may be in a 24-hour period. Our ears do not average noise events or duration.**

Can Noise Really Hurt My Ears?



Yes, noise can be dangerous. *If it is loud enough and lasts long enough, it can damage your hearing. When noise is too loud, it begins to kill the nerve endings in the inner ear. There is no way to restore life to dead nerve endings damaged by noise. The damage is permanent. Most experts agree that exposure to more than 85 decibels is dangerous. The highest permissible noise exposure for unprotected ears is 115dB for 5 minutes/day. (Texas Div. of Workers Compensation)*