



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

Western-Pacific Region  
Office of the Regional Administrator

P. O. Box 92007  
Los Angeles, CA 90009-2007

JUL 2 8 2014

Mr. James Gates  
142 Via Pasqual  
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

Dear Mr. Gates:

Thank you for your email dated June 21, 2014, regarding an operation at Torrance Airport (TOA) between your aircraft and a helicopter on May 30, 2014.

Upon receipt of your email, we conducted an investigation. Following your original call to the TOA Airport Traffic Control Tower, an Air Traffic Mandatory Occurrence Report was initiated. A full analysis of the event was completed including a review of voice recordings and radar data. As described in your letter, your aircraft, N320JG, was inbound to TOA. The helicopter you described was operating in right closed traffic, also known as the north traffic pattern. The tower controller issued traffic to both N320JG and the helicopter, and issued instructions to the helicopter to resolve any conflict. Additionally, the tower controller had both the aircraft and the helicopter in sight. Your aircraft passed above and behind the helicopter. There was no loss of separation.

Additionally, there have been no changes to the north traffic pattern altitudes. The north traffic pattern altitude at TOA is 1,100 feet Mean Sea Level (MSL) for all single engine aircraft, including helicopters, and 1,600 feet MSL for all twin engine aircraft.

You also sent an email dated June 22, 2014, to Mr. Gerald A. Boots of our Long Beach Flight Standards District Office. Their investigation of the event you referenced on May 30, 2014, at approximately 1530 does not appear to be a near midair collision.

Review of the radar data indicates you passed behind and above the helicopter and then initiated a left turn into the traffic pattern at TOA. The occupants of the helicopter were identified. One occupant was a Designated Pilot Examiner. The second occupant was a commercially rated pilot and applicant for a flight instructor certificate. Neither the examiner nor the applicant recalled having a close call with another aircraft during the checkride.

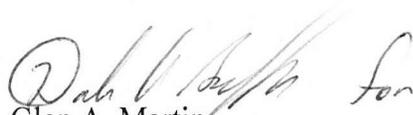
The helicopter had just departed Runway 29R and was remaining in the pattern for Runway 29R. All aircraft use the same pattern and altitude for Runway 29R at TOA. This event does not appear to be related to the change of altitude on arrival and departure routes, as both aircraft were engaged in traffic pattern operations when the event occurred.

Regarding your concern about Torrance noise abatement, an airport operator may establish recommended noise abatement procedures, may recommend changes to Federal Aviation Administration flight procedures for noise abatement purposes, and may establish airport noise and access restrictions. Such procedures and policies may not adversely affect the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace, may not conflict with any applicable federal statute or regulation.

Air traffic control communications regarding airport noise abatement procedures are advisory only. The pilot in command is responsible for the safe operation of the aircraft and should advise air traffic control if he or she is unable to comply with any air traffic advisory or instruction.

Thank you for this opportunity to answer your inquiry. If you need further help, please contact me or Mr. Dale Bouffiou, Deputy Regional Administrator, at (310) 725-3550.

Sincerely,

  
Glen A. Martin  
Acting Regional Administrator