



Noise tracks at TEB

By Dennis O'Connor
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You hear people use the term “walk the talk” a lot these days. It basically means you do what you say you’re going to do. It’s a concept we need to apply in aviation, although the words might be a little different. I’d like to suggest the phrase, “Control the yoke as you spoke.”

This applies particularly to us as pilots when it comes to being good neighbors. Increasingly, we are living in an environment where we all need to get along together. If we don’t, none of us will like the result.

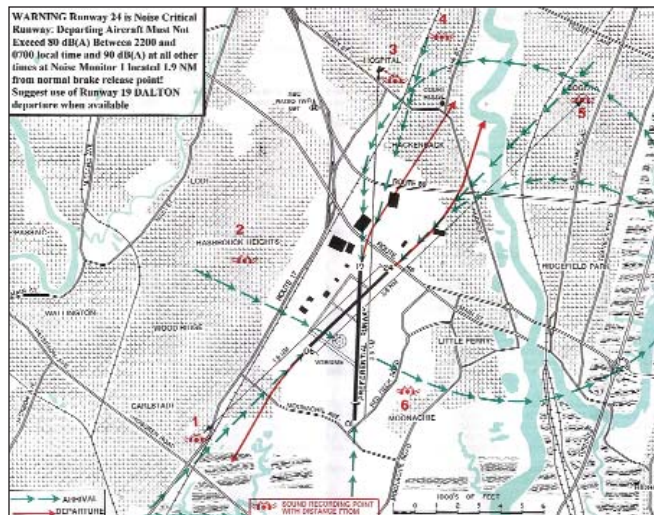
At TEB (Teterboro NJ), as with many airports in high-population communities, noise is a continual issue. We have been able to address criticism by creating arrival and departure routes designed to contain noise to less sensitive areas. But here’s where “control the yoke as you spoke” comes in. Some pilots say they’re good neighbors but fly like they’re not. Our neighbors at TEB not only hear the noise we make, but also watch aircraft operations. They can tell when we’re not doing what we said we would do.

As the airport’s noise compliance officer, I do explain the difference between local routes used for mandatory procedures and those used for guidance. Such exchanges help represent pilot interests before laypeople, and they’ve also done their part to discuss land areas that help minimize noise. Unfortunately, the layperson’s view remains limited—perhaps due to the media or only being an airline passenger. As pros, we have to be consistent in actions to help neighbors see beyond mere words or, worse, token meaning.

This June I received a flurry of noise complaints, all coming from the same town during the same midday hour. They came from different callers, but each had the same complaint: “Those planes are flying everywhere!” And, sadly, the complainants were right. Unlike the tracks depicted here for guidance with noise abatement (via the VOR-A approach), several jet aircraft were turning north over Ridgefield Park and maneuvering in other nearby areas to circle for Runway 19.

The published tracks suggest a routing for using land-use areas that offer some measure of compatibility with aviation (given the high-density residential development near TEB). The outbound leg from the VOR is between 2 neighborhoods over a patch of commercial area. The northerly turn overflies Overpeck Creek and follows a park east of I-95. The turn west makes use of a small (I admit) but still compatible commercial strip between Bogota and Teaneck, and the final leg passes the downtown area of Hackensack and avoids Hackensack Hospital.

I know the tracks are challenging—to keep the airport in sight, to keep the approach stable, to spot TEB’s beacon at night. But consistency wins and it’s easy to



TEB’s VOR-A approach uses “minimum sound tracks” for the neighbors. These are also shown in Jeppesen charts.

achieve since these tracks are readily available prior to operating at TEB.

And that point was the most surprising part about the complaint day last month, because as I talked to pilots, it became clear that not everyone is becoming familiar with the tracks prior to arriving at TEB.

The noise abatement tracks are available. At TEB we publish our own *Flight Crew Handbook*, which spells out our noise abatement procedures and the reasons for them in great detail. They are also published in the Jeppesen charts. It’s good they’re in Jepp, but that’s also why it was so disappointing to see people not following the tracks, because Jepp flies in nearly every corporate cockpit. There’s really no excuse for not adhering to the published tracks, particularly when we’ve told our neighbors that’s what we are going to do. It fails all us and our efforts to bolster general aviation when some pilots seemingly neglect good information at their fingertips.

On the day with all the complaints, some pilots were doing their part to be good neighbors, but some were not. At TEB, and elsewhere, they’re your neighbors, too. They appreciate “flying quiet” sentiments.

So my message is this. If you’ll all “control the yoke as you spoke,” you’ll help keep our neighbors happy and operations running smoothly at TEB. And that’s in everybody’s best interest.



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