



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

Western-Pacific Region
Office of the Regional Administrator

777 S. Aviation Blvd., Suite 150
El Segundo, CA 90245

May 24, 2019

Chairperson Mary-Lynn Bernald
Santa Clara/Santa Cruz Counties Airport Community Roundtable
P.O. Box 3144
Los Altos, CA 94024

Dear Chairwoman Bernald,

I am writing this letter in follow up on the PIRAT briefing provided at the most recent roundtable meeting on May 22, 2019, and in response to questions of a timely nature that were posed about the PIRAT arrival route.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) developed the PIRAT arrival route in response to a unanimous recommendation from the 12-member Select Committee on South Bay Arrivals. The recommendation stated that, "The Select Committee recommends revision of the Woodside Very High Frequency Omnidirectional Range (VOR) Ocean tailored arrival to honor the existing noise abatement procedure to cross the Woodside VOR at 8,000 feet."

The FAA carried out this recommendation and raised the altitude of oceanic aircraft within the vicinity of the Woodside VOR (OSI), now known as the ARGGG waypoint, to 8,000 feet Mean Sea Level. Beyond this waypoint, aircraft are radar vectored to join the airport approach courses and will follow ground tracks similar to the ones used prior to the publication of PIRAT.

As explained by FAA representatives, oceanic aircraft have been arriving over OSI and have been radar vectored for many years. The FAA does not anticipate the number of oceanic aircraft over Palo Alto or its neighboring communities to change with the implementation of the PIRAT.

After publishing the PIRAT, the FAA determined that it needed to make a minor amendment to the route. The only change was to add a 15,000-foot altitude restriction at the PIRAT waypoint, which is 23 miles offshore. The amendment did not change the route's ground track. The FAA published the amended PIRAT route – known as PIRAT TWO - on April 25, 2019.

I hope this addresses concerns that the roundtable members expressed about PIRAT and please know that you have my commitment to keep you updated on PIRAT as developments occur.

Sincerely,

Raquel Girvin
Regional Administrator

Cc: Congressman Khanna
Congressman Panetta
Congresswoman Eshoo