

In response to the request made by Orcas Port Commissioner Robert Hamilton this morning, I'd like to go on record with respect to noise generated by San Juan Airlines aircraft at the Orcas airport.

There has been a long standing issue with a couple of our aircraft that tend to generate complaints from a few of the residents on the island. In particular, the two aircraft we currently fly, a Cessna 206 (N9428G) and a Cessna 207 (N91060) utilize a Continental IO-520-F and McCauley 401 three blade propeller. The maximum RPM generated by this combination is 2850 RPM as specified in the FAA Approved Type Certificates and applicable Supplementary Type Certificates. At this RPM and propeller diameter, the props reach somewhere in the order of Mach .92, which produces the prominent 'buzz' that seems to garner the majority of noise complaints.

I've been asked several times (mostly by pilots living on Orcas that are sensitive to noise) about using a reduced RPM on takeoff to help reduce said noise. When we do not have passengers on board, our pilots will often do that in an attempt to minimize the impact on the surrounding communities. However, with passengers on board, the FAA has mandated that we use full power on takeoff until we're established over 300 feet AGL and the flaps have been retracted. We've spoken with the FAA about this several times to use reduced power takeoffs for two reasons. The first is the noise factor. The second is that full power does not equate to full thrust in this configuration. Unfortunately, the way the FAA views this, is they demand we keep the procedures for the pilots as simple as possible with passengers on board. I don't expect that position will change anytime soon.

With respect to noise abatement procedures, our pilots are instructed to follow them to the best of their ability. Unfortunately, with full passenger loads and often times foul weather, we are not always able to comply fully as we're required to maintain glide distances to a shoreline in case of an engine failure.

We're in the process of converting the fleet to an IO-550-F with a shorter propeller. This combination produces a max RPM of 2700 RPM while still providing the same amount of power (it's a longer stroke motor.) N684S (our Silver 207 with Orange and Blue stripes) utilizes this engine package and is significantly quieter in operation. Unfortunately, these engine packages are much more expensive, and it's taking us some time to make the full conversion. We're hoping to complete that conversion within the next 12-18 months.

Please know we wish to be good neighbors, and are doing all that we can to work with the surrounding community to continue serving them, while minimizing the noise impact. Please feel forward this e-mail to all concerned parties including but not limited to all the Orcas Port Commissioners. I'll see you at the board meeting tonight at 5:00 pm.

**Many thanks,  
Jason Douglass  
Owner, San Juan Airlines**