

# SAN DIEGO COUNTY REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY

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## **9<sup>th</sup> Variance Process for San Diego International Airport**

### ***What is the “Variance” process for airports in California?***

Generally, all California airports with residential noise impacts in surrounding communities of 65 decibels (dB) or greater Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) must receive a variance under the California Noise Standards (CNS) as adopted by the State of California, Division of Aeronautics (State). The CNS uses a 65 dB CNEL contour to define the noise impact area around an airport. It is the objective of the State that there be no incompatible land uses (i.e. residential, schools, churches or hospitals) located within the 65 dB CNEL contour. Since the late 1970s, the San Diego Unified Port District owned and operated SDIA until January 2003, receiving eight variances to the CNS. Creation of the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (SDCRAA) in 2003 resulted in the transfer of the variance process to SDCRAA.

### ***What noise mitigation programs have resulted from the Variance Process?***

The CNS are designed to bring the airport proprietor and the local noise-impacted community together to work co-operatively to diminish aircraft-related noise impacts. Some SDIA programs resulting from this process include the Airport Use Regulations, Time-of-Day restrictions (nightly departure noise curfew) and the School and Residential Sound Attenuation (Quieter Home) Programs. Additionally, a major modernization of SDIA's computerized noise monitoring system has been completed (with the exception of relocating ten of the twenty-six monitors) to more accurately monitor SDIA's aircraft noise contour.

### ***What is the status of the current San Diego International Airport (“SDIA”) Variance?***

The SDCRAA, owner and operator of SDIA since January 1, 2003, applied to the State for further variance (Variance #9) on June 24, 2004. All interested parties (interveners) within SDIA's noise impact area, including planning boards, community groups and SDCRAA's Airport Noise Advisory Committee (ANAC) were provided copies of the variance application and had the opportunity to comment on the application to the State. The 8<sup>th</sup>(current) Variance remains in effect until the State determines the merits of SDCRAA's 9<sup>th</sup> variance application.

The SDCRAA is currently undertaking negotiations with interveners in the process. A pre-hearing conference, held before an Administrative Law Judge, was initially scheduled for May 12, 2005, continued to July 8, 2005, and is now calendared for September 8, 2005. On August 11, 2005, the ALJ will consider the merits of all intervener motions.

