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## Charles M. Schulz – Sonoma County Airport (STS)

# Aircraft Noise Monthly Report

January 2021



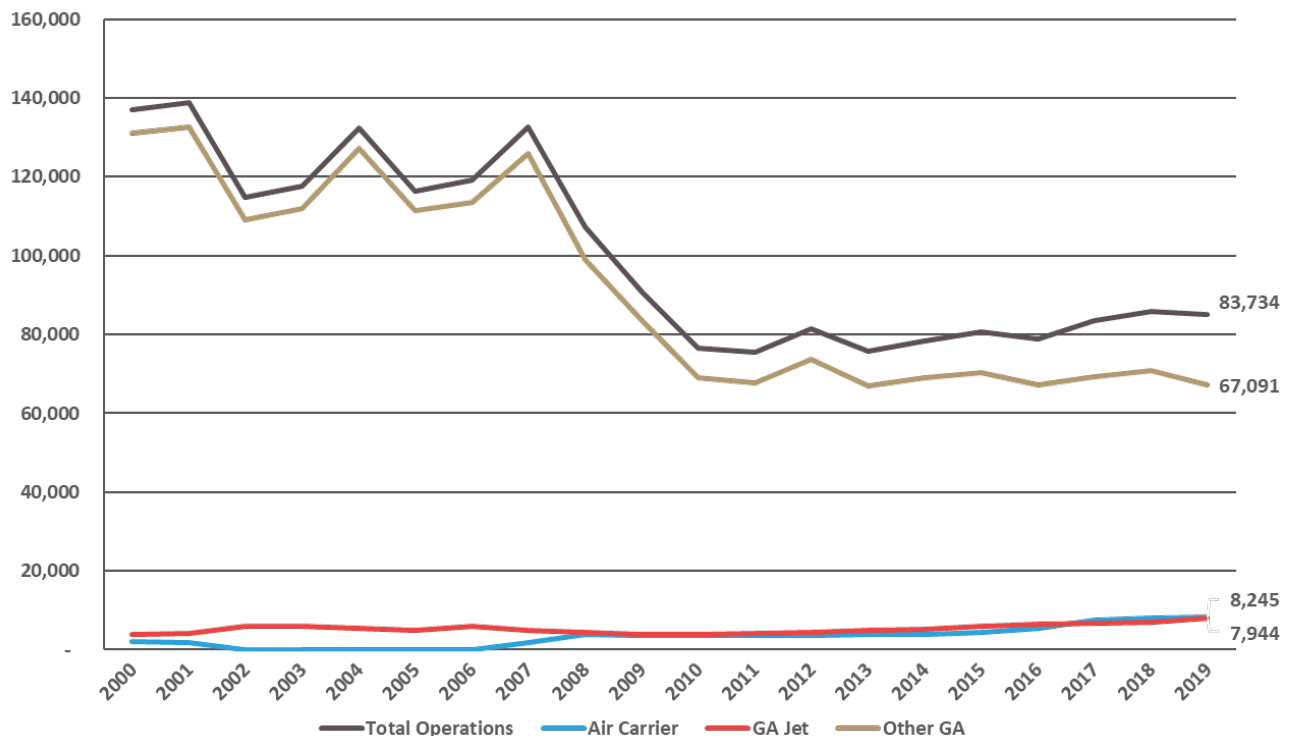
# About the Charles M. Schulz – Sonoma County Airport and Noise Abatement

The Airport operates as a self-supporting Enterprise Fund within the Department of Transportation and Public Works and under the jurisdiction of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). STS is both a general aviation facility, serving private planes and business jets, and is a commercial airline facility with scheduled air service. STS generates over \$1,300,000 annually in tax revenues, via its users, for Sonoma County and County School Districts.

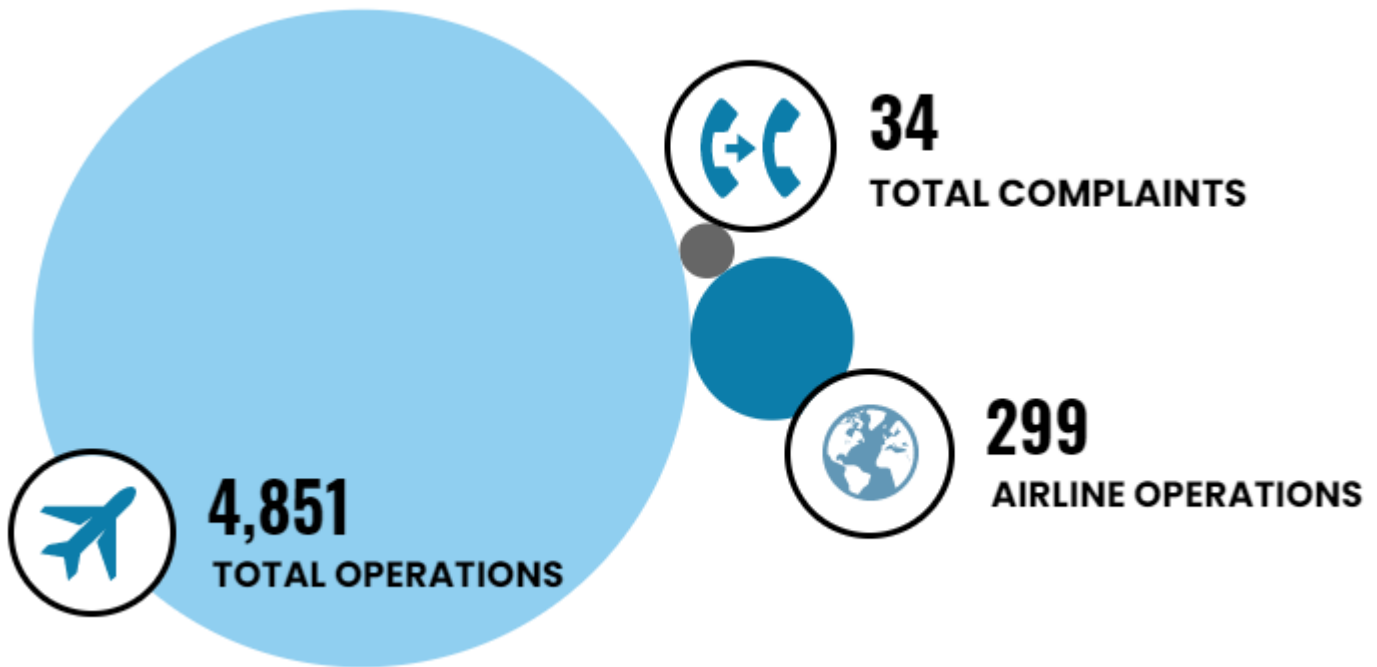
The Airport’s current Noise Abatement Program was established in 1988. STS also works within FAA guidelines, to encourage pilots and airlines to fly with consideration of our neighbors in mind. The Airport makes every effort to promote flight procedures that minimize aircraft noise while always maintaining safety as the highest priority. It is the FAA’s sole responsibility to develop air traffic rules, assign the use of airspace, and control air traffic.

STS is working with our Aviation Commission and a community advisory group to re-write the Airport’s Noise Abatement Guide and associated procedures (to be released in early 2022). Using flight-tracking and noise management software, the Airport also provides monthly complaint reports to pilots and to airlines so that operators can use real data to update flight practices and fly friendly. As more data becomes available to STS staff, additional analysis is performed and included in monthly and annual reports.

## STS Historical Operations



# This Month's Operations



# This Month's Noise Complaints At-A-Glance

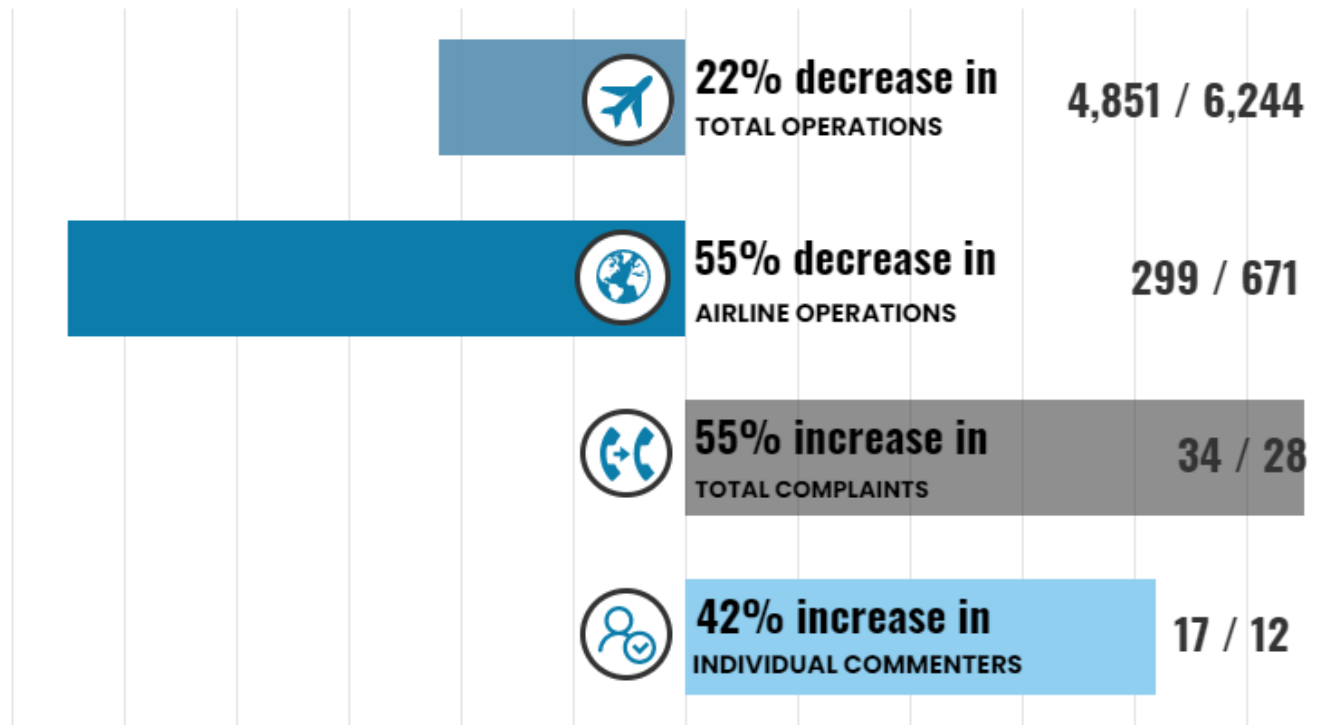
- 34 Noise Complaints received
- 17 Individual Commenters
- 4 New Commenters
- 23 Correlated Operations\*
- 13 Complaints that were non-specific, were regarding operations that did not include STS as the origin or the destination (not Airport-related), or were unable to be correlated to a flight track/aircraft



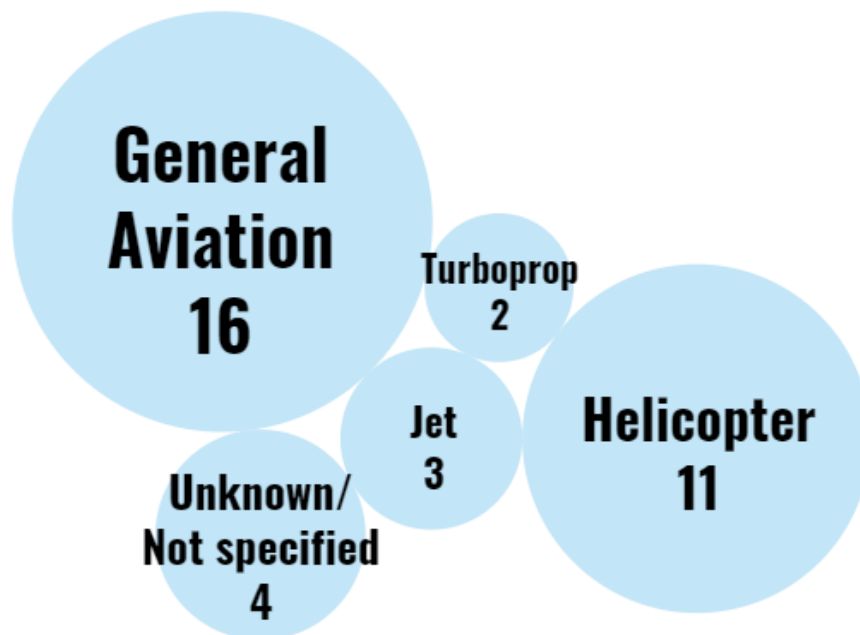
*\*An Operation is a departure from or an arrival to the Airport. Complaints may be correlated to more than one Operation or may not be correlated to an Operation.*

In January, the Airport received the same number of complaints received in December. Of the 34 complaints received, 22 (65%) were made by frequent commenters (three or more complaints during the month), including one commenter living within one nautical mile (NM) of STS who submitted six complaints over the month. STS did not receive any complaints regarding airline operations in January. The number of commenters increased to 17 in January (from 12 in December), including four new commenters. Eight of the January commenters live greater than ten NM from STS, including five commenters who submitted complaints regarding operations out of the Cloverdale airport. The eight complaints submitted regarding the Cloverdale airport largely account for the uncorrelated or not Airport-related operations, along with complaints submitted from Cotati and from Penngrove. The majority of complaints received in January were regarding light general aviation (GA) aircraft operations and helicopter operations.

# What's Changed This Year? January 2021 vs. 2020



## Airlines and Operators Identified Through Complaints



*Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, and United Airlines operate jet aircraft. No complaints regarding airline operations were received this month.*

# Aircraft Operated by Airlines at STS

**Alaska Airlines**  
E175 (76 seats)



Q400 (76 seats)



**American Airlines**  
E175 (76 seats)



CRJ700 (65-76 seats)



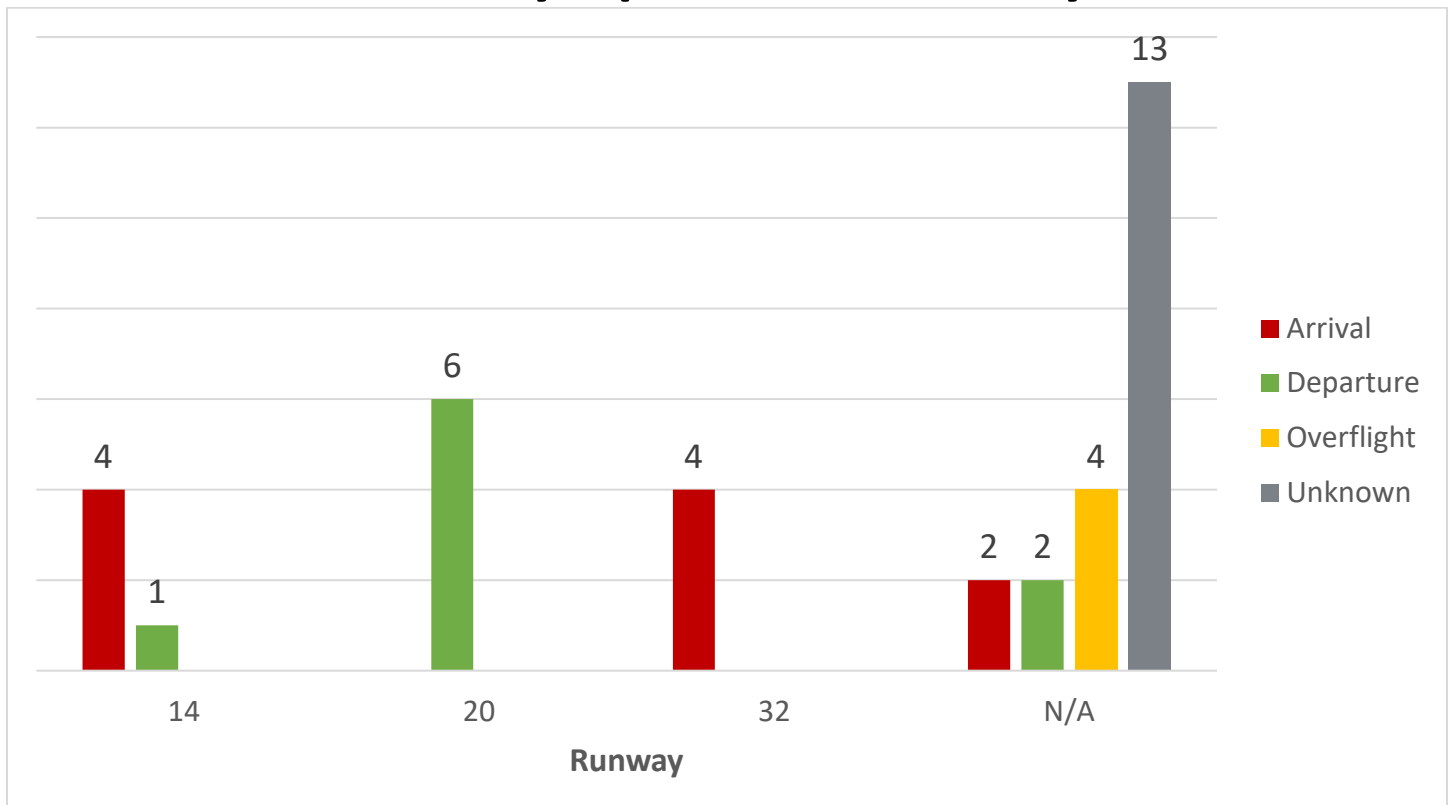
CRJ900 (76-79 seats)



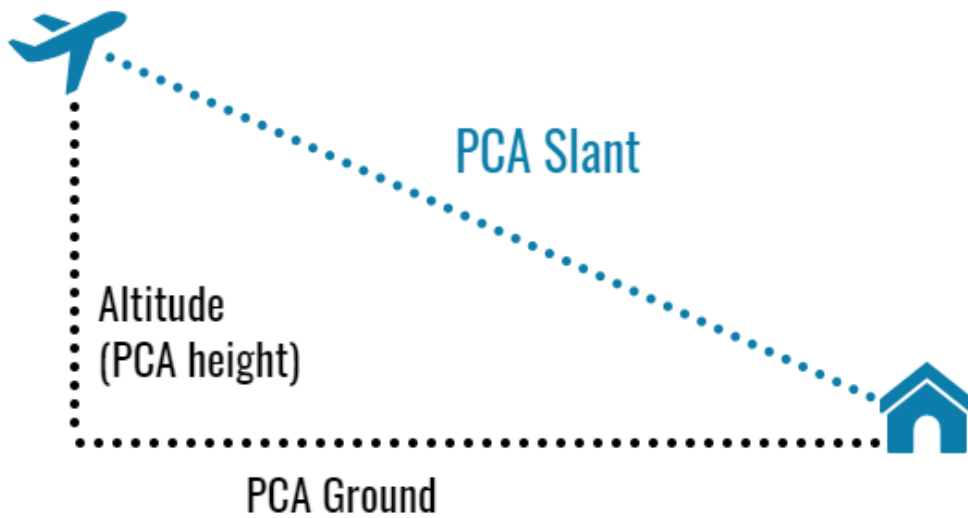
**United Airlines**  
CRJ200 (50 seats)



## Identified Aircraft by Operation, Runway



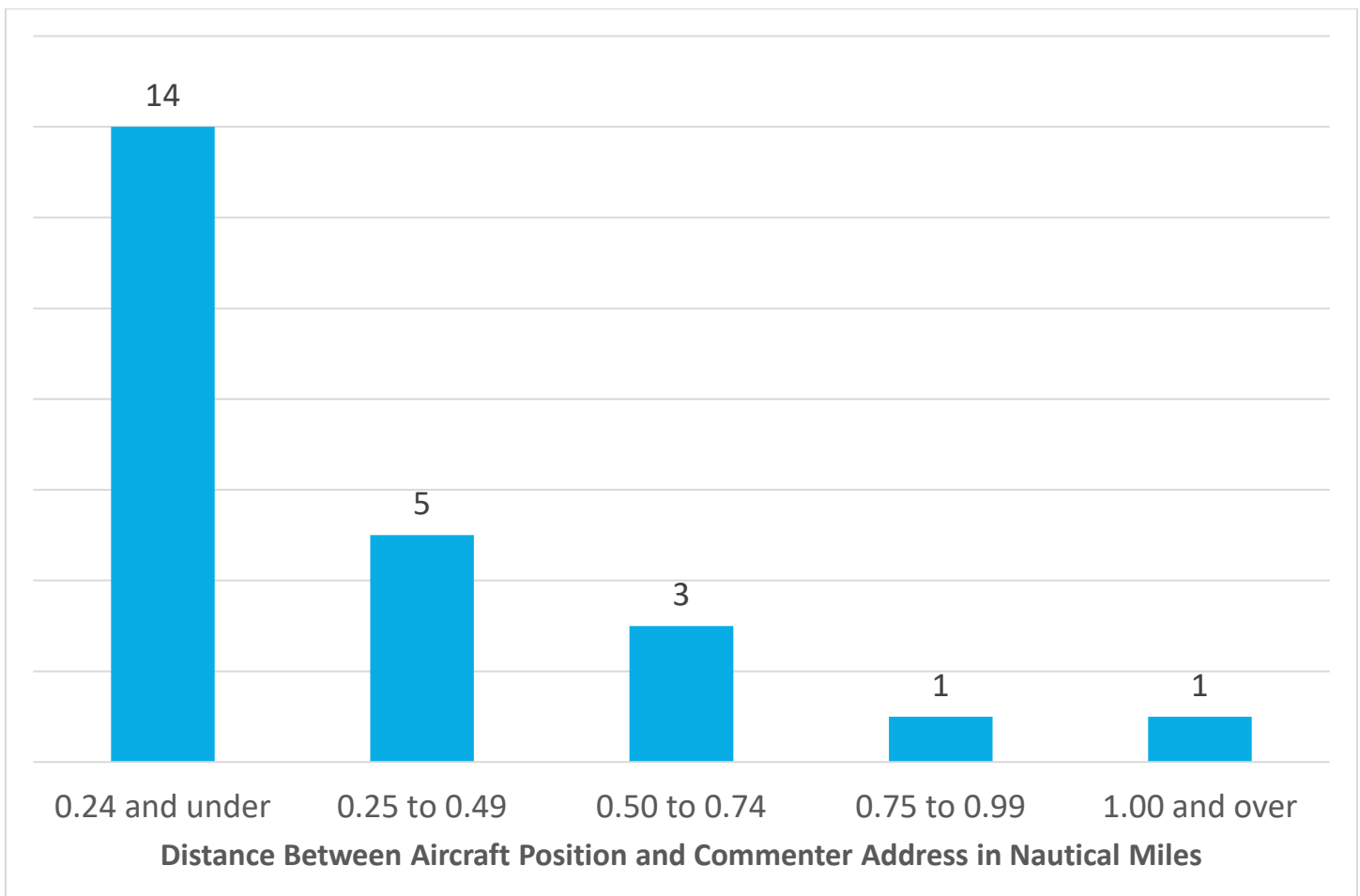
# Aircraft Points of Closest Approach (PCA)



There were 22 aircraft identified through complaints made this month with a tracked point of closest approach (PCA). Sometimes called the PCA slant, the PCA is the distance in nautical miles between the commenter’s address and the aircraft.

In January, 64% of aircraft that generated complaints were less than a quarter-mile from the commenter’s address per the PCA measurement.

## Most Aircraft Were Under 0.25 Nautical Miles from the Commenter



# Aircraft Altitudes

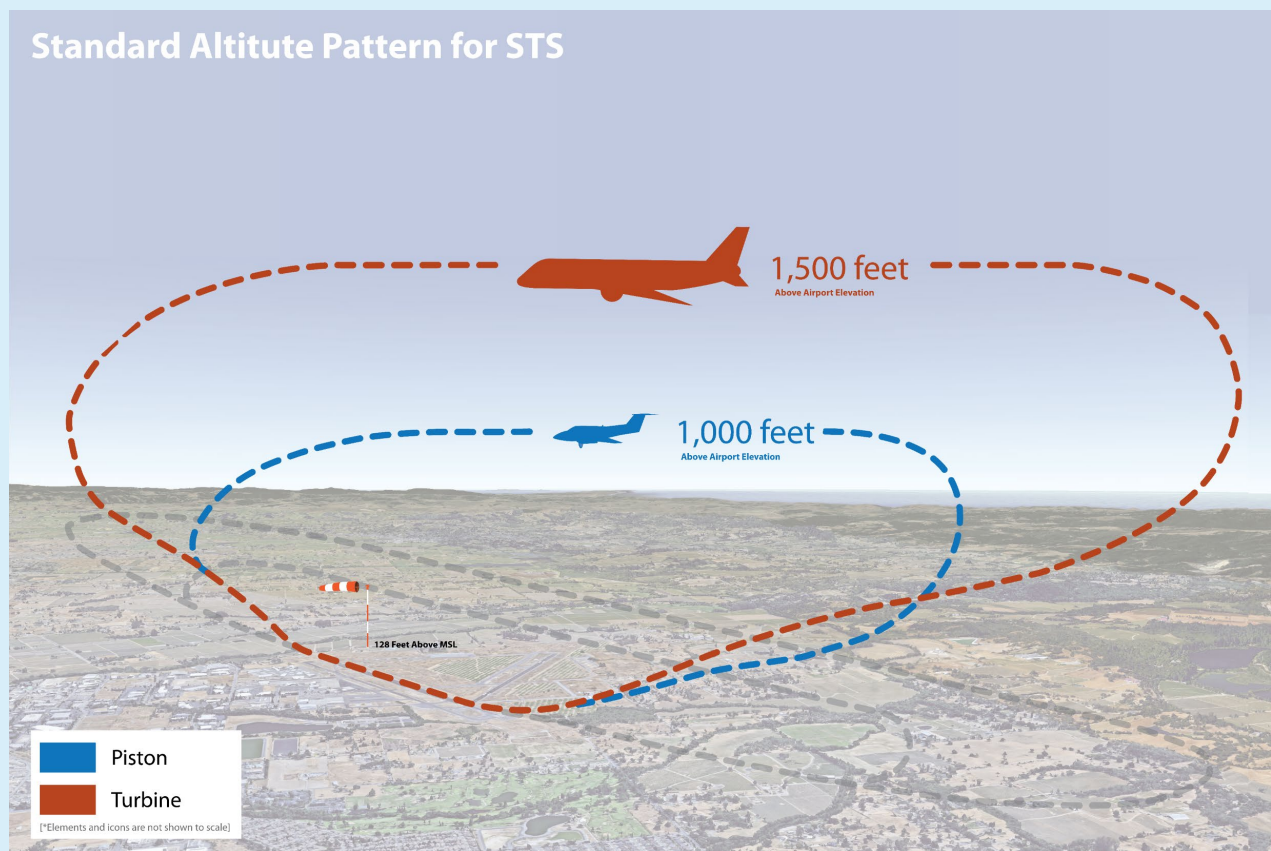
There were 22 aircraft identified through complaints made this month with a tracked altitude. At the point of closest approach to the commenter’s address, the altitude was recorded (in feet). Per FAA aircraft guidelines, except when necessary for takeoff or landing aircraft must maintain an altitude of at least 1,000 feet over populated areas. Helicopters may operate safely at less than the minimum for aircraft.

Recorded Altitude Range	Recorded Altitude
Under 1,000 feet (15 aircraft*)	216, 251, 341, 366, 381, 391, 396, 471, 646, 711, 796, 816, 866, 871, 941
1,000 to 1,499 feet (4 aircraft)	1,241, 1,261, 1,296, 1,316
1,500 to 1,999 feet (1 aircraft)	1,566
Over 2,000 feet (4 aircraft)	2,236, 3,371, 3,771, 4,511

\*All aircraft under 500 feet are helicopters.

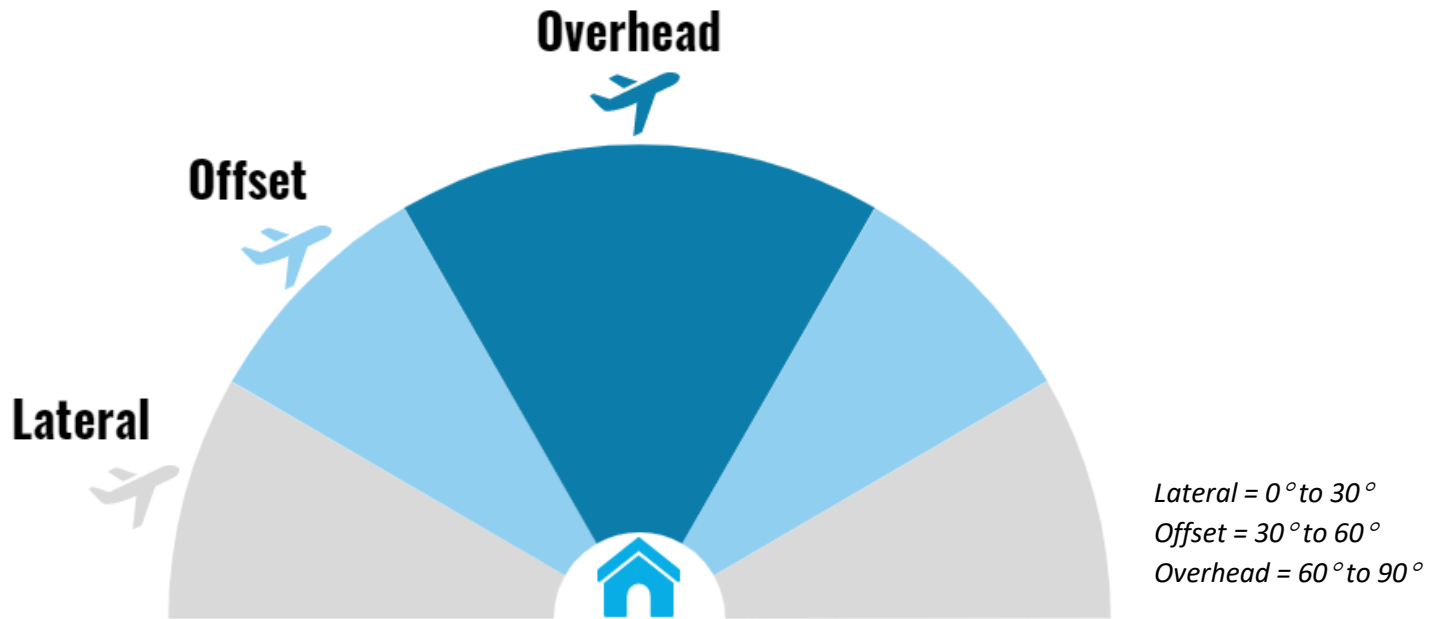
## What are the altitude requirements for aircraft landing at or taking off from the Airport?

The Airport’s standard altitude pattern is the highest allowed by the FAA. Under FAA regulations, altitude restrictions are not applicable during landing and takeoff. The FAA has exclusive sovereignty of airspace in the United States (49 U.S.C. Section 40103(a)).

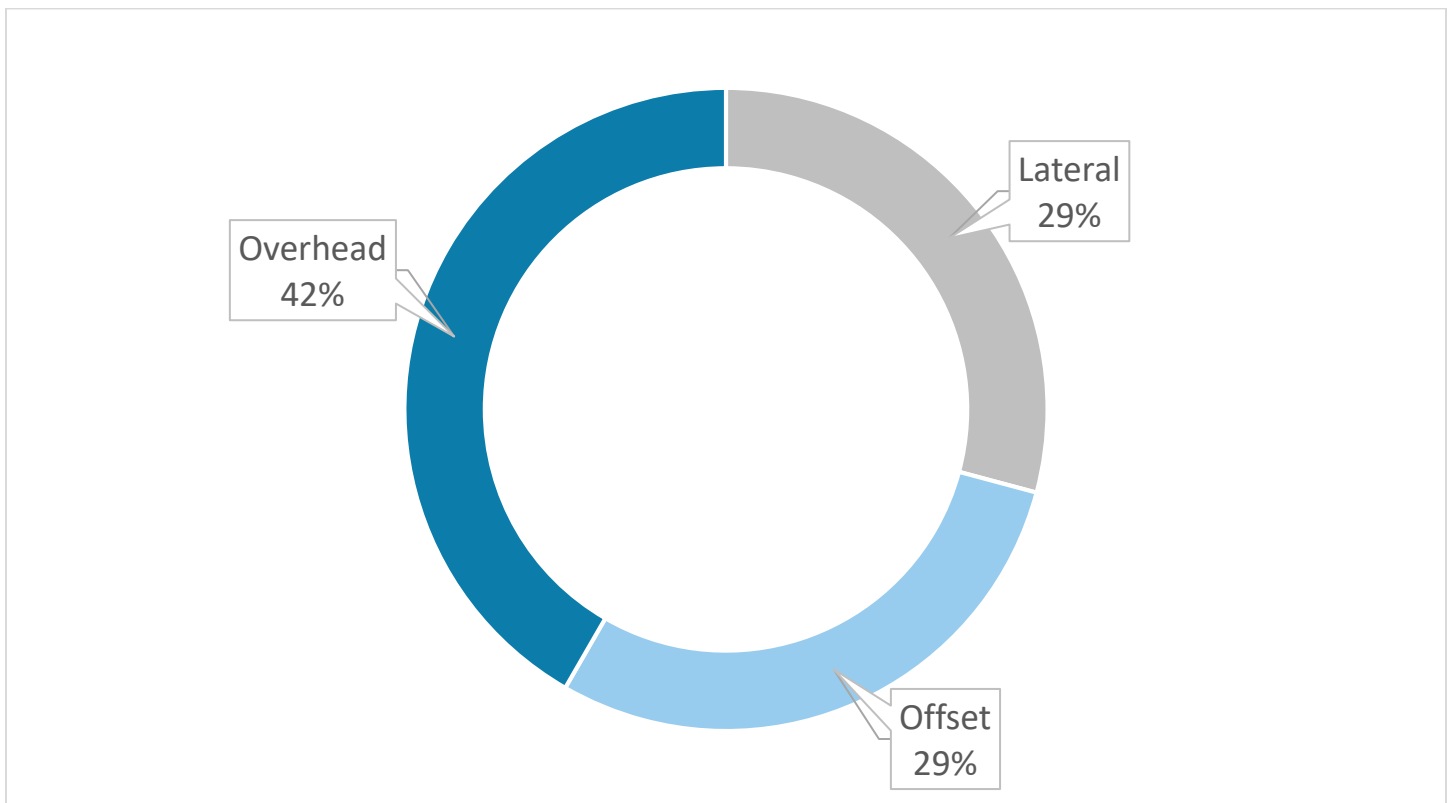


# Aircraft Angles

At the point of closest approach to the commenter's address, the angle was calculated. The angle of the aircraft was then categorized as lateral (0° to 30°), offset (30° to 60°), or overhead (60° to 90°).

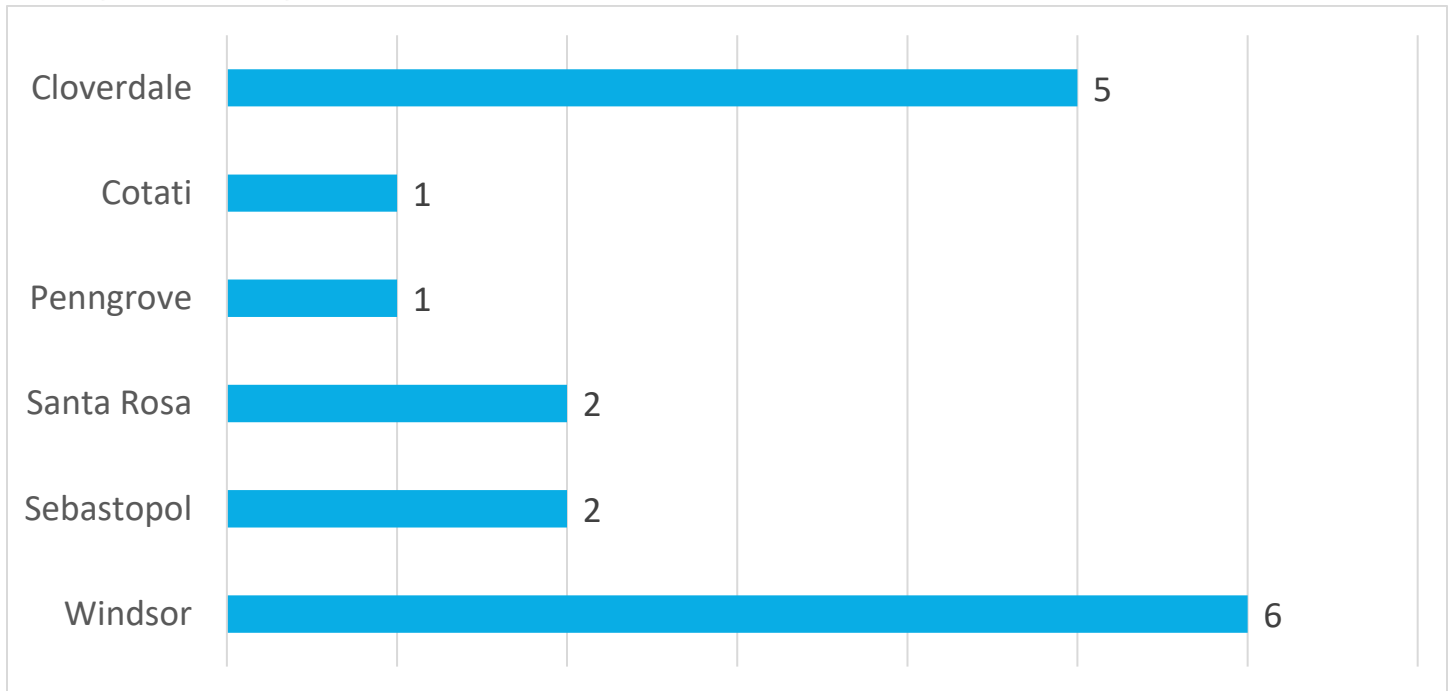


## Most Aircraft Were Overhead at the Time of Complaint





# Originating Locations of Complaints

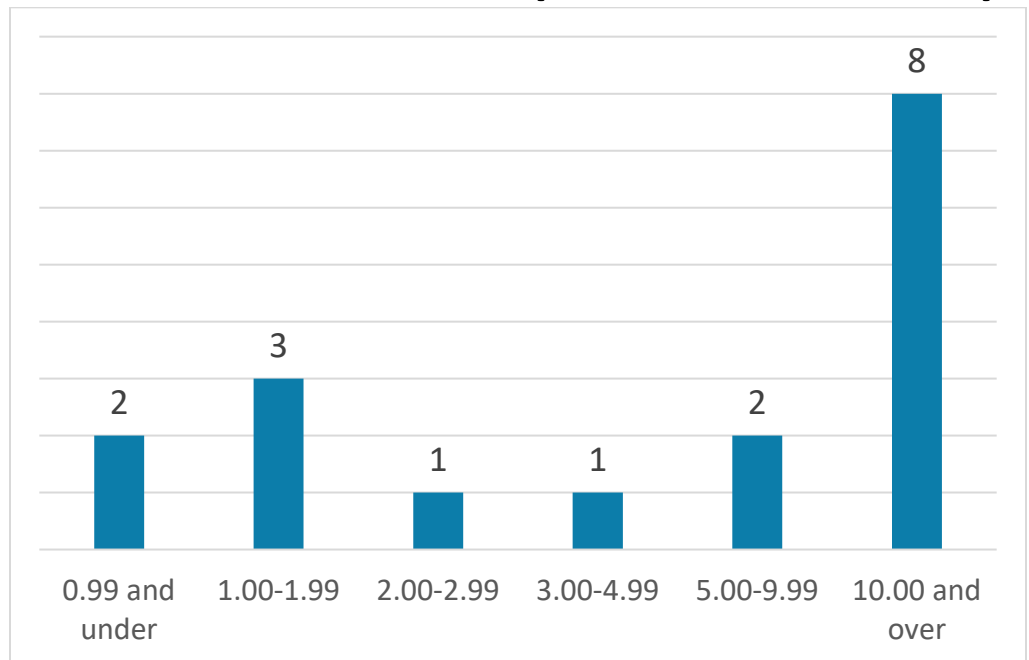


*This graph reflects the locations of unique commenters this month.*

## Why are aircraft flying over my house?

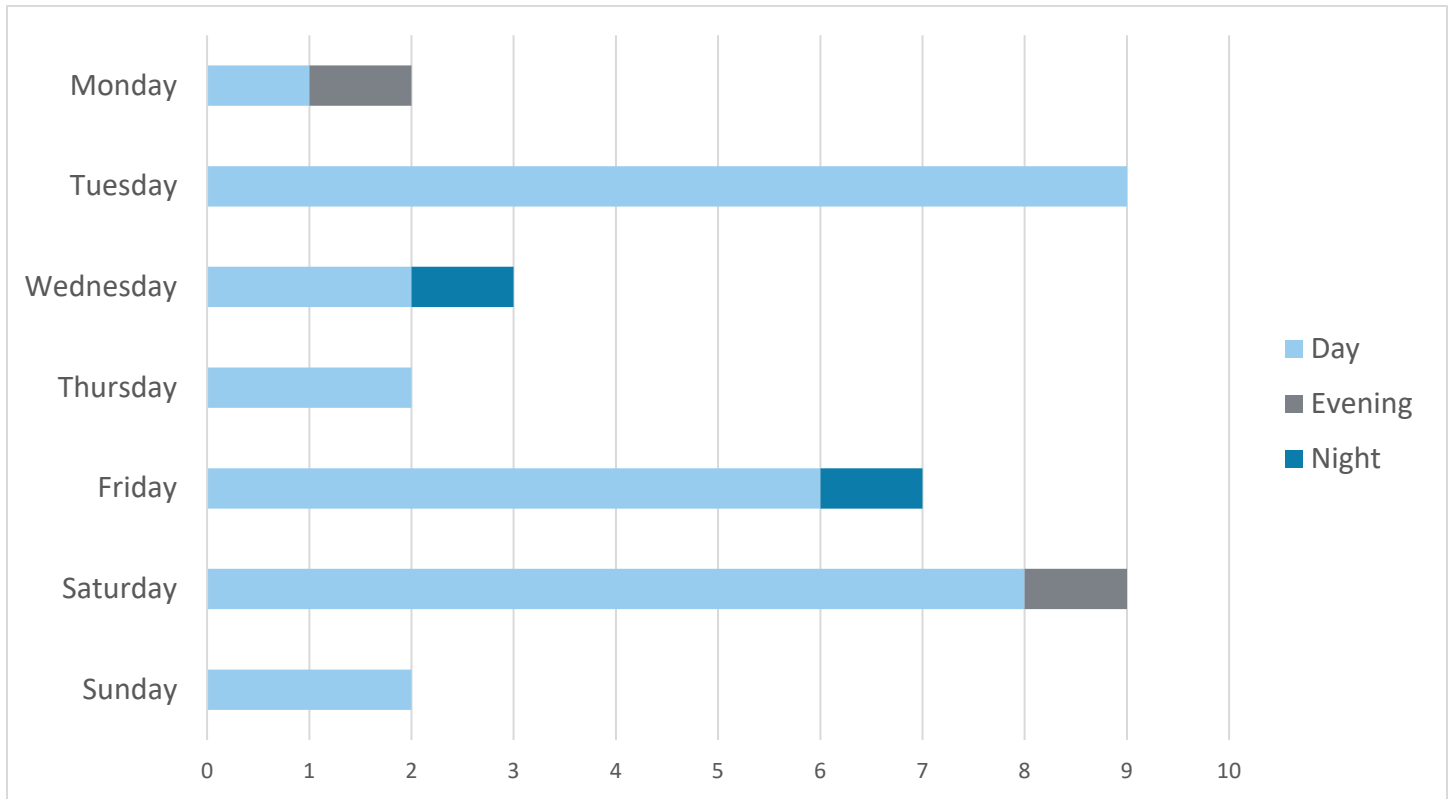
The FAA directs traffic into and out of the Airport. Flights are directed to the safest pattern depending on the amount of air traffic and prevailing winds at the time of arrival or departure. Safety is the FAA's first consideration. However, aircraft can and do fly over all parts of Sonoma County. Sonoma County does not contain any No Fly Zones.

## Distance of Originating Complaint Locations from STS (in nautical miles)



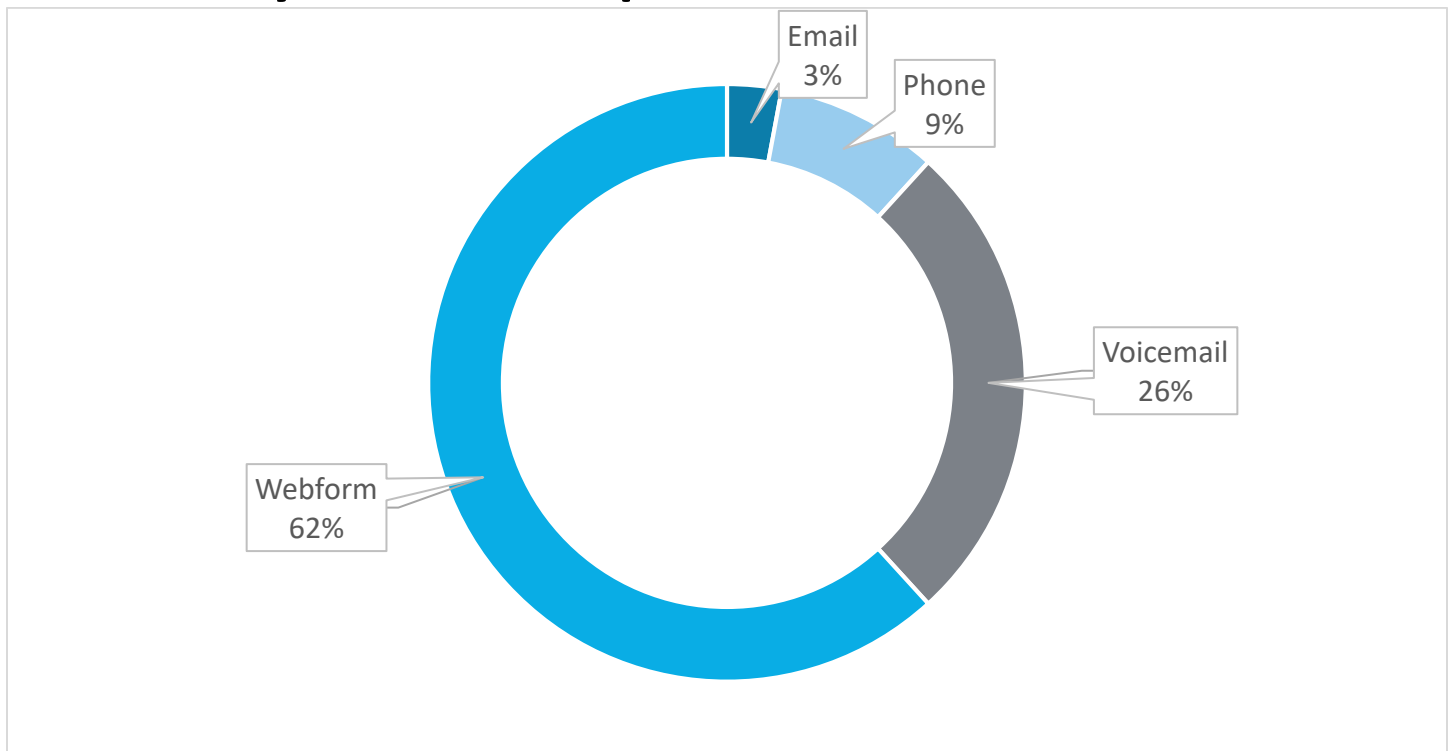
*This graph reflects the distance between the Airport and the addresses of unique complainants who made complaints this month in nautical miles (NM).*

## Days and Times Complaints Were Generated



Day = 7:00 AM to 5:59 PM, evening = 6:00 PM to 9:59 PM, night = 10:00 PM to 6:59 AM.

## Method by Which Complaints Were Received



## Year-to-Date Operations and Complaints

Month	2021 Total Operations	2021 Airline Operations	2021 Complaints	2020 Total Operations	2020 Airline Operations	2020 Complaints
January	4,851	299	34	6,244	671	28
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4,851</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>6,244</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>28</b>

## Year-to-Date Activities Identified Through Complaints\*

January	0	0	0	3	11	2	16	0

\*Complaints may be correlated to more than one Operation (arrival or departure from the Airport) or may not be correlated to an Operation or aircraft.

## Contact the Charles M. Schulz – Sonoma County Airport

**To learn more about Noise Abatement at the Airport or submit a noise complaint:**

<https://sonomacountyairport.org/business-and-community/aircraft-complaints-and-flight-traffic/>

Or call our hotline (707) 565-4515

Complaint submission tips:

Provide as much information as possible, including date, time, and, if possible, a description of the aircraft. Include the reason for your complaint.

**To submit a general comment:**

Visit <https://sonomacountyairport.org/about-sts/contact/>