

Notes regarding the June 21st Community Leaders Forum at MCAS Miramar

Meeting was hosted in the Commanding Officer's Conference Room. Both the Commanding Officer and the Executive Officer were in Washington so the meeting was led by LtCol Rick Pagel, the Station Operations Officer.

For those unfamiliar with command lines at Miramar, the Commanding Officer of the Air Station can best be thought of as the landlord. The CO is in charge of the facilities, structures and people that support the pilots and their mission. The aircraft squadrons function more as tenants and the flight operations are directed by their own command structure. The public usually does not deal with the aircraft squadrons directly. The CO of the base and his staff function as the conduit between the aircraft squadrons and the public.

We were treated with an informative briefing by Mr. Paul Tompkins, Fire Captain, MCAS Miramar Fire Department. He explained how the 22,000 acres of Miramar vegetation is managed to prevent catastrophic fires. The public should expect preventative burning (treatment) of the habitat over the summer. Small, manageable controlled burns will go along way to prevent excessive fuel buildup.

LCpl. Taylor Poulin gave a briefing on the Public Affairs program conducted by the air station. It was noted that a great deal of time is devoted to informational presentations in the county schools.

Mr. Tony Guinn presented the Operations Report for May. This report is quite detailed and defines the route usage by aircraft type as well as noise complaints. Flight operations are about 75% of predicted maximum. Interesting is the almost total lack of noise complaints. It was not unusual eight or nine years ago to record 1500 or more noise complaints in a single month. Rancho Bernardo, at one time, filed over 200 noise complaints in a single month. For the month of May, noise complaints from Rancho Bernardo were ZERO. Countywide, the total was only 19.

After the meeting was over, I did discuss with LtCol Pagel the flight tracks that affect Rancho Bernardo. We both agreed that the flight tracks, when correctly flown, do not disturb the population to a great degree. Normally, when a significant noise event does occur, it is due to aircraft flying outside of planned parameters. In almost all cases this occurs at the direction of Air Traffic Control in an effort to ensure safe separation of aircraft.

The next planned CLF meeting will be held on July 19th.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey C. Frederick