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Air Guard Special Landings Expand During Trial Period

The Oregon Air National Guard will expand use of a special landing procedure at Portland International Airport during a six-month trial period beginning May 1.

Called a continuous descent overhead approach, the tactical maneuver increases pilot safety when landing in actual combat situations, and lands aircraft more efficiently through a faster landing procedure. With the procedure, military pilots begin their descent from a higher altitude, reduce power and then circle close to the ends of the runways while landing. Oregon Air National Guard has conducted the special landings at PDX since October 2009.

During the trial period, community members are invited to share any observations with the Port of Portland's Noise Management Office at 503.460.4100 from Oregon, 800.938.6647 from Washington, or pdxnoise@portofportland.com. More information on the trial project is also available from the noise management office.

The PDX Citizen Noise Advisory Committee recommended allowing the trial project during its March meeting. The noise management office supports the test as it allows the Oregon Air National Guard to perform important training and reduces aircraft time in the air, benefitting community noise and air quality. The advisory committee, noise management team, and the Oregon Air National Guard will evaluate the trial program and any findings at the end of the six-month period before considering possible permanent adoption of procedures with the Federal Aviation Administration Air Traffic Control at PDX.

The special landing procedures will expand by allowing participation by visiting military aircraft training with Oregon Air National Guard; use of both the east and west ends of both primary runways, rather than just the east ends; participation by up to four aircraft simultaneously, rather than just two; and operations from 9 a.m. to sunset daily, rather than 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekends.

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