

DOCKETED

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Project Title:	Palen Solar Power Project - Compliance
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11/1/2013

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

2013-110/9-5
1109473, 1108698

To: FAA (Director of Western Terminal/Enroute Operations)

Info: FAA (AFS-230, AFS-200, AVP-1, AVP-200), A4A, ALPA, AOPA, APA, ASAP, ATSAP, ATSG, CAPA, EAA, IAM, ICASS, IPA, NAFI, NATCA, NBAA, NTSB, RAA, SWAPA, USAPA

From: Linda J. Connell, Director
NASA Aviation Safety Reporting System

Re: Environmental Visual Flight Hazard

We recently received an ASRS report describing a safety concern which may involve your area of operational responsibility. We do not have sufficient details to assess either the factual accuracy or possible gravity of the report. It is our policy to relay the reported information to the appropriate authority for evaluation and any necessary follow-up. We feel you should be aware of the enclosed deidentified report.

To properly assess the usefulness of our alert message service, we would appreciate it if you would take the time to give us your feedback on the value of the information that we have provided. Please contact Dennis Doyle at (408) 541-2831 or email at dennis.j.doyle@nasa.gov.



Aviation Safety Reporting System
P.O. Box 189 | Moffett Field, CA | 94035-0189



ACN: 1109473

Time

Date: 201308

Local Time Of Day: 1201-1800

Place

Locale Reference.Airport: BVU.Airport

State Reference: NV

Altitude.MSL.Single Value: 6000

Environment

Flight Conditions: VMC

Aircraft 1

ATC / Advisory.Center: ZLA

Make Model Name: Small Transport

Person 1

Function.Flight Crew: Pilot Flying

ASRS Report Number: 1109473

Events

Anomaly.Inflight Event / Encounter: Other / Unknown

Detector.Person: Flight Crew

Result.General: None Reported / Taken

Narrative 1

During the initial climb after a VFR departure from BVU (Boulder City airport) via GPS to the DAG VOR on an approximately heading of 225 the Co-pilot and I were distracted and momentarily blinded by the sun reflecting off of mirrors at the solar power plant facility located near the CA-NV border near the town of Primm. This solar power plant which I believe is still under construction consists of three massive circular arrays of thousands of mirrors oriented inward toward a central tower. As soon as we cleared the mountains southwest of BVU from 6,000 to 12,000 FT MSL still climbing there were three very bright reflections (one from each solar array) of the sun into the pilots and copilots eyes. The reflection from the northernmost array was the brightest and the largest and grew in size as we flew closer to the facility.

The flight path of our aircraft passed overhead of this facility. At its brightest neither the pilot nor co-pilot could look in that direction due to the intense brightness. From the pilot's seat of my aircraft the brightness was like looking into the sun and it filled about 1/3 of the co-pilots front windshield. In my opinion the reflection from these mirrors was a hazard to flight because for a brief time I could not scan the sky in that direction to look for other aircraft.

Synopsis

A flight crew experienced a very bright, intense light from three solar complexes which interfered with their ability to scan for traffic while climbing westbound between 6,000 and 12,000 feet along J60/V12 southwest of NATEE Intersection.

ACN: 1108698

Time

Date: 201308

Local Time Of Day: 1201-1800

Place

Locale Reference.ATC Facility: ZLA.ARTCC

State Reference: CA

Altitude.MSL.Single Value: 36000

Aircraft 1

ATC / Advisory.Center: ZLA

Make Model Name: Commercial Fixed Wing

Person 1

Function.Air Traffic Control: Enroute

ASRS Report Number: 1108698

Events

Anomaly.ATC Issue: All Types

Anomaly.Inflight Event / Encounter: Other / Unknown

Detector.Person: Flight Crew

Result.General: Physical Injury / Incapacitation

Narrative 1

There is a solar farm south of Las Vegas which is in Sector 6 and Sector 37's airspace. Daily, during the late morning and early afternoon hours we get complaints from pilots of aircraft flying from the northeast to the southwest about the brightness of this solar farm. They usually ask us what it is because they don't know. On this particular morning, an air carrier complained about the brightness and reiterated that it was "nearly blinding." I reported this to Management and was told that they were going to do nothing about it. They then suggested that I tell the pilot to report it through the safety reporting system that they have and to report it myself. I have no idea what can be done about this situation, but being a passenger on an aircraft that flew through this airspace and saw it for myself, I would say that something needs to be done. It is extremely bright and distracting.

Synopsis

ZLA Controller relayed concerns expressed by flight crews overflying a solar farm south of LAS. Flight crews have noted the facility causes nearly blinding reflection.