Practice Areas in the Los Angeles Basin

- **The Los Angeles TERMINAL CHART includes 13 Flight Training areas indicated by a magenta CAUTION BLOCK containing the area title, altitude, and frequency.**

- **The boundaries of these areas are not charted. However, SCAUWG has drawn candidate or general guideline boundaries in this presentation. These boundaries are shown in many FAAST seminars.**

- **These data are provided solely as a guide for pilots flying in the Los Angeles Basin. They do not represent fixed boundaries or other regulatory airspace designated or defined by the FAA.**

The "legal stuff" … There are 13 areas in the Los Angeles Basin used for practice by students as well as pilots working on enhanced ratings – and in at least three cases, aerobatic training. This presentation was developed by Al German, CFI (retired), while working with Orange County Flight Center. The reference lines that designate the practice areas are general in nature and represent discussions by Mr. German with flight schools in each of the areas designated. This data is provided solely as a guide for pilots flying in the Los Angeles Basin and in no way, represents fixed boundaries or other regulatory airspace designated by the FAA. It is made available for use by pilots by Mr. German and the Southern California Airspace Users Working Group.

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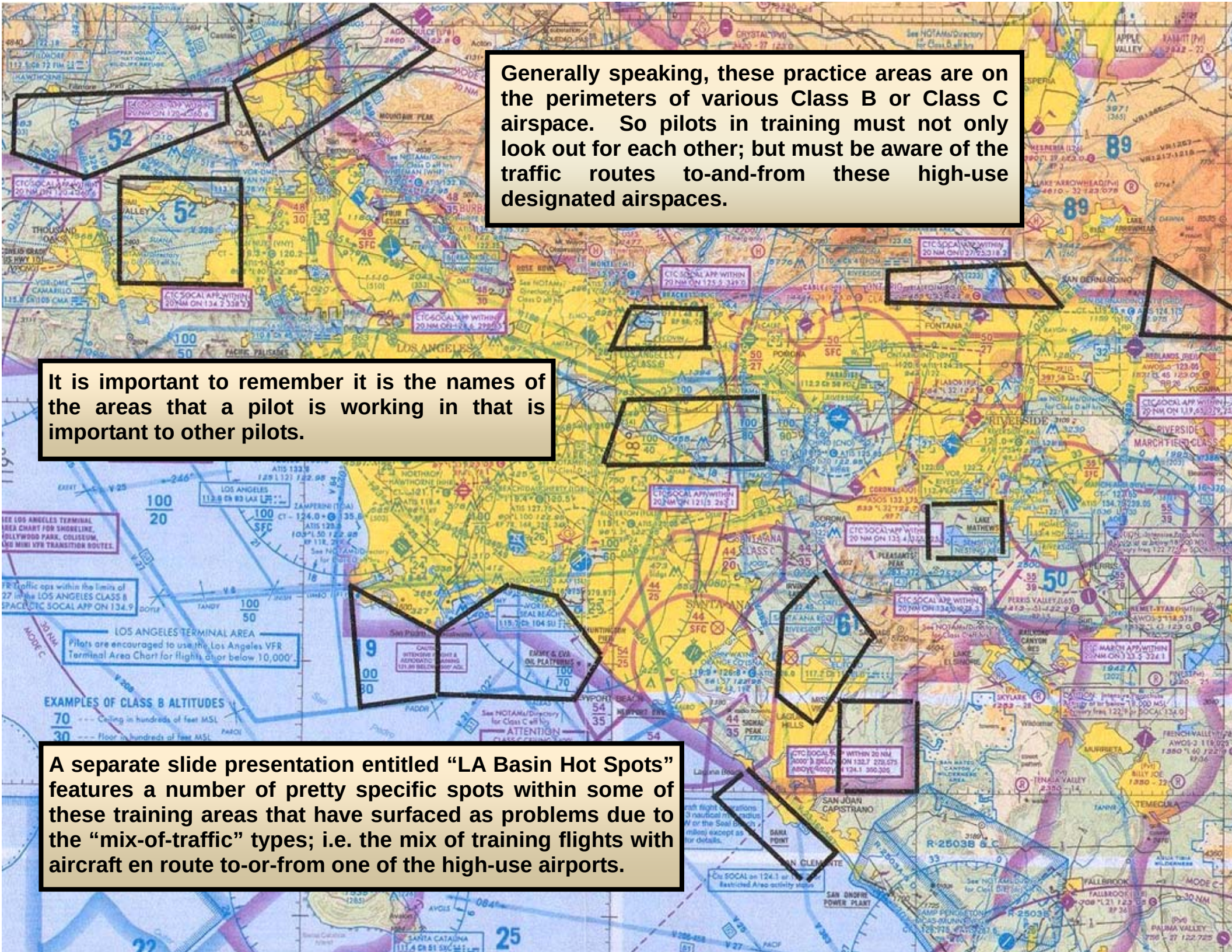

Generally speaking, these practice areas are on the perimeters of various Class B or Class C airspace. So pilots in training must not only look out for each other; but must be aware of the traffic routes to-and-from these high-use designated airspaces.
It is important to remember it is the names of the areas that a pilot is working in that is important to other pilots.
A separate slide presentation entitled “LA Basin Hot Spots” features a number of pretty specific spots within some of these training areas that have surfaced as problems due to the “mix-of-traffic” types; i.e. the mix of training flights with aircraft en route to-or-from one of the high-use airports.
LOS ANGELES TERMINAL AREA
Pilots are encouraged to use the Los Angeles VFR Terminal Area Chart for flights at or below 10,000'
EXAMPLES OF CLASS B ALTITUDES
70 --- Ceiling in hundreds of feet MSL
30 --- Floor in hundreds of feet MSL
LOS ANGELES
SANTA ANA
SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO
FONTANA
RIVERSIDE
TEMECULA
MURRIETA
R-2503B
R-2503
SAN ONOFRE POWER PLANT
SANTA CATALINA

INTENSIVE FLIGHT TRAINING AREAS

CAUTION
INTENSIVE FLIGHT TRAINING
122.775 BELOW 4500'
123.025 AT OR BELOW 2000'
SIMI VALLEY

	NAME	CEILING	FREQ
1	SANTA PAULA	5500	122.775
2	SIMI VALLEY	4500	122.775
		AT OR BELOW 2000	123.025
3	SANTA CLARITA	4500	122.775
		AT OR BELOW 2000	123.025
4	PALOS VERDES	4500	121.95
		AT OR BELOW 2000	122.85
5	LONG BEACH	4500	121.95
		AT OR BELOW 2000	122.85
6	SANTA FE	4500	123.3
		AT OR BELOW 2000	123.025
7	LA HABRA	4000	123.3
		AT OR BELOW 2000	123.025
8	REDLANDS	7500	123.3
9	CAJON PASS	4500	123.3
		AT OR BELOW 2000	123.025
10	JOHN WAYNE	4500	123.5
11	EL TORO	4500	123.5
		AT OR BELOW 2000	122.85
12	BLOCKHOUSE	6000	123.5
13	LAKE MATHEWS	4500	123.5

To enhance safety in the vicinity of intensive flight training, frequencies are listed for air-to-air communications with other pilots using or transitioning the area.

The following guidelines are encouraged when utilizing these areas:

The flight does not require communications with or a clearance from Air Traffic Control.

All flights are to be conducted under visual flight rules and in compliance with FAR 91.155.

Pilots are encouraged to have a current Los Angeles Terminal Area Chart in the aircraft.

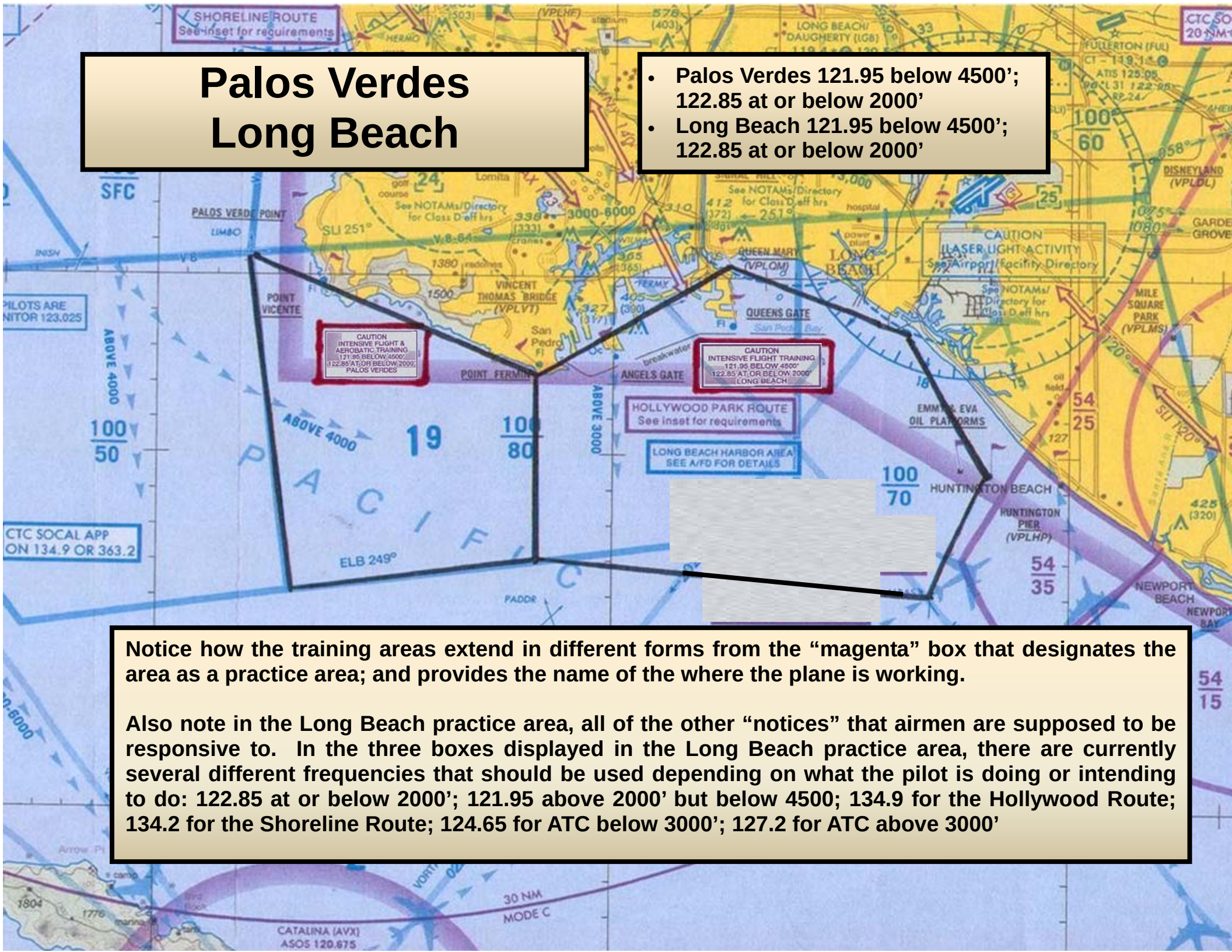
Use of anticollision lights, aircraft position/navigation lights and landing lights is recommended.

Use of indicated VFR checkpoints is helpful to provide location information between pilots using these areas.

The frequencies for each of the practice areas are listed to the left of the lower left corner of the Los Angeles Terminal Area Chart.

These frequencies are for communication among pilots training in these areas; and should be monitored by pilots flying through the airspace.

However, not all pilots are aware of the extent of these practice areas; and equally important, many en route pilots transiting these practice areas are working with ATC and my not have time or think to monitor VFR practice area frequencies.



Palos Verdes
Long Beach

- **Palos Verdes 121.95 below 4500'; 122.85 at or below 2000'**
- **Long Beach 121.95 below 4500'; 122.85 at or below 2000'**

Notice how the training areas extend in different forms from the "magenta" box that designates the area as a practice area; and provides the name of the where the plane is working.

Also note in the Long Beach practice area, all of the other "notices" that airmen are supposed to be responsive to. In the three boxes displayed in the Long Beach practice area, there are currently several different frequencies that should be used depending on what the pilot is doing or intending to do: 122.85 at or below 2000'; 121.95 above 2000' but below 4500; 134.9 for the Hollywood Route; 134.2 for the Shoreline Route; 124.65 for ATC below 3000'; 127.2 for ATC above 3000'

John Wayne
El Toro
Blockhouse
Lake Mathews

- John Wayne 123.5 below 4500’
- El Toro 123.5 below 4500’; 122.85 at or below 2000’
- Blockhouse 123.5 below 6000’
- Lake Mathews 123.5 below 4500’

Lake Mathews is a densely populated training area because it is comparatively small, but the only designated practice area close to Corona and Chino; and convenient to Riverside and Flabob. It is trapped to the east by Class C airspace; to the south by mountains; and to the west and north by both Class D and Class B airspace. With the various airspace constrictions, VFR traffic frequently transits the borders of this practice area.

El Toro lies just to the east of the John Wayne Orange County airport. While part of this airspace is covered by the Class C airspace, the least restrictive VFR approaches to Orange County are right through the middle of this airspace … from the north, the east, and the south. Since the Orange County Class C airspace border cuts through the middle of this practice area, inbound pilots are often preoccupied with contacting SOCAL approach rather than looking for student or practicing pilots.

The Blockhouse practice area has higher terrain, which forces training activities into higher altitudes. More important, it’s contains a non-designated aerobatic training area.

Michael Church of Sunrise, in replying to the question, “Does Sunrise have a local aerobatics area,” replies << Yes we do, inland from San Juan Capistrano -- in constant aerobatic use since 1984. It is free of all airspace restrictions, subject only to the 3 mile visibility and 1500' AGL rules. The area is large enough to accommodate 4 planes at a time.

The John Wayne practice area is NOT the area just east of the airport – that’s El Toro practice area. John Wayne practice area is the one off the coast that stretches from about the Newport Beach harbor area down to San Clemente. John Wayne practice area often has traffic traversing up-and-down the coastline; channeled there by the Camp Pendleton restricted airspace to its Southeast and the John Wayne Class C airspace ahead.

Santa Fe
La Habra

- Santa Fee 123.3 below 4500’; 123.025 at or below 2000’
- La Habra 123.3 below 4000; 123.025 at or below 2000’ (west portion tops at base of Class B airspace)

Santa Fe dam practice area serves El Monte and Bracket fields primarily; but it has raising terrain under it and is squeezed between the mountains to the north and the LAX Class B airspace to the south – making it a busy transit area for en route VFR traffic working its way across the LA Basis and into the San Fernando Valley area or headed from the north to the Riverside area or out through the Banning Pass area.

The La Habra practice area, serving Fullerton and Bracket, is similarly “endowed”. It has rising terrain below it … and is capped on top by the base of the LAX Class B airspace.

Thus traffic from the southern coastal areas seeking to transit to the north are often flying through this airspace under the Class B airspace while having to clear the 1500’ mountains below by 1000’.

Cajon Pass
Redlands

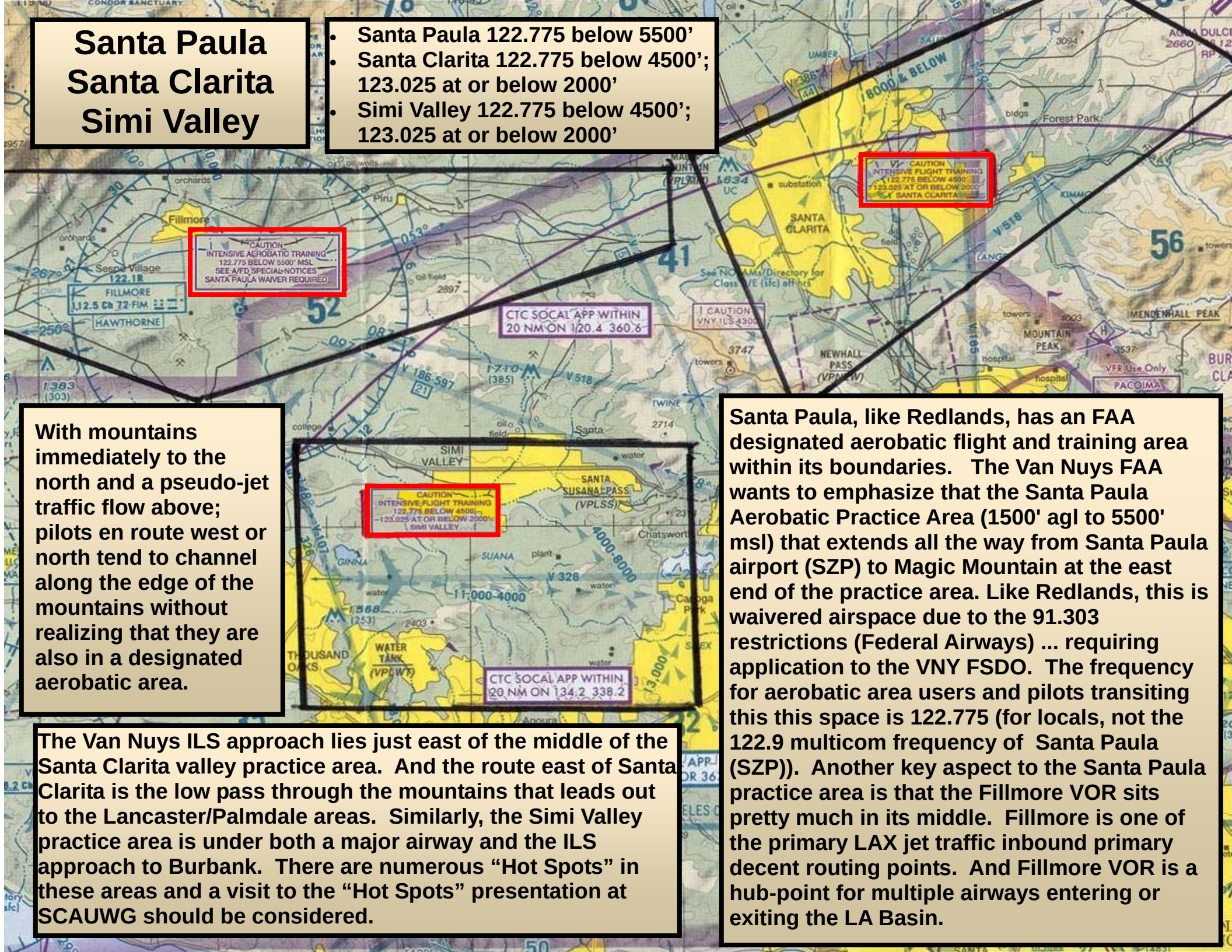
- Cajon Pass 123.3 below 4500’; 123.025 at or below 2000’
- Redlands 123.3 below 7500’

Redlands is unique because, in addition to student training and very rapidly rising terrain – Redlands has an FAA designated aerobatic training area within its boundaries that extends from 1500’ agl up to and including 7500’ msl. This aerobatic airspace is for waiver holders only; but it still requires pilots to be alert in the area. And as with the Cajon Pass, pilots coming from Las Vegas down the airway or departing out of Big Bear airport and headed for the LA Basin are often commencing their descents into the basin – potentially right in the middle of where pilots are flying aerobatics. The frequency for communicating in this area is NOT the Redlands airport (REI) multicom frequency 123.05.

The Cajon Pass practice area has multiple challenged. It too is squeezed between high mountains on the north and airspace restrictions to the south; in this case, Ontario’s Class C airspace. VFR Traffic flying east that begin north of the LAX Class B airspace are further channeled into an even narrower chute; which also happens to be the Cajon Pass practice area. And for many VFR pilots … particularly those based in the Corona, Chino, Riverside and San Bernardino areas … the Cajon Pass is the lowest area to cross the mountains if intending to go to Las Vegas and/or Palmdale/ Lancaster. Thus traffic at the east end of the practice area is varied and often preoccupied with navigation issues rather than looking for practicing pilots.

Santa Paula
Santa Clarita
Simi Valley

- Santa Paula 122.775 below 5500’
- Santa Clarita 122.775 below 4500’; 123.025 at or below 2000’
- Simi Valley 122.775 below 4500’; 123.025 at or below 2000’



With mountains immediately to the north and a pseudo-jet traffic flow above; pilots en route west or north tend to channel along the edge of the mountains without realizing that they are also in a designated aerobatic area.

Santa Paula, like Redlands, has an FAA designated aerobatic flight and training area within its boundaries. The Van Nuys FAA wants to emphasize that the Santa Paula Aerobatic Practice Area (1500' agl to 5500' msl) that extends all the way from Santa Paula airport (SZP) to Magic Mountain at the east end of the practice area. Like Redlands, this is waivered airspace due to the 91.303 restrictions (Federal Airways) ... requiring application to the VNY FSDO. The frequency for aerobatic area users and pilots transiting this this space is 122.775 (for locals, not the 122.9 multicom frequency of Santa Paula (SZP)). Another key aspect to the Santa Paula practice area is that the Fillmore VOR sits pretty much in its middle. Fillmore is one of the primary LAX jet traffic inbound primary decent routing points. And Fillmore VOR is a hub-point for multiple airways entering or exiting the LA Basin.

The Van Nuys ILS approach lies just east of the middle of the Santa Clarita valley practice area. And the route east of Santa Clarita is the low pass through the mountains that leads out to the Lancaster/Palmdale areas. Similarly, the Simi Valley practice area is under both a major airway and the ILS approach to Burbank. There are numerous “Hot Spots” in these areas and a visit to the “Hot Spots” presentation at SCAUWG should be considered.


Thank You!
Questions?
This presentation
is available at
http://www.scauwg.org