



Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (FAR) Part 150 Noise Compatibility Study Update

Study Input Committee Summary Notes
March 6, 2014 1:30 p.m. Airfield Maintenance Facility

<i>NAME</i>	<i>AFFILIATION</i>	<i>PRESENT</i> ✓
Staff and Consultants		
John Parrott	ANC	✓
John Johansen	ANC	✓
Scott Lytle	ANC	✓
Katie Gage	ANC	✓
Teri Lindseth	ANC	✓
Mike Lee	ANC	✓
Ryk Dunkelberg	Barnard Dunkelberg & Company (Mead & Hunt)	✓
Kate Andrus	Barnard Dunkelberg & Company (Mead & Hunt)	✓
Rachel Jones	Barnard Dunkelberg & Company (Mead & Hunt)	✓
Christian Valdes	Landrum and Brown	✓
Eva Welch	AECOM	✓
 Committee Members		
Breck Tostevin	Turnagain Community Council	✓
Cathy Hammond	Citizen Representative	✓
Mary Lee	Citizen Representative	✓
Jim Seeley	LHD Pilot Association	✓
Thede Tobish	MOA	✓
Bob Auth	Sand Lake Community	✓
 Other		
Cathy Gleason		✓

Summary Notes

Mr. Dunkelberg began the eighth meeting of the Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Part 150 Noise Compatibility Study Update Input Committee by presenting the meeting agenda as follows:

- ▶ **Introduction**
- ▶ **Presentation and Discussion of Potential Land Use, Administrative and Facility Options for Part 150 Study Update**

Introduction

Mr. Dunkelberg welcomed the committee back and gave a brief overview of the agenda for this meeting. He then identified the next steps for the Part 150 Study Update process. This meeting presented a list of proposed land use, administrative and facility options.

Presentation of Land Use Options

The Part 150 Team presented the proposed list of land use, administrative, and facility options. These options included: eight (8) land use options, seven (7) administrative options, and one (1) facilities option. Land use options are either remedial or preventive in nature, and are generally within the jurisdiction of local and state governments. Administrative options are generally within the jurisdiction of the Airport.

Next Steps

Mr. Dunkelberg explained the next steps, which include further refining the land use alternatives, as necessary, and starting to combine and narrow noise abatement and land use alternatives into the finalized set of Noise Compatibility Program recommendations. The next Study Input Committee Meeting will likely be in spring 2014, and it will include the draft Noise Exposure Map for the future case, as well as a presentation of proposed recommended land use, administrative, and facility alternatives.

The following questions and comments occurred during the meeting:

Questions and Comments on Land Use Options

Comment: In addition to addressing off-airport land uses impacted by noise from the airport, we should also be considering ways in which on-airport land could be used in ways that help protect off-airport uses from noise impacts.

Answer: Off-airport land uses are the focus of this Part 150 Study. Non-compatible uses are by definition off-airport, and are created by on-airport land uses. It is not possible to have a non-



compatible use that is on the airport property; therefore, for this Study, we are examining compatibility only for land uses that are off of the airport.

Question: If a land use within the noise contours that is considered compatible is changed to a non-compatible use, and is remodeled to fit the needs of the new use, how would the acquisition of a building permit work in such a situation?

Answer: At the point of the remodel, a building permit would be acquired. Under *Land Use Option 6: Building Code Requirements – Sound Attenuation Required for New Development*, the remodeling for a new non-compatible use would need to receive approval for a building permit, at which point the structure would have to meet the requirements for sound attenuation of new structures under the amended building code, contingent upon approval for the permit.

Question: As a reminder, what does the acronym ‘RNP’ refer to?

Answer: ‘RNP’ stands for Required Navigation Performance, which refers to on-board electronic navigation performance monitoring and alerting systems. These systems would help to further guide aircraft during their approach and take-off along a very specific flight track.

Question: Under *Land Use Option 2: Acquisition of Non-Compatible Land Uses or Undeveloped Land Zoned for Residential Use*, could this acquisition by the Airport also be involuntary?

Answer: That is dependent upon local laws and regulations. The Airport does have the ability to acquire land uses, but only for airport use. If the land is not to be used for airport use, the Airport must have a conversion plan in which to divest/resell the land in a manner that will cause the use to become compatible, such as requiring the granting of an aviation easement, or sound insulation, as contingencies upon resale.

Question: What is land banking? Please explain how *Land Use Option 2: Acquisition of Non-Compatible Land Uses or Undeveloped Land Zoned for Residential Use* does or does not relate to land banking (a measure recommended in the previous Part 150 Study).

Answer: Land banking was a recommended measure in the previous Part 150 Study, and was defined as “public acquisition of noise impacted property for future public use.” The term land banking is used as reference to the previous Part 150 measure, but was changed in this Part 150 to more accurately depict what actually happens when land is acquired as a result of a Part 150 Study. *Land Use Option 2: Acquisition of Non-Compatible Land Uses or Undeveloped Land Zoned for Residential Use*, would NOT constitute land banking, but is better expressed as land



‘holding’ because the Airport would resell/divest the land rather than hold it indefinitely. The land would also not necessarily be converted to public use, but could be kept as a residential use, albeit made into a compatible residential use through the acquisition of an easement or requiring sound insulation. This could be done to preserve the integrity of existing neighborhoods by counteracting a “checkerboard” effect within neighborhoods that might occur if acquired land uses were simply held and kept as vacant. For any property that it acquires, if the property cannot be used for aviation purposes, the Airport develops a conversion plan for what actions to take with the land, and works with local land use authorities to make these decisions.

Question: Why is *Land Use Option 4: Voluntary Sales Assistance (Assurance Program)* not available for all properties within the 65 DNL noise contour, including those that have already been sound-insulated? What if the seller of a home near the Airport that has been insulated is still not able to sell for fair market value due to the potential stigma of being near an Airport?

Answer: Insulating a home for sound is a process that typically costs tens of thousands of dollars. A home that has been insulated would therefore have an increased value based on the improvements that were done during the insulation process. The home can be expected to receive fair market value because the sound insulation has mitigated the deficiency the house would otherwise have by being located near an airport. Sales assistance is only available for homes that have NOT been insulated.

In addition, the FAA funding available for sound insulation cannot be used to mitigate a sound issue that has already been mitigated through insulation of the structure, i.e., the funding cannot be used to pay for sound insulation twice, because an insulated home is considered a compatible land use.

The only exception would be if a home is determined to be within a higher noise contour than it was when it got insulated, based on changes in the designated noise contours. In such a case, the home could potentially receive additional insulation or sales assistance due to the additional noise levels experienced.

Question: Is there a limit on the amount of sales assistance that can be received on a home?

Answer: There is not a limit per se; however, if the cost of sales assistance is high enough, the Airport could simply purchase the property outright through their land acquisition program.

Question: Could you elaborate on the 45-dB interior noise level requirement?

Answer: The Airport Improvement Program (AIP) Handbook interprets Part 150 regulations to require that in order to be eligible for FAA funding for noise insulation, the interior noise level of structures must be measured at 45 dB or greater.



Question: How has flight tracking at the Airport worked in the past?

Answer: In the past, the Airport has had flight tracking and monitoring systems in place. The flight tracking proved to be more useful to the needs of the Airport and stakeholders than did the noise monitoring. The FAA collects flight tracking information using radar tracking devices on aircraft. Airport flight tracking systems acquire this FAA data and link it to the flight number and aircraft type. The end result is a path showing the flight path of the aircraft, along with date, time, aircraft type, and other information.

Question: Does the Airport currently have historical noise monitoring information?

Answer: No. The noise monitors in place are collecting data, but are not currently transmitting the data they receive. They can only hold 7 days' worth of data at a time, so the most information that the Airport would have is from the previous 7 days because the data is not currently being downloaded from the monitors.

Question: What would be the cost of re-instituting the noise monitoring system? Why would the Airport pay to duplicate information the FAA already collects?

Answer: An updated quote would need to be done to find out how much it would cost. The last time it was investigated, it cost around \$100,000 to get the system updated and fully operational. Through its previous experience operating a noise monitoring system, the Airport found that the monitoring did not help to address the noise complaints received, and in fact, tended to create arguments. Even though the monitoring system might report that a noise recipient filing a complaint was outside of the 65 DNL contour, for example, the actual noise level attributed by the monitoring system does not change the fact that the person is upset and affected by the noise they are experiencing. The actual noise level numbers were irrelevant for solving noise issues with upset citizens, and did not help the Airport to better handle noise complaints. However, the Airport has found the flight tracking system to be effective in helping identify noise issues, so this might be a more cost effective way to keep the most beneficial elements of the previous system.

Question: Please review the relationship of ground noise to flight tracking/noise monitoring.

Answer: Ground noise is not considered or measured in flight tracking systems. Ground noise is also not specifically gathered in noise monitoring systems. A noise monitor will not transmit noise data it receives unless it is associated with the occurrence of an aircraft flyover. Essentially, ground noise is filtered out of the noise monitoring, as is general ambient noise. A ground-run up enclosure will do a lot to mitigate ground run-up noise.

Question: At what point will the Part 150 Team assist with facilitation of discussions between Eagle River residents and the FAA?



Answer: Interested Eagle River representatives may contact persons from the Air Traffic Control Tower directly to discuss remaining concerns about noise that they may have.

Comment: Some of the land use, administrative, and facility options presented in this working paper chapter are good, especially the administrative options. However, the discussion of the options needs additional detail and to go beyond the status quo to investigate larger-scale changes that can be made. For example, the pilot education report card needs additional description because it is unclear what is meant by 'report card.' Incentive programs that would aid in the success of voluntary Fly Quiet measures should also be considered in this Study.

Answer: Flight Quiet programs can take time to develop, typically one to two years, and the details of the program would be developed subsequent to this Part 150 Study, should Fly Quiet measures be recommended. It is important to be careful when developing Fly Quiet measures such as report cards and incentive programs that all pilots/airlines are treated equally in the process so as not to violate Part 150 regulation by being unjustly discriminatory. The details are further flushed out once the measure is approved to ensure that it is flexible with future conditions.

Question: How will the final recommendations of the Part 150 Study be chosen?

Answer: The main considerations in deciding which alternatives will be recommended include cost and whether the alternatives achieve the goal of reducing the number of people affected by noise. The Part 150 Team will work with the Airport to choose the final recommendations, while considering the input received from this Study Input Committee.

Comment: Many of the land use recommendations that involve the Municipality of Anchorage and the West Anchorage District Plan have been very controversial in the past and may experience difficulty in acceptance and implementation due to unpopularity.

Answer: There is certainly a highly political element to these alternatives that needs to be taken into account and considered. The Part 150 Study can make recommendations based on noise elements, but the implementation decisions still lie within the governing authority.

Comment: A traffic pattern and preferential runway use system at Lake Hood Seaplane Base (LHD) is needed.



Answer: LHD currently has a voluntary preferential runway use plan in place, and it is recommended to be used whenever conditions allow. For the most part, pilots at LHD abide by this system. A Fly Quiet Program could help increase awareness of this preferential runway use system, but in general the Tower tells pilots to follow the plan when able.

Question: Regarding the Residential Sound Insulation Program (RSIP) requirement that housing must have been constructed prior to October 1, 1998 to be eligible for insulation, what can be done if the noise issue arose after that date, i.e., after the house was built?

Answer: If the house was built after October 1998, and was not within a published Noise Exposure Map 65 DNL contour at the time of construction, at some point in the future, if this home is within a 65 DNL and greater contour, then it could be eligible for insulation.

Question: Please describe *Land Use Option 8: Zoning Code Changes/Noise Overlay Zone* in greater detail, and the ramifications it might have. The noise overlay zone proved extremely controversial when considered in the past.

Answer: A noise overlay zone would contain as many or as few requirements as the local land use authority would give it. Noise overlay zones are different at each airport that has such zones, depending upon the needs of stakeholders and the local political climate. An overlay zone would be over top of (additional to) existing standard zoning, and would not change the underlying districts or codes, but would modify them and/or add additional requirements in the areas where the overlay districts occur. Examples of the types of requirements included in noise overlay zones include: height and obstruction restrictions for structures, trees, roads, etc.; restrictions on the development of new non-compatible uses; or sound insulation or special building code requirements.

Although the noise overlay zone proved extremely unpopular when it was previously considered in the West Anchorage District Plan, any noise overlay zone that might be created in the future may not necessarily be extremely confining or restrictive depending upon what is actually included in the overlay zoning code.

Question: Please elaborate on the *Land Use Option 5: Disclosure Statements/Buyer Notification*.

Answer: Many states have buyer disclosure requirements, but some do not allow local municipalities to develop their own specified disclosure statements. The State of Alaska currently has a residential disclosure form in which the seller is required to acknowledge any known aircraft noise experienced on the property. However, there is not currently a requirement that the buyer acknowledge that the property may be subject to airport noise either for the State of Alaska or for the Municipality of Anchorage. Additionally, the plats for some newer developments to the south of the Airport did disclose that the properties could be subject to airport noise, but disclosure of noise levels on plats is not a borough- or state-wide requirement at the present time.



Question: I have been dissatisfied with the lack of direct action resulting from noise complaints I have made in the past.

Answer: The Airport previously utilized a voicemail recording system for receiving of noise complaints, but has since moved to an electronic submittal of noise complaints online, which is available on the Airport website in the same location as submittal of all other types of complaints about the Airport. The current system is a great improvement over the former because it is much easier to keep track of complaints and ensure that a response is given, and direct the complaints to the Airport staff member having the most relevant knowledge on the specific issue. Persons submitting complaints may choose on the form how they would like to be contacted by the Airport in response (email, phone, etc.). Overall, the new complaint system aids functionality of staff and response to complaints to avoid the accidental deletion or overlooking of a complaint. Combining of noise complaints with all other complaints in a single integrated electronic system has also streamlined the Airport's ability to respond.

Regarding response times and direct action, the Airport works hard to address noise complaints in a timely manner; however, as a public use airport under Grant Assurances, the Airport is nonetheless very restricted in the actions that it can actually take to address a noise complaint in order not be unjustly discriminatory towards airport operators.

Comment: We should carefully consider the pros and cons of continuing this committee in some format, as discussed under *Administrative Option 1: Continuation of Study Input Committee*.

Answer: That will certainly be a major consideration, and if continued in some format, would likely meet only several times per year at the most. It may be more ideal to integrate noise discussions into meetings and committees that are already taking place related to Airport activities.

Comment: We should also find better ways to better disseminate information on voluntary noise reduction measures.

Answer: Although a worthwhile goal, it is important to keep in mind that such mailings or other methods require a certain amount of funding and staffing. Additionally, it is difficult for the Airport to keep track of all of its users because many pilots are transient, and it is difficult to obtain and maintain current contact information for all of the users.