

JULY 14TH, 2007

37th Annual NOISE Summer Conference and Aviation Noise Symposium

The annual National Organization to Insure a Sound-controlled Environment (NOISE) Conference and Aviation Noise Symposium is being held in College Park, Georgia July 18th-20th. The conference will take place at the Georgia International Convention Center and includes a guided tour of the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. This year's conference boasts an outstanding array of speakers including: Ashraf Jan, a land use compatibility expert from the FAA, Alan Zusman, Chairman of the Federal Interagency Committee on Aviation Noise, Lynne Pickard from the FAA's office on Environment and Energy, and Congressman Dave Scott from Georgia's 13th Congressional District. Visit aviation-noise.org for future NOISE events and organization updates.

Proposed FAA Reauthorization and Legislation Brief

On June 27th, James Oberstar (MN-8) introduced the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2007 (HR 2881). The bill's purpose is to authorize funds for the FAA from 2008-2011 in order to improve aviation safety and capacity and to provide stable funding for the national aviation system. A day after introduction, June 28th, the bill received a full committee consideration and markup by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. During the markup the Committee voted to authorize \$15.8 billion through fiscal 2011 for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). (For a further description of AIP refer to pg. 3 of newsletter). FAA facilities would receive \$13 billion and

FAA operations would be authorized \$37.2 billion.

There are many positive provisions included in the reauthorization in regards to mitigating airport noise; HR 2881 provides a phase out of noisy stage-II aircrafts within five years with no airport opt-out program, and creates a pilot program for the development, maturing and certification of continuous lower energy, emissions, engine noise, and airframe technology. HR 2881 also authorizes a program to fund six projects at public-use airports to utilize promising environmental research concepts by placing them into the airport environment to demonstrate the reduction or mitigation of aviation impacts on noise, air quality or water quality. In addition to environmental and noise concerns the bill contains numerous provisions to increase general aviation safety. HR 2881 was reported favorably by voice vote to the full House.

The Senate version, S 1300, authorizes \$65 billion through fiscal 2011 to the FAA. It was approved by the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee on May 16th after much debate about a new \$25 per-flight surcharge, not included in the House version, that would replace the current excise and ticket tax. The revenue created would be put into a trust fund used exclusively for modernizing the air traffic control system. The surcharge would apply to any plane that uses controlled airspace. Airlines believe that the new surcharge would more evenly distribute the cost burden of the new system whereas general aviators believe this new surcharge creates a corporate welfare program for airlines. S 1300 also departs from HR 2881 as it offers a consumer rights provision which gives passenger's the right to deplane after three hours and the airline is required to inform passengers as to when they will be able to get off the plane.

The Federal Aviation Research and Development Reauthorization Act of 2007 (HR 2698), a related bill likely to be folded in with the overall FAA reauthorization, was approved by voice vote by the House Science

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and Technology Committee. Mark Udall (CO-2), sponsor of the bill, stated that the purpose of the bill is to “help ensure that the FAA has the tools to keep the nation’s air traffic control system safe, efficient, and environmentally friendly.” FAA research and development programs would be allocated \$335 million in fiscal 2008 increasing to \$515 million in fiscal 2011. The bill also has provisions to keep lawmakers abreast of the FAA transition to a new air traffic control system while introducing new reporting responsibilities and adding personnel at the FAA, NASA, and other agencies with a stake in the air traffic control system.

Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) Lawsuit Update

Homeowners living near the Minneapolis-St. Paul international airport filed a lawsuit against the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) in 2005 alleging that MAC agreed to expand its residential sound insulation program to include homes in the 60-64 DNL zones as a response to airport expansion. MAC, in an effort to settle the class action lawsuit, has offered an agreement that would provide nearly \$65 million in noise mitigation benefits to over 4,400 homeowners. The money would be used to pay for or refund the purchase of noise mitigation materials and some money would be set aside to pay a fraction of the plaintiff’s attorney fees.

Minneapolis, Eagan, and Richfield who filed a similar lawsuit have decided not to accept the agreement. The cities differ with MAC on which DNL contour maps to use and how to use the maps to determine which homes receive funding. MAC would provide assistance to individual homes within the contour while the cities have stated that entire neighborhoods should be covered if there are some homes of that neighborhood within the contour map. The cities have until July 23rd to offer a counter agreement. Judge Aldrich, who is presiding over both lawsuits, has given a partial ruling requiring MAC to begin

mitigation work on homes in the 64 DNL contour by February 1st, 2008.

Boeing Company Goes “Green”

Boeing unveiled its new 787 Dreamliner jet on July 8th. This new jet is capable of carrying 330 passengers and uses 20% less fuel than similar-sized aircrafts. Boeing said that the jet will have bigger windows, raised cabin pressure and humidity to reduce the amount of headaches and itchy eyes, and the jet itself will “greatly” reduce the noise footprint. Boeing stated that due to its specially treated engines noise emissions will be reduced by as much as 60%. The Dreamliner has attracted attention and, more importantly for Boeing, buyers; there are currently 600 orders placed from 47 customers. The 787’s first delivery will be made in May of 2008.

In further efforts to “green” their fleet Boeing has begun using GE’s Flight Management System (FMS) for the first time in Europe. This system enables the airplane to use Advanced Continuous Descent Approach (A-CDA) or the “Green Approach” by flying the aircraft at idle thrust from cruise through landing. FMS, which has only been used on Boeing’s 737s, features a 4-dimensional trajectory downlink that air traffic controllers can use to manage traffic flow using Required Time of Arrival (RTA), a precision positioning and time guidance tool. RTA assists in creating flight profiles which will increase efficiency thus reducing a significant amount of greenhouse gas and noise emissions.

Unease Over FAA Flight Plan Redesign

The FAA is near completion on an airspace redesign project that would span five states including New York and New Jersey. The current flight plan takes approximately 70 percent of large and medium sized jets on a path down the Delaware River; the redesign would have those same jets make a much sharper turn after takeoff in order to pass over the counties of Delaware and Gloucester. FAA officials have stated they will attempt to limit flights late at night and early morning but those statements have done little to

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ease the concerns of the soon to be affected residents.

Rockland, NY is a model and representative example of a community that is apprehensive towards the redesign. Under the current flight plan most aircrafts that fly overhead are already at altitudes of 10,000 feet or higher thus having little noise impact. The redesign would require 200-600 flights per day to be redirected over Rockland with altitudes between 5000-6000 feet. The FAA insists that the increased noise impacts endured by the more than 11,000 residents would be “slight to moderate” despite the acknowledgement by FAA spokesperson Jim Peters saying that the redesign will result in an average of one overhead flight per every three minutes between the hours of 6 am and midnight. These concerns are not isolated in the Rockland, NY community, but have been widespread in the affected areas, prompting Senator Hillary Clinton (NY) to become involved. Senator Clinton has called on the FAA to schedule meetings to address citizen concerns. The FAA expects to decide on a plan in September.

Airport Improvement Program (AIP) Grants

The FAA’s Airport Improvement Program awards grants to public and some private airports for planning, development, or noise compatibility and mitigation projects. Grants given to large and medium hubs cover 75 percent of the costs or 80 percent for noise program mitigation. Small airports receive coverage for 95 percent of the total project cost. Grants awarded between 4/26/07 and 6/26/07 totaled nearly \$2 billion.

48 airports were given grants for noise mitigation and compatibility projects. These projects demonstrate clear progress in the fight against excessive aviation noise. Highlighted below are grants that were awarded to a few airports with known and lengthy histories of excessive noise issues:

- **Los Angeles International Airport:** (1) a \$3 million grant for noise mitigation measures for residences in the airport’s 70-74 DNL contour in El Segundo, (2) a \$5 million grant for noise mitigation measures for residences within the airport’s 70-74 DNL contour in Los Angeles County.

- **Orlando International Airport:** a \$845,597 grant for noise mitigation measures for public school sound insulation.
- **Chicago O’Hare International Airport:** (1) a \$3 million grant for noise mitigation measures for public buildings (2) \$18 million grant and a (3) \$2,256,928 grant for noise mitigation measures for residences within the airport’s 65-69 DNL contour.
- **Newark Liberty International Airport:** a \$11,884,519 grant for noise mitigation measures for an elementary school in Kearny, NJ.
- **La Guardia Airport in New York:** (1) \$3,975,290, (2) \$2,069,519, and (3) \$1,574,358 for school soundproofing.
- **San Antonio International Airport:** a \$6,094,446 grant for noise mitigation measures for residences within the 65-69 DNL contour.

This list is in no way exhaustive. For the complete list of grants visit the FAA’s website.

NOISE Legislator of the Year-Congressman David Scott of Georgia’s 13th District

Congressman David Scott (GA-13) is accustomed to dealing with aviation noise issues since the Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport is located right in his district. The Congressman is a member of the Congressional Noise Abatement Caucus and has worked tirelessly to address the noise concerns of his citizens. The even-handed Congressman understands that the Atlanta Airport is major economic powerhouse but believes that “the airport must be a good neighbor to surrounding communities.”

Congressman Scott’s continued fight on behalf of his citizens regarding environmental concerns caused by aviation has earned him NOISE’s “Legislator of the Year Award.” Congressman Scott now joins the ranks of previous award winners Congressman James Oberstar (MN-8), Senator David Vitter (LA), Congressman Bobby Jindal (LA-1), Congressman Jim Ramstad (MN-3), and former Congresswoman Anne Northrup.