



NATIONAL ORGANIZATION TO INSURE A SOUND-CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT
"America's Community Voice on Aviation Noise Issues" • An Affiliate of the National League of Cities

WASHINGTON NOISE WATCH **MARCH 13TH, 2006**

FAA FORECAST CONFERENCE (FEBRUARY 2006)

The FAA has completed its much anticipated report which forecasts trends in the aviation industry through the year 2017. This report statistically supports what aviation industry insiders have suspected for years about the projected growth of passenger, freight and total number of flights.

The FAA report indicates that passenger totals will continue to grow at more than 3 percent per year, with international passenger levels growing another 2 percent beyond that. This rate of growth suggests that one billion passengers will be carried by the year 2015.

Regional carriers will contribute significantly to the anticipated growth, forecast at an average rate of 4.4 percent per year through 2017. By the end of the forecast period, regional carriers are expected to annually transport over 250 million passengers.

Cargo traffic is also experiencing solid growth. Domestically, it is anticipated to grow at 3.2 percent annually, while 6.3 percent annual growth is anticipated for international traffic.

Other indicators suggest that the size of domestic aircraft will decline this year by 1.4 seats. Legacy carriers continue to replace their wide-body and larger aircraft with smaller, narrow-body planes. The increased demand for 70-90 seat aircraft and mini-jets will continue to drive down the overall number of seats per aircraft.

Despite challenges including the lingering effects of the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks, concerns relating to the spread of pandemic viruses through international air travel and volatile oil prices, the FAA report projects that all sectors of the airline industry will continue to grow steadily through the year 2017.

This growth will further tax an already often overburdened system and will undoubtedly expand the regions affected by aviation noise concerns as the use of smaller aircraft is increased by both legacy and regional carriers.

NATIONAL AIRSPACE REDESIGN

As utilization of the aviation industry increases, the several areas are increasingly becoming choke points in the national aviation system. The National Airspace Redesign (NAR) is a systematic approach to increasing the efficiency and capacity of the National Airspace System. The process began with the New York / New Jersey / Philadelphia region and is now implementing projects in the Great Lakes, Central and Western Pacific Regions.



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The airspace redesign in the NY/NJ/PA region involves a 31,000-square-mile, five-state area with a population of 29 million residents and 29 airports. The primary alternatives proposed to handle the influx of passengers and freight include:

1. Reroute departing flights from Newark Airport over the Atlantic Ocean to reduce noise impact on residents. This is preferred by some community and environmental organizations, but not FAA.
2. Integrate airspace by consolidating operations at two major air traffic control centers. This is preferred operationally by FAA, airport officials and business leaders in the Delaware Valley. It would require a federal investment of \$150 million to \$250 million and result in a 47 percent increase in departures capacity from Philadelphia International Airport. (This option would effectively double the airspace over southern New Jersey.)

Because any adopted plan would likely be long term in nature, concerned parties are working to influence the acceptance of the primary alternatives. Opponents of the Airspace Redesign proposal say that the increase in capacity and traffic routing efficiency will also increase exposure to aviation noise – for as many as 330,000 residents in some estimates. Local and state officials are also concerned about the level of local investment which may be required to address noise and other environmental effects of the increased traffic.

NOISY JETS PINPOINTED

On Thursday, March 9, 2006, the San Francisco International Airport unveiled a sophisticated new noise-tracking system aimed at appeasing the thousands of people who live, work and go to school under the airport's flight paths.

The \$1.8 million system, which consists of 29 monitoring terminals attached to the top of 20-foot poles between San Francisco and Redwood City, could lead to changes in flight patterns and piloting practices such as when they throttle the engines, officials said. The airport received a grant from the Federal Aviation Administration that covered most of the cost of the new system, known as ANOMS8.

The airport is owned by San Francisco, but its location south of the city means that San Mateo County residents bear the brunt of the noise.

San Mateo Supervisor Rich Gordon thanked the city for the new system, which pulls together information from ground-level noise monitors and flight-path information to paint three-dimensional pictures of what's happening in the skies on a 10-minute delay.

Now when officials receive a noise complaint, they will use the system to track down the offending airplane and find out whether it was flying a standard route or was instructed to veer off course for some reason, such as a medical emergency or to avoid a collision.

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A simpler two-dimensional version can be viewed online at <http://www.flyquietsfo.com>.

Air traffic controllers will continue to put safety and efficiency over noise concerns, but at least the information will give people an explanation. "It allows us to be more responsive to residents' concerns," said Supervisor Mark Church, chair of the Airport/Community Roundtable, in local news reports.

According to the City of San Francisco, the airport has spent \$160 million to insulate about 15,000 homes, 10 schools and a number of churches under the flight paths in response to resident and community noise concerns.

BOEING AND UPS INVEST IN ELECTRONIC FLIGHT BAGS

As fuel prices escalate industry officials are looking to lower cost and gain a competitive advantage over the competition. In this pursuit Boeing and UPS will install Electronic Flight Bags on over one hundred Boeing 757's and 767's. This new technology provides pilots with, "vital charts, manuals, documents and whatever else they need." This technology will reduce fuel emissions and community noise exposure by plotting more direct flight paths and by minimizing the amount of time spent on the ground with engines running.

FY 2007 AIP / NASA BUDGET LETTER

The budget process is an important time for NOISE to push for programs that help to mitigate excessive levels aviation noise. In the current financial atmosphere, it is more important than ever for there to be a strong voice about the justification for projects supported by NOISE. NOISE sent a letter to the Budget Committees in both the House and Senate in support of the NASA's Aeronautics Program and Airport Improvement Program (AIP) and cautioned Congress about pitfalls of not modernizing airport capital infrastructure and aircraft technology as the aviation system expands. The letter highlights the goals and basic structure of NOISE's grassroots movement to fight against excessive aviation noise.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF REGIONAL AIRPORTS

The winds of change look to be steadily blowing in the direction of local regional airports and the way they are utilized in the near future. A new breed of microjets is expected to make their presence known at small regional airports. These jets serve as a *taxi service of the sky* in that they seat less than 10 passengers and use opportunistic flight schedules to attract the upwardly mobile business class.

Microjets will bypass aviation noise restrictions because they do not exceed the weight restrictions for small aircraft. Without being accountable to noise limitations, the introduction of these microjets is likely to introduce additional noise to small regional and general aviation airports.

The FAA estimates that next year alone 100 microjets will introduced into service in the United States, with an additional 400-500 added per year until the year 2017. Microjets are projected to cost from \$1.3 million to \$2.25 million, about half the price of existing business

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jets. Costs are lower because the engines on a microjet are smaller and more lightweight; they are based on engines developed for military cruise missiles.

The development of these new aircraft will certainly present new challenges for regional airports and their relationships with local communities. FAA officials are also concerned about congestion on runways and in the skies, where more planes may be crowding the same airspace. While microjets are small, they can fly at high altitudes alongside commercial carriers. And they require the same amount of attention from air-traffic controllers as do larger aircraft, particularly if they fly through congested air space.

NOISE GROWTH INITIATIVE

"They say that time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself," perfectly models NOISE's commitment to being the vanguard of change in the sphere of controlling aviation noise. The *NOISE Growth Initiative* is founded on the continued belief that every affected community has the right and responsibility to challenge the presence of excessive aviation noise.

The NOISE Growth Initiative encompasses several small but important parts in expanding the power and scope of the organization. The first step is to recognize and encourage the communities who take a leading role expansion, by inviting neighboring communities that have aviation noise issues. In the Spring Meeting promotional material all communities were encouraged to invite neighboring communities as a means to show anyone interested in the value of being a NOISE member.

The next challenge for the Growth Initiative is to build membership over the summer, building momentum for the Annual Conference and Aviation Noise Symposium in September 2006. This effort will evolve all members as we reach out to our neighbors who share our concerns about excessive aviation noise.

This commitment to changing the way government, airports and local communities interact to improve the quality of live of local residents needs to be buttressed by a grassroots movement that fully utilizes its true strength. The strength of the NOISE organization is born out of its member communities standing together to support one another in pursuit of our common goal. Together we can more effectively work to promote enlightened practices to allow airports and communities to co-exist for the benefit of all.

If you have suggestions regarding NOISE and how we may reach out to new members, please contact us at (202) 544-9844.