

Airport Noise Report



A weekly update on litigation, regulations, and technological developments

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ACRP

TRB ISSUES UPDATED, EXPANDED GUIDELINES FOR AIRPORT SOUND INSULATION PROGRAMS

A 313-page Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP) report, which updates and expands previous guidance on airport sound insulation programs, was released by the Transportation Research Board on Aug. 20.

ACRP Report 89: Guidelines for Airport Sound Insulation Programs was prepared to help airport and non-airport sponsors develop and effectively manage their aircraft noise insulation projects.

As the guidelines were being finalized last year, the Federal Aviation Administration issued Program Guidance Letter (PGL) 12-09, "AIP Eligibility and Justification Requirements for Noise Insulation Projects," on Aug. 17, 2012.

The PGL replaced existing guidance on the implementation of AIP-funded noise insulation projects as had previously been provided per Section 812 of the AIP Handbook, FAA Order 5100-38C.

"At the time that the ACRP Report 89 guidelines were finalized, there were outstanding questions regarding the PGL. These outstanding questions and related is-

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Naval Air Station Key West

COUNTY ADVOCATES FOR MITIGATION NAVY REJECTED IN FEIS ON EXPANDED BASE OPS

Monroe County, FL, Commissioners are seeking the ear of as many influential people as they can to express concerns about the Navy's plans to increase fighter jet training operations at Naval Air Station Key West without implementing the noise mitigation measures the County seeks, including sound insulation of civilian homes in the high noise zone near the air station.

On Aug. 21, the Commissioners authorized the County Administrator, staff, and consultants to meet with senior Navy policy officials, White House Council on Environmental Quality and Office of Intergovernmental Affairs staffs, members of the Florida congressional delegation, and the County lobbyist to discuss the County's continuing concern with the Final Environmental Impact Statement on the project.

The County's concerns focus on the Navy's rejection of all the major substantive recommendations it made on a Draft Environmental Impact Statement the Navy released in August 2012 on its plan to increase operations at the naval air station.

Monroe County disagreed with the Navy's conclusion that expanding operations at Naval Air Station Key West would not cause significant noise impact in the

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sues are discussed throughout the text with advice to users to contact their ADO project manager regarding any further guidance or information that has been provided since the publication of these guidelines,” TRB Staff Officer Theresia H. Schatz explained in a *Forward* to the report.

“This research will be very helpful to improve current practices and ensure compliant airport sound insulation programs. The research significantly expands information available on best practices and current standards and requirements for sound insulation of homes as well as for other eligible noise-sensitive buildings. The guidelines are a very useful tool for airport staff, consultants, and FAA offices to use with the AIP guidance provided in the AIP Handbook as updated by PGLs from time to time,” the *Forward* notes.

The updated guidelines were prepared under ACRP Project 02-24. The effort was led by the Jones Payne Group in association with URS Group, Freytag & Associates, Larson Manufacturing, CSDA Architects, S&L Specialty Contracting, Robert R. Smith, R.W. Sullivan Engineering, and Hill International, Inc. Each of the team members was expert in a specific area or aspect of sound insulation addressed in the guidelines.

A separate contractor’s final report, which provides background to the research conducted in support of the guidebook, has been posted on the ACRP Project 02-24 web page at <http://apps.trb.org/cmsfeed/TRBNetProjectDisplay.asp?ProjectID=2795>.

Unlike earlier sound insulation program guidance, the ACRP report also addresses energy performance and sustainability, community outreach, improvements in products, current code and other regulatory requirements, and bidding methodologies and project costs.

The report is available online at <http://www.trb.org/ACRP/Blurbs/169358.aspx>

MSP Int’l**FORUM TO SOLICIT QUESTIONS ON MSP RNAV IMPLEMENTATION**

Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN) will hold a public forum on Aug. 27 to discuss the questions Minneapolis residents would like to have answered before RNAV procedures are implemented at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

Expected to attend the forum are Administrator of Federal Aviation Administration Great Lakes Region Barry Cooper, Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak (D), State Sen. Scott Dibble (DFL), state Rep. Frank Hornstein (DFL), and representatives of the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC).

The forum will be held from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at Washburn High School, 201 W. 49th St., in Minneapolis.

“Last fall, the FAA attempted to implement RNAV at the airport with minimal notification and no input from the residents directly affected by the changes. Minneapolis and partners were able to prevail upon the Metropolitan Airports Commission to request more time and to develop a better plan,” the City of Minneapolis said in an Aug. 12 press release announcing the forum.

Officials of Minneapolis and the community of Edina, west of the airport, were so fearful that FAA was trying to push through airport commission approval of the RNAV departure procedures it wanted to impose at MSP that they mounted a scorching campaign against them (25 ANR 184).

Portions of both Minneapolis and Edina would have had concentrated overflights from the RNAV procedure package FAA proposed.

The political pressure on the Metropolitan Airports Commission was so intense from Minneapolis and Edina that the MAC backed off endorsing the RNAV procedures that would have taken aircraft over those cities and only approved those that took aircraft to the south and east of the airport.

Consequently, FAA is now determining whether it can safely implement only a portion of the RNAV departure procedure package it proposed at MSP International.

NASA**NASA RELEASES NEW VISION FOR AERONAUTICS RESEARCH**

NASA Administrator Charles Bolden has unveiled a new strategic vision that will better align the work of the agency’s Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate to address looming challenges in global air transportation.

Continuing a tradition of nearly a century of aviation research, NASA’s aeronautical innovators will bring to life new technology and ideas in flight to ensure the United States will maintain its leadership in the sky and sustain aviation as a key economic driver for the nation, the agency said.

Bolden shared the strategic vision as a keynote speaker during a gathering of the nation’s leading aviation engineers and managers at the American Institute for Aeronautics and Astronautics’ Aviation conference in Los Angeles on Aug. 14.

The new strategic vision greatly expands the relevancy of NASA’s research and is based on three themes: understanding emerging global trends, using those trends to drive research directions and then organizing NASA’s aeronautical research work in response to those drivers.

The new vision addresses key drivers that are expected to change the face of aviation during the next 20 to 40 years. Those drivers include significant growth in planet-wide demand for air mobility, mounting concerns related to climate and energy, and the convergence of technologies ranging from new materials to embedded sensors to ubiquitous networking.

Six Research Areas Defined

Reflecting inputs contributed by the aviation community and national policymakers, six areas of research were identified in the vision that will allow NASA to best deploy its resources and prioritize its goals:

- Safe, efficient growth in global operations that will enable the Next Generation Air Transportation System in the United States by 2035 and safely expand capacity of the global airspace system to accommodate growth in air traffic.
- Innovation in commercial supersonic aircraft that will provide data for a low level sonic boom standard that could lead to permission for supersonic flight over land.
- Ultra-efficient commercial transports that will pioneer technologies for future generations of commercial transports that simultaneously reduce noise, fuel use and emissions.
- Transition to low-carbon propulsion that will enable industry to move toward and adopt use of low-carbon fuels and alternative propulsion systems.
- Real-time, system-wide safety assurance in which tools are developed for use in creating a prototype of an integrated safety monitoring and assurance system that can detect, predict and prevent safety problems in real time.
- Assured autonomy for aviation transformation that will enable the utilization of higher levels of automation and autonomy across the aviation system, particularly as it relates to unmanned aerial systems and remotely piloted vehicles.

A NASA White Paper on the agency's Aeronautics Research Strategic Visions is available at http://www.aeronautics.nasa.gov/pdf/armd_strategic_vision_2013.pdf

Awards

RENO-TAHOE AIRPORT AUTH. WINS 2013 RANDY JONES AWARD

The Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority is the recipient of the 2013 Randy Jones Award for Excellence in Airport Noise Mitigation, the Planning Committee for the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE) Airport Noise Mitigation Symposium announced.

This award is given every year to an individual or organization that has made a significant contribution to the airport noise mitigation industry.

The RTAA has undertaken noise mitigation efforts at Reno International Airport since 1995. To date it has insulated over 4,600 dwellings and expects to insulate the 5,000th home in the summer of 2013. During the 2010 seven-month-long construction season, the RNO program was treating over 110 dwellings per week.

"Since the program began in 1995, the RTAA has shown a dedication to improve the quality of life for individuals in the community that live near RNO airport and are impacted by high levels of aircraft noise," the Planning Committee said in announcing the award.

The Randy Jones Award will be presented at the 13th Annual AAAE Airport Noise Mitigation Symposium during the awards luncheon on Oct. 7 at the Eldorado Hotel in Reno.

A draft symposium agenda is available at: <http://noise-mitigation-symposium.com/>

The symposium sessions will focus on an update of FAA regulations, an airport survey on the status of sound insulation programs, "practical realities" of the Airport Handbook revisions, acoustical testing protocols, winding down a sound insulation program, and public relations strategies for airports implementing sound insulation programs.

In addition, a contractor/supplier roundtable discussion will be held as well as an overview of the Reno-Tahoe Airport sound insulation program and a tour of homes in the program.

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nearby community, asserting that there were substantial flaws in the Navy's noise analysis, including an inadequate assessment of the baseline noise condition at the air station and surrounding community.

In the Final EIS on the project, released on Aug. 2, the Navy selected a project alternative that will add up to 4,500 additional annual operations at the Key West Naval Air Station, increasing the total number of annual operations to approximately 52,000. It also approved transitioning to next-generation F-35 aircraft at the air station and conducting carrier air wing Field Carrier Landing Practice (FCLP) operations there.

The Navy is expected to issue a Record of Decision on the project in September.

Monroe County Commissioners authorized staff and its consultant on the EIS (the Fort Lauderdale, FL-based engineering firm Keith and Schnars) to advocate for the following noise mitigation measures recommended by the County:

- An absolute limit on all types of flight operations at the naval air base, including FCLP and night flights.
- The "proper evaluation" of the baseline condition for existing operations at Naval Air Station Key West. Although the FA-18E/F Super Hornet aircraft is already operating at the air station, Monroe County wants the Navy to exclude its noise from the baseline conditions analysis on the basis that the noise impact of the aircraft on the surrounding community was never properly evaluated in earlier NEPA documents that the Navy relied on in this FEIS. The County asked the Navy to evaluate the FA-18E/F as a new, Next Generation aircraft in the noise analysis of the current project.
- The Navy should contract with an independent consultant "to conduct a noise study to establish an actual noise baseline with actual noise sampling based on industry accepted protocols, and should the Navy choose not to conduct a noise study, it should request authorization for the County to contract an independent consultant to conduct a noise study to establish an actual noise baseline with actual noise

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sampling to document the full impacts to surrounding community and the necessary mitigation by the Navy to alleviate the impacts”;

- Full mitigation by the Navy for the impacts associated with the proposed increases in flight operations to ensure the impacts on existing surrounding community are minimized. This includes, but is not limited to:

- (1) Navy request for statutory authority, where necessary, to provide mitigation to the surrounding community impacted by the proposed increases in flight operations included in the preferred alternative. Also, as a result of the FA-18E/F Super Hornet, mitigation should include but not be limited to soundproofing;

- (2) The use of alternative runways to alleviate impacts to the surrounding community; and

- (3) Modification of operational procedures and full enforcement of course rules (e.g., altitudes, flight paths) to minimize impacts to the surrounding community.

Navy's Response to Comments

In the FEIS the Navy responded to Monroe County's criticisms and recommendations.

It said “the analytical methodology and results presented in the EIS for noise are consistent with current Navy policy regarding the modeling of aircraft noise. The Navy has determined the noise analyses presented in this EIS is an accurate representation of the current and future noise environment.”

The Navy said the noise environment at the NAS Key West airfield was modeled using NOISEMAP software suite, which “represents the best noise modeling science available today for military airfields.”

Regarding mitigation of noise impacts, the Navy said it “will continue to make every attempt to minimize its noise impacts to nearby communities through the continued use of designated flight paths, procedures, and noise abatement measures for military aircraft,” which include restricting the manner in which aircraft climb, limiting late night flying to only mission essential activities, minimizing flights over heavily-populated areas, and accepting input from the public to ensure these measures remain as effective as practicable.”

The Navy explained in its FEIS that Congress has not given the military services the authority to install soundproofing in homes and buildings that are not owned by the federal government.

Under existing conditions, an estimated 1,273 housing units off the air station are within the 65 dB DNL or greater noise zone, according to the FEIS. Expanding operations at the air station under the alternative selected is estimated to add another 184 homes to that zone.

The FEIS is available at <http://www.keywesteis.com/>

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