

FAA News



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FACT SHEET **Boston Logan Airport Noise Study** **Conventional Procedures Implemented in Early 2008**

The Federal Aviation Administration's Categorical Exclusion Record of Decision for Phase 1 of the Boston Overflight Noise Study was issued in October 2007. The noise abatement measures approved in that decision involved the revision of some existing conventional arrival and departure procedures, the development of new conventional procedures, and the development of Area Navigation (RNAV) procedures.

Details of the approved alternatives are available on the project website:

<http://www.bostonoverflightnoisestudy.com>

On February 14, several conventional-only or radar vector procedures (Phase 1 Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 14 and 15) were implemented. These procedures were recommended for early implementation by the Logan Airport Community Advisory Committee (CAC), which represents more than 30 of the 90 communities in the Boston Logan Airport Noise Study area.

Alternative 6 is expected to be implemented by Spring 2009 and Alternative 11 by late Summer 2009. In addition, the RNAV procedures for Alternatives 1, 2, 3, 5, 14 and 15 could be implemented by late Summer 2009, but that target date depends upon the 18-step process FAA uses to develop these procedures.

RNAV procedures, which are capable of point-to-point navigation, require automation capability aboard an aircraft to fly a precisely defined flight procedure. All of these new or revised procedures will reduce noise for residents of some communities to the northeast and southeast of Logan Airport by raising the altitude or height at which aircraft cross the north and south shorelines.

Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Boston Logan Airport Noise Study stem from a mitigation requirement contained in the FAA's 2002 Record of Decision (ROD) for the Boston

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Logan Airside Improvements Planning Project. Specifically, the ROD requires that the FAA, the Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) and the CAC work jointly to develop a scope of a noise study that will include enhancing existing or developing new noise abatement measures applicable to aircraft overflights.

Phase 1 focused primarily on those measures that would reduce aircraft noise exposure which do not significantly impact other communities; and that could be implemented early or prior to the completion of the entire noise study.

According to the noise modeling conducted for Phase 1, the implementation of all the approved measures is expected to reduce aircraft annual average day/night noise levels (DNL) for several communities. The DNL metric is based on average annual operations for a 24-hour period that is weighted during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 6:59 a.m.) to account for the more noise sensitive hours. All of the single-event levels that are expected to occur for an average annual day are averaged for a 24-hour period.

DNL reductions up to 3 dBA are expected for communities to the south of Logan International Airport such as Quincy, Braintree, Weymouth, Hingham, Cohasset and Hull and communities to the north of Logan Airport such as Marblehead and Salem. Average annual DNL reductions between 1.5 dBA and 3 dBA are expected for communities such as Swampscott, Peabody, Danvers, Hanover, Pembroke, Norwell and Marshfield. Although the DNL levels do not reflect significant decreases, the result of the measures provided some reduction to the frequency of single-event levels, which was an important metric for CAC.

Most of the communities included in the project's study area are currently experiencing average annual DNL levels below 65 dBA. Noise-sensitive land uses, such as residential use, is considered incompatible by the FAA where aircraft DNL levels are equal to or higher than 65 DNL. Although the FAA considers most land uses compatible for communities exposed to aircraft noise levels below 65 DNL, the FAA worked directly with the CAC and Massport to assess measures proposed by the advisory committee that were intended to reduce aircraft single-event noise levels and/or reduce the frequency of such events.

The primary metric that the CAC used in assessing potential reductions was a metric that provided the number of average annual day operations that produce single-event noise levels that would have peak levels around 50 dBA. According to the analysis, most south shore and north shore communities are expected to experience a reduction of 15 or more aircraft average annual day operations that cause peak levels at or above 50 dBA. As a result of the procedure changes, increases in the number of average annual day operations that emit single-event peak levels at or above 50 dBA are expected for portions of communities such as Duxbury, Marshfield, Beverly and Manchester. The increase of

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such operations is expected to range between 5 and 15 for an average annual day. Such changes did not result in a moderate increase in DNL (5dBA DNL or higher change for areas exposed to aircraft DNL levels lower than 60 DNL). According to the evaluation, the DNL levels are not expected to change over Marshfield but would increase up to 3dBA DNL for Beverly and Manchester.

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