

**Boston Logan Airport Noise Study (BLANS)  
CAC Meeting**

**MEETING SUMMARY (Final)  
June 25, 2008**

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**Attendance:**

**CAC Members:**

Bernice Mader (Quincy), Steve Lathrop (Hull), Dick Morrison (Chelsea), Bob D'Amico (City of Boston Mayor's Office), Wig Zamore (Somerville), Jerry Falbo (Winthrop), Peter Koff (Cambridge), Darryl Pomicter (Beacon Hill), Buddy Borgioli (Swampscott), Bob Driscoll (Winthrop), Marianne McCabe\* (Marshfield), Gary Banks (Scituate), Frank Ciano (Arlington), Ben Leone (Revere), Yelena Shulkina (Medford), Robert Seigel (Malden), Jeff Weeden (Lynn), Will Lyman (Jamaica Plain), Anastasia Lyman (Jamaica Plain), Alan Wright (Roslindale)

**FAA, Massport Members:**

Terry English (FAA), Richard Doucette (FAA), Flavio Leo (Massport)

**Project Consultant (PC) Team:**

Stephen Smith\* (Ricondo & Associates, Inc.), Scott Hamwey (Planners Collaborative)

\* = by telephone

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**1. Opening Remarks**

Bernice Mader welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the meeting format. All attendees introduced themselves, after which B. Mader introduced Terry English of FAA for the project overview presentation.

**2. BLANS Project Overview Presentation (Phase 1)**

T. English explained she had been the project manager since September 2007, although she had been involved in a different capacity at the outset of BONS. She noted the presentation was being made at the request of the new CAC Chair (B. Mader) who thought it would be a good way to get new CAC members up to speed. T. English said that the presentation was also designed to be a good reference for all members. T. English provided an overview of the topics requested by B. Mader to be discussed (slide 2 and 3). T. English emphasized the importance of getting a clearer definition of the Purpose and Need (P&N) for the project in Phase 2. She added that FAA will not discuss proposed measures or anything related to the ongoing lawsuits such as the 33L departures.

T. English reviewed the mitigation items included in the 2002 Airside EIS ROD specifically related to this noise study (slide 4). She also explained the unique arrangement whereby the CAC was provided with the Independent Consultant (IC) to assist in the review of the Project Consultant's (PC) work. Dick Morrison added some information on the rationale for the IC.

T. English displayed a slide showing the BOS/TAC organization (slide 6), which had recently been updated. She went into detail in describing the Project Management Team (PMT), purpose of PMT calls, and the Boston Terminal Radar Approach Control (TRACON) and Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) airspace responsibilities. She mentioned that the TRACON is located in Merrimack, NH and controls aircraft within approximately 20 nautical miles up to 14,000 feet. BOS ATCT has control within 5 nautical miles of Logan and under 2,000 feet. She also presented a slide on the project study area (slide 7), which she noted has frequently been updated due to recent growth in the CAC's membership.

T. English reviewed the reasons for phasing the noise study, explaining that phases were identified for both budgetary reasons and to meet NEPA requirements (slide 8). Phase 1, known as the Boston Overflight Noise Study (BONS) dealt with measures that did not cause significant impact and could be implemented early. Phase 2, known as the Boston Logan Airport Noise Study (BLANS) involves assessing measures related to both ground and air that may provide a noise reduction benefit, but may not meet Categorical Exclusion criteria and therefore require an Environmental Assessment. Phase 3 would be the Environmental Assessment. Before opening the session to questions and comments, she reviewed milestones from Phase 1 (slide 9 and 10)

### **3. CAC Questions on Phase 1 Portion of Presentation**

Darryl Pomicter said Phase 2 should not just assess the remaining measures identified in Phase 1. He said there was always an understanding that they would look at new measures in Phase 2. He requested Slide #8 be footnoted to indicate this. T. English said she understood the position, but noted the last sentence on the slide did touch on this and suggested the sentence could be moved up to be more prominent on that slide. Steve Smith said the intent of the slide was to give the audience a timeline of thinking. He said at the beginning of the project, Phase 2 was defined to assess those measures proposed in Phase 1 that potentially involved significant changes in noise. During Phase 2 scope of work development, CAC requested that new measures may also be proposed in Phase 2. FAA agreed to add a note at the bottom of the slide via an asterisk and tie the text back up to the Phase 2 bullet.

Jerry Falbo asked what was meant by the text on Slide #4 reading “working jointly to develop the scope.” T. English said the goal was to reach a consensus, while adding the FAA is not able to bend on certain issues due to legal requirements. J. Falbo suggested this meant the groups were not equal partners. T. English said FAA is unable to compromise on certain issues, though it always seeks to educate partners on these limitations. J. Falbo said he did not want the CAC to become window dressing and this study was meant to be a ground-breaking process. He said if the issue with an alternative isn't safety related they should pursue it.

Steve Lathrop asked what the role of the data they were developing is. He added they are choosing mitigation measures in the absence of any baseline noise data. He said individual objections to noise measuring tools have gone unanswered and asked how

a minority member of the CAC can make sure the data presented is consistent across measures and answers to questions are received. Richard Doucette responded to a question from Steve Lathrop regarding addressing minority opinions in this study. He indicated the FAA is required under NEPA to consider all reasonable alternatives. Even if only one person (CAC member or not) suggests an alternative, the FAA could assess that alternative in the NEPA phase of the process. T. English said, while she was not the technical expert best suited to answer all of the data-related questions, the study is using models required and accepted by FAA and has been coordinated with FAA experts at headquarters. She added the CAC has the IC to challenge PC or FAA's work and so far IC has supported it. S. Smith stated that IC's opinion of the noise modeling protocol for this project represents a method that is above and beyond what is typically done for an airport noise analysis.

Flavio Leo explained the rationale for giving additional funds and information to the IC. He said at some point, however, they need to close the analysis and move on and accept IC's opinion. B. Mader asked how they could reconcile methodologies and come up with a baseline if there are multiple sets of data using different methodologies. D. Morrison asked which datasets were being discussed. S. Lathrop listed them as the dB/DNL, the SEL, and peak level noise levels to be mixed with contours close to the airport. He said none of these will result in the same evaluation of noise. S. Lathrop added he did not have a problem with the models, but with how the data was gathered, suggesting it was "garbage in, garbage out." He said if the response to these questions can't be raised "because Jon Woodward is the CAC for technical matters," then he has a problem with that. T. English said, in general, FAA uses dB/DNL and that the other two are supplemental metrics. S. Lathrop said this study is about helping the CAC make decisions.

Bob D'Amico asked if noise abatement was taken into account in rejecting measures. T. English said only safety and operational hurdles were used to reject measures at this stage (Level 1 Screening) in the process.

D. Pomictier said the use of three different models is not really a big deal. He explained decibel changes. B. Mader explained the study is happening because of Runway 14/32. She emphasized the importance of developing a P&N statement and that it should have been the first thing done. She added that backing into it now was unacceptable and should have been the first thing done.

Bob Driscoll said newer members should be given a copy of the ROD and asked if this presentation was going out to other towns. T. English said the presentation was designed for this forum and it will be posted on the website.

D. Morrison said he remembers arguing over the term "adverse" and spending time outlining the P&N.

Wig Zamore noted there are 1,200 deaths per year in the metropolitan area due to air quality and asked if FAA uses the same morbidity and mortality risk calculations

when evaluating community health/safety as compared to aircraft operational safety. Richard Doucette said there is no calculation used by FAA for morbidity and mortality in its safety calculations. W. Zamore asked if safety was a qualitative measure rather than a quantitative measure. F. Leo said if he was asking whether they do cost/benefit analysis, then the answer is no. T. English said they do look at air quality during an environmental review. B. Driscoll said this is a noise study but there is an ongoing health impacts study. D. Pomicter said although this is a noise study, safety is raised by FAA all the time as a reason for not doing things.

#### **4. BLANS Project Overview Presentation (Phase 2)**

Referencing slide 13, T. English explained the Phase 2 goal is to identify measures that will reduce noise impacts for communities surrounding the airport. She discussed the Project Plan developed in July 2007, saying it is the road map of where the project is and where it's going. S. Smith said it is a living document currently in version 5. He explained it and said it can be found on the website's file sharing system. It will be "living" or adjusted as needed until Phase 2 is done.

T. English discussed the public outreach in support of Phase 2 and how over 100 communities were sent letters about recent elected officials meetings. B. Mader said the original letter did not clarify the consequences by saying the study could result in changes to the airport's use. F. Leo said, to be fair, there was a lot of input from the CAC on the letter and the effort was there. D. Morrison asked which communities had a problem. B. Mader said Milton and Marshfield were two. T. English emphasized the amount of work put in by the CAC and turned over the next part of the presentation to S. Smith.

S. Smith explained that some of the slides on recommended measures are taken directly from those shown at the elected officials meeting last month and the IC slides that were shown to BOS/TAC at the February meeting. In response to some questions on the wording on slide #14, S. Smith replied it was the exact slide used by J. Woodward in his presentation to BOS/TAC in February. In response to another question about slides #15-17, S. Smith explained the slides were only intended to show how IC presented the information and were not meant to represent which measures were presented at the elected officials meetings—all measures were presented to the elected representatives.

Referencing slides 20, 21 and 22, S. Smith reviewed the evaluation process and said a key Level 1 question was whether or not the proposal was safe and implementable. He said the preliminary Level 1 Screening document has been sent to everyone for their review and the rejected measures were discussed at the last BOS/TAC meeting. He said Level 2 Screening involves further definition of the measures, FAA assessment on operational viability (safety and efficiency), and screening measures that do not provide noticeable noise benefit. He concluded the review of the evaluation process by describing Level 3, which is the more detailed analysis, and emphasizing the importance of the Level 3 cumulative noise impact analysis.

S. Smith quickly reviewed the planned milestones from Phase 2 and suggested there was a delicate balance in scheduling the work remaining for Phase 2 (slide 23).

#### **5. CAC Questions on Phase 2 Portion of Presentation**

Peter Koff asked how they can deal with individual impacts during the cumulative analysis, particularly since the cumulative analysis may include measures the CAC did not want. S. Smith said they would deal with them similar to how they were dealt with in Phase 1. Each measure will be evaluated separately. CAC will then choose measures based on the individual results and request that those chosen be combined to conduct a cumulative analysis. CAC will then review the cumulative results and provide a recommendation for implementation. The noise impacts of each alternative will be assessed individually, then cumulatively as one group of alternatives.

Anastasia Lyman said slide #17 did not accurately represent the benefits of an altered 27 departure procedure. S. Smith said the slide was generated by IC and reminded the group that the slide was illustrative only and the intent of the meeting was not to discuss measures. S. Smith also stated his concerns that there are slides provided by IC that apparently were not reviewed by CAC prior to its release. When PC receives such information from IC, PC assumes it was reviewed and approved by CAC.

Will Lyman, in a question on slide #18, said the group was told by J. Woodward once a measure is rejected it is gone. He asked why measures 17 and 21 are still in the study and why FAA is not accepting the CAC rejection. T. English said FAA is still awaiting the CAC's development of the P&N. FAA's role is to advise you what criteria needs to be in NEPA to defend your recommendations on a legal basis. She said they are trying to protect CAC from legal challenges arising during the NEPA public comment period. W. Lyman said there still seems to be measures in here for operational efficiency only and this is a noise study. T. English said that is not the reason. Measures such as "fanning" have been used by other airports for noise abatement. She said if they say "no new noise above 65 DNL" then it has to apply to everything. She said the RWY 33 procedures may spread noise, and FAA needs to have the purpose and need because people may raise questions during the public process and then FAA can point to the purpose and need.

Ben Leone asked what the standards are referred to in the third bullet of slide #21 and whether the CAC was a part of establishing them. S. Smith replied they are for the purpose and need and that CAC participated in establishing them. T. English said FAA has the final word but it is based on CAC input.

D. Pomicter said it would be foolish to ask for this criterion on no new noise and they should just talk about fanning. He asked if slide #14 was lifted from the elected officials presentation. S. Smith said it was and is exactly the same content provided by IC at the February BOS/TAC meeting. D. Pomicter said the last bullet includes "local procedures" but there is no slide for local procedures in slides #15-#17. He said such a slide should have been shown to the elected officials because no one currently flies the published procedures. T. English said every measure was shown in the

elected officials meeting and these slides were just examples. D. Pomicter said he did not appreciate its omission from this presentation. T. English said that the FAA will modify the presentation and add an example of a local procedure.

S. Lathrop said they are being asked to be consistent, but FAA sometimes is inconsistent. He said they sometimes give noise abatement at the expense of efficiency, and said that was great. He asked what FAA would do if the CAC said fanning was OK, but only if it never increases efficiency. T. English said that would have been discussed as part of the P&N discussion.

D. Morrison said Beverly agreed to take 9 to 10 flights more each day so south shore towns could be spared 50 to 100 flights per day. He said this is the kind of tradeoff they will need to make, rather than blanket statements about when they will make certain choices.

D. Morrison asked when they would have the opportunity to explore land uses, such as industrial areas. S. Smith said they can start to work with that by using land use maps, radar tracks and perhaps the EDR noise contour. P. Koff asked when the EDR was coming out, to which F. Leo replied this fall. P. Koff asked if CAC will get the contour part of it prior to its release. F. Leo said they would not, but that CAC is on the distribution list for the EDR.

P. Koff asked about slide #21 and the statement “meet determined noise reducing goals and objectives.” He asked if this was part of the purpose and need and/or what the relationship is. T. English said the goal is to have the purpose and need done soon. S. Smith said in Phase 1, IC used the term “notable change” that was based on a percentage of change in number of operations that cause noise events above 60 dBA SEL. Such a threshold is supplemental in nature, but can be determined based on the P&N of the project. He said this is the reason they need the purpose and need. P. Koff said he still thinks the bullet is vague. He suggested changing the language to “meet noise reduction goals that have been agreed to by the CAC.”

W. Zamore noted both slides #14 and #21 discuss the CAC not being ready to discuss runway use. He said the CAC has been on record about the tripling of usage of runway 33L. S. Smith said the slides are from J. Woodward and there is an assumption that the CAC is reviewing the IC’s work, and agreed to the statements made on IC slide. W. Zamore asked if they were J. Woodward’s slides or the PC’s interpretation of them. S. Smith said he used a screen capture to copy the slide exactly. W. Zamore also said detailed population data needs to be input in order to optimize tactics. He said it is important for people to understand what the impacts are of a full day’s use on each individual runway, in addition to cumulative information.

B. Mader asked that all additional questions on Phase 2 be forwarded to the team so the presentation can be finished.

## **6. BLANS Project Overview Presentation (Focus Topics of Discussion)**

T. English presented a slide on the project schedule and noted the schedule is constantly changing (slide 25). She emphasized the importance of keeping the project on schedule. S. Smith said June 2009 is the end of the PC and IC contracts and there will be a need for a scope reassessment before then. F. Leo said there was always an understanding that a reassessment would be likely. S. Smith said the two things that don't move are the budget and the deliverable for Phase 2.

T. English reviewed the project stakeholders' role in Phase 2 (slides 27, 28, 29 and 30). She said FAA has the final decision related to safety and efficiency. For example, the TRACON and Flight Standards would make decisions on safety and efficiency. There are also other lines of business within the FAA that play critical roles related to safety and efficiency. She clarified that BOS/TAC does not make all the decisions and that CAC and FAA are both responsible for making their own decisions. B. Mader said it should be CAC voting and then reporting their decisions to the BOS/TAC. She asked whether BOS/TAC could recommend something that CAC didn't approve. T. English said it could not, but that FAA's role is to give the CAC, through BOS/TAC, information on what can't be done based on legal requirements and effects on FAA meeting its mission as described by U.S. Congress. F. Leo said BOS/TAC was put together to provide a venue for people who could spend more time on this project to gain insight into some technical decisions.

P. Koff asked why there isn't a user stakeholder slide since they will be the ones flying the procedures. F. Leo replied that it is tough to get them to the table, and several attempts have been made.

T. English said that the BLANS project management protocol states that the FAA and Massport will work together to keep the aviation industry informed of progress on the BLANS and that this is something that still needs to be done, particularly after the Level 1 Screening when it is clear what measures are still on the table.

T. English introduced the communication efforts for this project (slides 31 and 32). She talked about the modified approach for CAC participation in BOS/TAC meetings (with time provided at the close of the meeting for comments). T. English talked about the website and when open access to the discussion forum was tried in the past it did not work. Instead, a question and answer forum was developed. She then reviewed the timing of three media advisories on the project (one of which has already gone out, one which will go out when they get down to the final group of alternatives, and one that will come out after the final recommendations are made).

## **7. BLANS Project Overview Presentation (Purpose and Need)**

T. English presented slide 33 that was related to the Purpose and Need. One of the key points was that standard criteria are applied to ensure decisions on alternatives are not arbitrary. D. Morrison asked if there were good examples of P&N criteria from other studies, to which T. English said that she had an example with her on the

Bradley Airport and Miami study that she planned to share with the group. R. Doucette noted the beginning of every EIS includes one, and numerous examples can be found on the web.

D. Morrison asked about the Beverly-South Shore example given earlier and whether such tradeoffs could be reflected in the P&N. T. English said that would be OK, because it is not arbitrary. She also noted that the particular example was given a categorical exclusion because the impacts on Beverly were not significant.

S. Lathrop said there should be a quality control task. F. Leo said one of the reasons CAC received substantial funding to hire the IC is to provide QA/QC on PC work. S. Lathrop said the consultant is not a stakeholder, and that QA/QC has to be done by a stakeholder. He said it is appropriate that FAA be the stakeholder to do it.

W. Lyman said press releases should be reviewed by the CAC. B. Mader agreed and cited a sentence in the most recent one that was not removed per CAC request (related to airport capacity). T. English said the CAC-chairs were afforded the opportunity to comment on the media advisory and that she coordinated CAC comments with the FAA Public Affairs Office, but clarified that they (FAA) make the final call. D. Pomictor took issue with the fact that CAC did not get the final press release until after it had been released. T. English said the distribution occurred through a series of consecutive emails within a matter of minutes, and asked for information to find out if the release process was conducted appropriately.

B. Mader pointed to slide #1 and said she received a copy of the brainstorming session notes and that 80% of the recommendations were made by non-CAC personnel. She asked who JD Clark was. F. Leo replied that he was a professor from MIT brought in for the session. He is currently a professor at Georgia Tech and had done a lot of work on an airport study in Louisville related to Constant Decent Approaches. B. Mader noted his recommendations represented a good amount of the junk they are trying to reject now.

Bob Siegel said QC should be done by the CAC, not FAA. He said that's why they got all of the money to hire the IC. He added the P&N should be on the schedule if it's important.

B. Mader closed the meeting by reviewing dates for the next CAC meeting.