

**Boston Logan Airport Noise Study (BLANS)**  
**Legislative Briefing**  
FAA Offices, Burlington

**MEETING SUMMARY**  
May 3, 2007

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**Attendance:**

**FAA:**

Gail Lattrell (FAA Airports), Steve Kelly (FAA), Barbara Travers-Wright (FAA), Ernestine Gatewood (FAA), Gary Hufnagle (FAA), George Yardley (FAA), David Hall (FAA), Bettina Peronti (FAA), Brian Brunelle (FAA), Sandra Bogosian (FAA), John Haley (FAA), John Silva (FAA)

**Non-FAA BOS/TAC:** Flavio Leo (Massport), Betty Desrosiers (Massport), Ralph Dormitzer (CAC Cohasset), Sandra Kunz (CAC Braintree), Jerry Falbo (CAC Winthrop)

**Project Consultant (PC) Team:**

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

**Independent Consultant (IC) Team:**

Jon Woodward (Landrum and Brown)

**Elected Officials and Other Interested Parties:** James Boudreau (Town Administrator Norwell), Robert Butman (State Senator Hedlund), John DePriest (Director of Planning Chelsea), Dale Earl (State Rep. Grant), Ted Fields (Mayor McCarthy Waltham), Bill Griffin (Town Manager Cohasset), Blair Haney (Mayor Bonfanti Peabody), John Kinder (State Rep. Bradley), Patrick Lally (Congressman Markey), Ted Langill (State Senator Hedlund), Tom Largey (Mayor Phelan Quincy), Matthew Patton (Congressman Tierney), Tom Reilly (Town Council Winthrop), Rosemary Sandlin, Adam Serafin (Brookline), Laine Titus (State Rep. Walsh), Jacqueline Woods (State Rep. DeLeo), Dina Seigel (City of Boston), Thomas Tinlin (City of Boston), Dan McCormack (Weymouth), Maureen Kenney (Selectmen Randolph)

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**1. Introductions**

Barbara Travers-Wright welcomed attendees to the legislative briefing and explained that they would be covering today's release of the Centerfield Taxiway record of decision (ROD), and the Boston Logan Airport Noise Study (BLANS). She introduced John Silva of FAA to discuss the taxiway ROD.

**2. Centerfield Taxiway**

J. Silva announced the release of the Taxiway ROD and said that it was available on the FAA website and an announcement will be published in the Federal Register. He said the 2002 ROD deferred a decision on the taxiway so this ROD takes care of that. He explained what a ROD is and provided a brief history of the project. In 1995 an environmental impact statement (EIS) commenced and a Final EIS (FEIS) was completed in 2001. The earlier referenced ROD was written in August of 2002. J. Silva explained since then they have looked at how to do the Centerfield Taxiway with fewer impacts on communities, and as a result they developed two additional alternatives for Taxiway November and looked at 16 additional alternatives for the

Centerfield Taxiway. With this ROD, FAA has decided to approve the taxiway and to consider funding it.

J. Silva discussed the environmental impacts they were concerned with during their analysis. One was ground noise as it affects the Bayswater/Constitution Beach and Court Road areas and the other was air quality. They found that noise would decrease slightly and that the NAAQS and conformity with the state implementation plan (SIP) would still be met. He added there was a potential air quality benefit due to reduced delays. He concluded by discussing the operational impacts, saying the taxiway would reduce runway incursions and the number of runway crossing points.

Thomas Tinlin said that Mayor Menino was very concerned about the lack of process. He said transportation needs to be looked at in a regional way and that runway incursions would actually increase due to crossings of Runway 22. He said there would be more queuing on both November and Centerfield. T. Tinlin said although FAA was not required to go to meetings, the process should have been more inclusive. He suggested the results of the process feel preordained and that no one has stepped back to decide whether Logan should continue to grow. He said the three letters from the mayor should have been addressed directly by FAA.

J. Silva said the EIS already covered the Centerfield Taxiway and FAA attended over 50 meetings on the AIP that included the taxiway. He said it was never FAA's intent for this process to be as comprehensive as the one for the AIP. He described the NERASP and the role of the other airports in the region.

Jerry Falbo asked why the public was prohibited from accessing meetings for the taxiway and also why meeting minutes were not made available to the CAC. J. Silva said it was never their intent to have the same level of community involvement because that was already done through the EIS. Instead they decided to work with three representatives from each of the affected communities (East Boston and Winthrop). Tom Reilly said all representatives from the two communities expressed frustration about the consideration afforded them by FAA. He added it didn't seem fair for FAA to rule on environmental impacts on a project that they had approved.

In response to the criticism that FAA did not give the communities consideration, J. Silva said that FAA looked at 16 alternatives proposed by the communities, each of which were abandoned, mostly because of the need to preserve operational benefits. He added that Section 61 findings are Massport commitments, not FAA's.

T. Tinlin said the reason that the taxiway was pulled out in 2002 is because it was bogging down the process. He said that it was not up to the neighborhoods to carry FAA's water.

Matthew Patton suggested that they could not question FAA adequately if they do not get a response to a letter until eight months later. J. Silva said that the FAA feels that a lot of community outreach was conducted as part of the EIS. M. Patton said that a

Massport model shows queuing will occur on both Taxiway November and the Centerfield Taxiway. J. Silva replied he was not familiar with those results.

Ralph Dormitzer said it was regrettable that the CAC was not involved, suggesting it would have been an opportunity for a compromise. J. Falbo said the Centerfield taxiway was not the focus of any of the 50 meetings, and that Runway 14/32 was. He referenced a letter submitted by Susan Condon and asked why it had not been answered. J. Silva replied they received over 300 letters and that FAA uses the EPA standard to calculate emissions. The results showed this project to meet NAAQS.

An attendee asked if FAA makes tradeoffs—for example, would they trade decibels for time savings. J. Silva said EPA does not provide an oversight role like MEPA does in Massachusetts. EPA weighs in on a decision, but they do not make the call. He said FAA feels comfortable public health will not be adversely affected by this proposal.

T. Tinlin asked if it wouldn't make sense to go back and invite public health officials in to review the decision. He asked if it is possible to stop the process and focus on public health. J. Silva replied they would be happy to participate in a review of overall Logan health impacts.

J. Falbo read a letter from a Winthrop committee member and asked why the initial FAA consultant who was more experienced was fired. Gail Lattrell explained the original firm (Mitre) did not have experience in noise and air quality analysis and their contract was up anyway. She added the process was not as interactive as the CAC process. J. Falbo said the committee was at a disadvantage because they didn't have the technical experience. He described the process as four meetings over two years with six people lacking technical capabilities. J. Silva replied that FAA's consultants were directed to work with this group. He added that FAA does not regularly provide consultant expertise for FAA and the community.

T. Tinlin asked what the next steps were. J. Silva said Massport could submit an application to FAA for funding to construct the taxiway and that an appeal process for the ROD was specified at the end of the document.

### 3. **Boston Logan Airport Noise Study (BLANS)**

B. Travers-Wright introduced G. Lattrell and Steve Kelly of FAA to discuss the BLANS project. S. Kelly talked about the partnership between FAA Airports and Aerospace division. G. Lattrell gave the background of the project, describing the effectiveness of the relationship between the Project Consultant (PC) and Independent Consultant (IC). She gave a history of the CAC.

G. Lattrell next presented the baseline noise contours and described the project's approach to this point: identify alternatives eligible for a categorical exclusion and then determine the disposition of the Phase One alternatives. S. Kelly gave a quick overview of the alternatives and explained the goal of each is the reduction of the

noise footprint.

G. Lattrell reviewed the DNL contours and cumulative results in addition to the supplemental metric, 60 SEL dBA. She reviewed the project's lessons learned and next steps such as the discussion forum, website enhancements, decision-making protocol and communications protocol. She reviewed Phase Two goals and the introduction of ground noise as an issue.

S. Kelly explained the intent of the study is noise reduction, not operational benefits and mentioned the name of the project had been changed from Boston Overflight Noise Study to BLANS to reflect the inclusion of ground noise issues.

Dina Seigel said that the two processes (Centerfield Taxiway and BLANS) could not have been done more differently and that the responsiveness of the latter project should be a key lesson learned for FAA.

Maureen Kenney asked residents of East Boston and Winthrop in the room to calm themselves. She said that on foggy nights in Randolph it sounds like the planes are going to land in her yard. She said that residents in East Boston and Winthrop chose to live next to an airport and they should not try to spread the noise around to communities populated by people who did not choose to live by one. T. Reilly replied that many residents of East Boston and Winthrop did not choose to live by an airport, but that the airport moved next to them. He said the longtime residents of those communities are the ones that chose not to flee when the airport expanded. T. Tinlin said after 9/11 residents in his neighborhood of South Boston complained about not being able to sleep because of the temporary halt in air traffic. He told M. Kenney she'd get used to it.

After a break for lunch, S. Kelly explained the difference between the supplemental metrics. James Boudreau asked what 60 SEL dBA means to a layman. Jon Woodward replied that the distance from the airport where the analysis is being conducted is way beyond what has been done before for a single airport. He explained that everything coming up from the east coast to Runway 4 goes over Providence and Randolph. He explained that dBA SEL is a means to describe relative changes and people sometimes get excited without understanding its meaning. J. Woodward then used a noise monitor to demonstrate noise levels. He used Weymouth as an example and asked the group not to think about the 4 arrivals turning but instead to think about the over the top landings as an analogy for the lower South Shore. He compared Marshfield and Duxbury and said the level at which he is talking for ten seconds would be comparable to 60 SEL dBA. The analysis shows this type of event would happen 10 to 20 more times a day than it already does.

S. Kelly said that the results of the analysis are all about perceptions. Sandra Kunz said all of the disagreement from the two towns is the result of one newspaper article that presented information in a misleading way, and now there is a new member of the committee who has screwed everything up. She said this new member does not

subscribe to the group's motto "we're stronger together."

John DePriest asked for the next steps in the process. S. Kelly said the concerned community has been given 30 days for their own consultant to review the analysis. After that, FAA will move forward with a categorical exclusion. G. Lattrell added that this has been a great educational opportunity. S. Kunz said since she joined the CAC she has learned what the close-in communities deal with and has come to realize that FAA is doing its job.

J. Woodward distributed his matrix and explained the changes for certain communities (Winthrop, Rockport, Cohasset). J. DePriest asked if the contours on the map are actual tracks or a fudge factor. J. Woodward replied there is some fudge factors and explained how DNL works as well as the refinement of the model over time. He added that Massport looks at noise levels and the flight path of every plane. Ernestine Gatewood explained that night flights get a 10 DNL penalty. Steve Smith explained that DNL is a cumulative metric and is a planning tool.

J. Woodward compared DNL and SEL, explaining that 65 dBA DNL is a federal standard of significance. Robert Butman said that there is now one town happy in his district, leaving seven to go. He asked where the baseline data came from. S. Smith replied it came from the 2003 EDR which was determined with the IC to be adequate. He explained refinements had been made to extend the altitude profiles to account for the larger 25 mile study area. Flavio Leo said microphones are on 24/7 all year long and they are designed to ignore local background noise. He added the modeling is based on INM flight tracks and the microphones are all set up in close-in communities.

J. Woodward showed where there was an error in the matrix and that each of the points represents the same plane. R. Dormitzer explained the 600 number was the reporter's addition mistake. S. Smith said this was the 400 vs. 600 confusion from yesterday's briefing. Ted Langill asked what the points are. J. Woodward replied they are the same for each measure. T. Langill said he did not have a problem in Braintree, but was personally having trouble understanding the Marshfield problem. He suggested perhaps too much information had been presented. S. Kunz said too much was never enough with this group. J. Woodward said people had asked about the number of people affected and they had looked at the impacted population. The results showed 150,000 people experiencing more events and 27 million experiencing fewer (using number people X the change). S. Kunz made complimentary comments about the representative from Beverly.