

6.0 COORDINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The FAR Part 150 Study process is very interactive and seeks input from both aviation interests and community interests to resolve noise issues. The FAR Part 150 Study for the BNIA used advisory committee meetings as well as a public out reach process to garner as much input as possible.

6.1 ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The two advisory committees, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) met three times during the development of the Existing (2003) NEM and the Future (2008) Baseline NEM. These committees met two additional times during the course of the study to discuss the possible solutions to the noise issues that were identified in Volume I. Those meetings are described in Chapter 6.0 of Volume II.

Meetings of the TAC and CAC that provided a forum for discussing the development of the NEMs, as presented in Volume I, were held on:

- May 7, 2003 – TAC only
- June 4, 2003 – CAC only
- September 23, 2003 – TAC and CAC
- March 9, 2004 – TAC and CAC

Over the course of the three meetings, attendees were provided with an overview of the process, an educational session regarding aircraft noise metrics, descriptions of the airport activity assumptions for the 2003 and the 2008 noise analysis, and a description of surrounding community land use, community facilities, zoning and comprehensive planning activities. Committee representatives all received a copy of the draft of Volume I for review and comment.

The following agencies and groups were invited to participate on the TAC:

- NYSDOT – Environmental Unit
- Town of Cheektowaga Supervisor’s Office
- Town of Amherst Supervisor’s Office
- Village of Williamsville Mayor’s Office
- JetBlue Airways
- AirTran Airways
- United Parcel Service
- Federal Express
- Prior Aviation Service
- U.S. Postal Service Airport Facility
- FAA – New York Airports District Office
- FAA – Buffalo Air Traffic Control Tower

The TAC provided technical information and also reviewed and commented on technical elements of the NEMs, as relevant to their area of expertise. Perhaps the most difficult issue at the TAC meetings was acceptance of the DNL metric. Members thought a peak level was more appropriate and that single events rather than an average annual day were more easily understood. In response to this concern, Time Above (TA) contours were added to the discussion of 2003 noise impacts and compared to the DNL contours. Also single event diagrams were included in the document for the type of aircraft that serve the BNIA and also were included to illustrate the benefits of the three stages of quieter aircraft and compliance with the Federal Noise Rule. Members did not disagree with the activity assumptions in the NEMs that were developed. In fact, extensive assistance was provided on the part of the BNIA’s ATC personnel to ensure that the activity information and assumptions about airfield operation were correct.

The following groups were invited to participate on the CAC:

- Town of Cheektowaga
- Town of Amherst
- Village of Depew
- Village of Williamsville
- Village of Clarence
- Nob Hill Coalition
- Sky Harbor Corporation

- Maryvale School Board
- Cheektowaga Conservation Advisory Council
- Harlem/Kensington/Cleveland Community Association
- Concerned Clarence Homeowners
- MedLab, Inc.
- Sky Harbor Homeowners Association

Comprised principally of local officials, concerned citizens, and community groups, the CAC served as a sounding board and were responsible for ensuring that the views of the community were represented in the study. Considerably more controversy took place at the CAC meetings than at the TAC meetings. Like the TAC members, the CAC members had difficulty with the DNL metric and never fully accepted its value as a noise measure, although they clearly understood the importance of the DNL as the approved metric for determining federal funding for mitigation.

Members on the CAC expressed concern over nighttime maintenance run-ups and aircraft ground movements. Consequently, aircraft taxi movements and run-ups were added to the INM's analysis. Because maintenance run-ups are not permitted during Quiet Time, a special investigation was conducted during Quiet Time hours to look for more evidence of engine maintenance run-ups during that time period.

6.2 PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS

Three public workshops were conducted during the course of the FAR Part 150 Study for the BNIA. The first two workshops provided opportunities for the public to comment on the NEMs.

The first workshop was held on October 23, 2003. Topics that were covered at the workshop included:

- Overview of the Study's approach and its purpose
- Educational material on how aircraft noise is described
- Existing 2003 aircraft noise analysis for the BNIA
- Information on how participants can provide input to the study

The workshop was announced in local newspapers and a newsletter was mailed to 3,449 homeowners residing in the noise impact area. Excluding the NFTA and consultant personnel, 55 individuals attended the workshop. Appendix C contains the sign-in sheets, informational booklet, newsletter, related new articles and announcements and a copy of all written comments and emails that were received in association with the workshop.

Written comments were received via comment forms that were distributed at the workshop (32), letters (3) and email (16). By far, the vast majority of the comments pertained to specific noise issues regarding aircraft overflights. A small number of comments, four or five each, were received regarding: the noise assessment methodology; temporary impacts pertaining to the use of Runway 14/32 when Runway 5/23 is under construction; the importance of/need for the Study; and a desire to be more involved. A few of the comments were not relevant to the FAR Part 150 Study. Responses to all relevant comments are included in Appendix C.

The second public workshop was conducted on April 29, 2004 and 57 individuals attended. Similar to the first workshop, the workshop was announced via press releases and articles, and a newsletter was mailed to homeowners residing in the impact area. The second workshop included the informational and educational material that was available at the first workshop and presented for public comment:

- Existing (2003) Noise Exposure Map
- Future (2008) Baseline Noise Exposure Map
- Operational strategies for mitigating noise impacts
- Remedial strategies for mitigating noise impacts

Public comments that were submitted in association with the workshop are contained in Appendix D along with other materials and news clippings associated with the April 29, 2004 workshop. Twenty-six (26) comments were received in the form of comment cards or written letters and 22 in the form of emails. Written comments received in comment or letter form were much more diverse than the comments from the first workshop, and included:

- Specific complaints about aircraft overflights or ground movements (9)
- Disappointment with the information and answers provided at the workshop (4)
- Appreciation of the NFTA for being open/paying attention to the noise issue (3)
- Request for an offset approach to Runway 23 (2)
- Request for more information on sound insulation (2)
- Concern that sound insulation will not solve the problem (1)
- Support for land acquisition as a remedial measure (1)
- Concern that the NFTA would be purchasing 316 homes; this concern is a misinterpretation of the newsletter's explanation that the noise contours reduce in size between 2003 and 2008 and that fewer homes are impacted (2)
- Request for more booklets/newsletters (2)

Two written comments from advisory committee members are also included among the responses. The first is from a Councilman in Clarence who reviewed the draft of Volume I and attended one CAC meeting. This individual found the Part 150 process and the sound insulation option to be a waste of funds, did not concur with the DNL methodology used to assess noise impacts, and considered the information in Volume I to be "fluff". The second letter is from the TAC representative from the Environmental Unit of the NYSDOT. This individual provided comments on the draft of Volume I.

Almost all of the emails complained about a specific noise issue with the exception of: two that were concerned about the impact of the use of Runway 14/32 when Runway 5/23 is under construction; two that wanted more information; and one that was concerned about land acquisition.

At this point in the study, the NFTA had activated a phone line specifically for the FAR Part 150 Study. Twenty-nine (29) phone calls were received, and the essence of these calls is summarized in Appendix D (listed as 6004 under Media in the summary tabulation). With few exceptions, phone comments were directed at specific aircraft overflight or ground movement issues. Exceptions were: one caller asked why negative comments are not listed in the Study's newsletter and why there is not more accountability for the way federal funds are spent; another asked for more comment cards

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to pass out to their neighbors; another asked to be on the mailing list; another defended the Airport, saying it was there first; and two callers wanted more information.

Overall, the comments provided insight into the noise issues of importance to the community. *Volume II: Noise Compatibility Program* examines opportunities for resolving these issues.