



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Eastern Service Center
Air Traffic Organization

11 Murphy Drive
Nashua, NH 03062

August 13, 2008

Ms. Bernice Mader
President, Logan Airport Community Advisory Committee (CAC)
108 Connell Street
Quincy, MA 02169

Dear Ms. Mader:

The purpose of this letter is to document the current status of the Boston Logan Airport Noise Study (BLANS) including; project accomplishments, upcoming milestones, and the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) position on how we need to proceed to ensure Phase 2 is completed in an acceptable time frame and within the allocated budget.

Current Project Status and Accomplishments

The BLANS Phase 2 Scope of Services (SOS) dated August 16, 2006, states the following, "At the conclusion of Phase 2, the CAC and Massport will recommend a series of measures for implementation; these measures will be the subject of an environmental document to be prepared in Phase 3 that will document the potential environmental impact of the proposed measures."

The FAA grant to Massport to complete Phase 2 was \$4.6 million dollars with a contract expiration date of June 2009. Work on Phase 2 began in October 2006. As of June 31, 2008, the Project Consultant has spent 28% of its budget and the Independent Consultant has spent 38% of its budget. In addition, the schedule to complete Phase 2 has slipped two years with the project now estimated to run through June 2011. See enclosed project schedule and implications of the schedule slippage described below under FAA's position.

To date, many resources have been expended in Phase 2 by all participants related to data collection, technical analyses, discussion on policy matters, public outreach and education, etc. Major accomplishments include but are not limited to: (1) completion of the project communication plan, (2) completion of the noise modeling protocol, (3) establishment of a Phase 2 project management protocol, (4) outreach to the elected officials and media, (5) 2005 noise (INM) and operational modeling (Total Airport and Airspace Model – TAAM; noise is about 60% complete and operational modeling is about 90% complete), (6) identification of over 30 noise abatement measures by the CAC for Level 1 screening, and (7) completion of a "draft" Level 1 Screening report that summarizes the safety and operational analysis conducted by the FAA and Massport on the CAC noise abatement

measures. We acknowledge that these accomplishments have occurred amidst the challenges that CAC faces as a volunteer organization.

Tasks to be Completed

In order to conclude Phase 2 and identify noise abatement measures for further study in Phase 3, it is necessary to: (1) establish clear CAC noise abatement goals and objectives for Phase 2, (2) finalize the Level 1 Screening Report, (3) identify the list of measures to evaluate in Level 2 screening, (4) collect and analyze data on the departures and arrivals in the vicinity of the DRUNK intersection for the Marshfield measures, (5) complete the existing conditions and TAAM modeling, (6) finalize the no action alternative modeling, (7) complete the Level 2 analysis, (8) complete the Level 3 analysis; and (9) discuss and determine whether the Preferential Runway Advisory System should be updated and further examined in Phase 3.

First, it is critical that the CAC goals be identified up front to set the framework that CAC will use to determine which measures to recommend for implementation and further study. Once approved by the FAA, the CAC goals will be incorporated into a purpose and need statement in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

In general, the FAA's role in defining the purpose and need for the BLANS is to ensure that it is structured so that decisions on alternatives will not be arbitrary and capricious, that it is consistent with prior policy statements and decisions regarding Logan Airport operations as well as other FAA regulations and policies, and that it only allows for implementation of measures that are safe and efficient.

Although the FAA will consider the noise abatement goals of the CAC, as an agency we are primarily committed to reducing the number of people that are exposed to DNL 65 dB or greater. We have also interpreted the term "adversely" in the 2002 Airside Environmental Impact Statement, Record of Decision to mean "significant" impacts. For noise impacts to residential areas the term "significant" is defined in FAA Order 1050.1E as...*an action that will cause noise sensitive areas to experience an increase in noise of DNL 1.5 dB or more at or above DNL 65 dB noise exposure when compared to the no action alternative for the same timeframe.* This threshold is required as part of an FAA's noise analysis under NEPA per FAA Order 1050.1E.

In addition, the BLANS SOS assumes that 18 measures will be evaluated in the Level 2 screening analysis for budgetary purposes. Any additional measures will impact the budget and require reallocation of funds to that task. We recommend that the CAC limit the number to 18 (or fewer) in accordance with the BLANS SOS. Before a final number is determined, CAC must also decide if they want to recommend any of the measures proposed by the elected representatives to the FAA or Massport for Level 1 Screening. I have already forwarded these to you for consideration by the CAC.

FAA's Position

The FAA remains committed to continue to work with the CAC and Massport to complete Phase 2 of the BLANS within the current budget. We do not anticipate approval of additional funds for Phase 2. As we discussed on the July 28th Project Management Team telecon, the FAA is concerned that the project schedule has already slipped by two years and will continue to slip until the CAC establishes clear noise abatement goals.

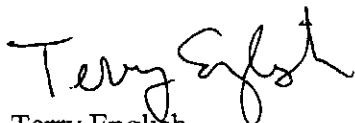
Adding time to the schedule increases the project management costs which currently are only allocated to June, 2009. The contract can be amended to extend the schedule, but this will require subtracting funds from other project tasks to pay for the two additional years of project management costs. The costs for any technical analyses should stay fairly fixed, but the effort on other work tasks will have to be limited. Continued delay in the schedule will again continue to limit work efforts on other tasks that were initially desired. In order to reallocate funds within the existing budget, the FAA will require a scope reassessment in accordance with the BLANS SOS, Task 1.4.

Before a scope reassessment, the CAC will need to establish clear noise abatement goals and objectives for Phase 2 as described above. For budgetary purposes, we expect CAC to complete this by the end of October 2008. Until this is completed, the FAA has directed the project consultant to stop work on any tasks related to alternatives analysis screening until further notified. This direction is within the purview of the FAA, who has overall responsibility for the management of this project as stated in the BLANS SOS. Work will continue on such things as; (1) TAAMS, (2) modeling the existing conditions, (3) modeling the no action alternative, (4) any Phase 1 implementation efforts, and (5) minor project management costs.

In closing, I hope this letter clarifies the current project status, upcoming milestones, and our future expectations for the BLANS. We are encouraged by the progress made in Phase 1 and remain optimistic that we can continue a good working relationship to finalize Phase 2 within the current budget.

Please contact me at (603) 881-1388 if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Terry English
Project Manager, Boston Logan Airport Noise Study

Enclosure

cc: Flavio Leo, Massport
Steve Smith, Ricondo and Associates, Inc
Jon Woodward, Landrum and Brown, Inc.