



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

Illinois, Indiana, Michigan
Minnesota, North Dakota,
Ohio, South Dakota,
Wisconsin

Great Lakes Region
2300 East Devon Avenue
Des Plaines, Illinois 60018

REGIONAL GUIDANCE LETTER (RGL)—AIRPORTS DIVISION

NUMBER: 5050.10

DATE: October 14, 2010

SUBJECT: FAA Oversight of Environmental Processing in Block-Grant States

REFERENCES: FAA Order 5050.4B (“National Environmental Policy Act [NEPA] Implementing Instructions for Airport Actions”)

Background and Policy

FAA Order 5050.4B included provisions clarifying FAA’s oversight responsibility for environmental processing in the State Block Grant Program (SBGP). In particular, Paragraph 213 (“FAA Oversight of the SBGP and Actions Connected to SBGP Actions”) states that:

Although Congress authorized FAA to enter into contracts with states to administer the SBGP for certain non-primary airports, FAA remains responsible for the activities listed below and for overseeing the portion of the SBGP for which the participating state is responsible. This oversight is needed to ensure the participant is honoring its commitment to the contractual agreements it made when it became a SBGP participant. [Emphasis added.]

Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Airports Division, Great Lakes Region that any Airports District Office (ADO) having a state under the SBGP must conduct a formal, periodic review of the state’s performance. This PPM is intended to provide guidelines for such reviews, including the following considerations:

1. Frequency. Each ADO shall conduct a formal review at least once every three years. In addition, in cases where the ADO or another Federal agency identifies significant unresolved issues, whether substantive or procedural, the ADO may, in its sole discretion, conduct more frequent or detailed reviews.
2. Scope of Review. The review shall examine specific projects (see further guidelines below); program-level policies and procedures; and the effectiveness of coordination between the state agency, the FAA and other Federal and state resource agencies.
3. Project Selection. The ADO Manager shall determine the number and specific types of projects to review, with consideration of the following:
 - a. Examine a broad representation of different project types, aviation facilities,

environmental issues and regulatory processes,

b. Include a representative sample of all environmental documents (CATEX, EAs),

c. Identify examples of best practices to be emulated as well as areas of concern,

d. Help the state in optimizing relationships among Federal and state agencies involved in both supporting transportation infrastructure and addressing environmental issues,

e. Implementation of program level policies and procedures.

4. The ADO shall submit a proposed plan to the Planning/Programming Branch for completing the review by January 31st of the audit year. The plan shall include at a minimum:

a. Schedule,

b. Staffing (including any requested assistance or participation from the Planning/Programming Branch or another ADO),

c. Scope of proposed review (e.g., types of projects, geographic scope, etc.),

d. Incorporation of the preceding report's conclusions and recommendations,

e. Evaluation of actions taken to implement recommendations identified in previous reports or any actions taken to improve the SBGP.

5. Within 30 days of completing the review, the ADO will give a draft of its report to the state for the state's review. The state shall have 30 days to comment on the draft report. The state's comments shall be included as an appendix to the final report.

6. After reviewing comments received from the state and the Planning/Program Branch, the ADO will complete the report.

7. The final report shall be completed no later than December 1st of the audit year.

8. Subsequent reviews and reports shall be completed at least once every three years starting with the audit year 2011.

9. The ADO will give copies of the final report to the state, the Airports Division Manager and the Planning/Programming Branch. The Planning/Programming Branch will provide a copy to the Airports Planning and Environmental Division (APP-400). Circulation of the report will be to the FAA and the state, however, this PPM does not supersede the Freedom of Information Act.

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Great Lakes Region