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

Great Lakes Region
2300 E. Devon Ave.
Des Plaines, IL 60018

OCT 06 2009

Mayor Arlene Mulder
Village Hall of Arlington Heights
33 South Arlington Heights Road
Arlington Heights, IL 60005

Dear Mayor Mulder,

I am writing in regard to information that was shared at a September 17, 2009 O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC) Technical/Flight Procedures Subcommittee meeting, and to reiterate the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA's) previously stated position on a specific subject discussed at that meeting.

The focus of the above-referenced meeting was intended to be a general overview of satellite-based navigation procedures, provided by a representative of the City of Chicago. I was informed that, once the meeting discussions began, the predominant discussion took place between American Airlines representatives and the subcommittee members. The American Airlines representatives offered information regarding both Area Navigation (RNAV) and Required Navigation Performance (RNP) procedures that American Airlines utilizes at other airports, and they suggested that O'Hare operations could accommodate, and perhaps benefit from, the near-term implementation of these types of procedures. The American Airlines representatives further stated that they intended to initiate the process to develop and implement such procedures for O'Hare.

The FAA has stated previously, in response to questions concerning employment of satellite-based procedures, that our agency is committed to the development of RNAV and RNP procedures throughout the National Airspace System (NAS), including O'Hare. In fact, we currently have in place RNAV arrival procedures at O'Hare today, and the potential may exist for the development of additional satellite-based procedures in the near term. However, we have further explained that current airspace complexities in and around Chicago, including multiple parallel runway operations at O'Hare, preclude the near term development of RNAV/RNP arrival procedures that would deviate from the standard "straight-in" arrival routes and procedures in place at O'Hare today. Moreover, FAA policy currently does not allow the use of standard instrument landing system (ILS) approach procedures (today's procedures) and satellite-based arrival procedures concurrently on adjacent parallel runways. While it is true that RNAV/RNP arrival procedures have already been employed at a number of locations around the country, they primarily overlay the existing ILS approach procedures. In most instances, they involve a stand-alone arrival route (i.e. no parallel runway) and few, if any, adjacent airspace constraints, which is not the case concerning any arrival route into O'Hare.

My primary interest at this moment, and the reason for this letter, is to ensure that those present at the September 17, 2009 ONCC subcommittee meeting, and all others interested in the subject of satellite-based procedures, are not misled regarding the near-term feasibility of developing the types of satellite-based arrival procedures that were discussed in the subcommittee meeting. I ask the assistance of the ONCC to ensure that any such misunderstandings are quickly addressed.

As you know, the FAA is committed to working with the City of Chicago, and the ONCC, to minimize impacts to communities surrounding O'Hare, while also supporting the City of Chicago's responsibility to operate O'Hare in the safest and most efficient manner possible. If you have questions or would like to further discuss the information contained in the above paragraphs, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Barry D. Cooper
Regional Administrator
Great Lakes Region

cc: Rosemarie Andolino, City of Chicago, Commissioner of Aviation