

Office of the Administrator

800 Independence Ave., S.W. Washington, DC 20591

August 18, 2023

The Honorable Patty Murray Chair, Committee on Appropriations United States Senate Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Murray:

This letter is the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) report to Congress on the progress in meeting the requirements of Title I of the Senate Report 116-109.

Over the past 5 years, the FAA has taken a very different posture in how we engage with airports and communities before, during, and after we make airspace changes. The FAA has always followed the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); however, we have recognized the need to work with greater transparency, as well as to improve our communication around those changes so that airport operators, community roundtables, and other interested parties understand the scope of the change.

- In coordination with the Miami International Airport (MIA) Noise Abatement Advisory Board and the Miami-Dade Aviation Department, the FAA re-aligned departure paths east and west from the runways to conform to traditional noise tracks and mitigate impacts on adjacent communities.
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- At the request of the Broward County Aviation Department, residents east and west of Fort Lauderdale Airport, and the Fort Lauderdale Airport Noise Abatement Committee (ANAC), the FAA made departure flight track adjustments in response to noise concerns. Proposals forwarded by the city of Fort Lauderdale also required an additional response.
- In Orlando, at the request of the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority and ANAC, the FAA designed departure flight tracks north of the airport to remain east of a noise-impacted community.
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- In Portland, Maine, FAA is working with the airport and the community on a short and longterm solution to keep aircraft higher and over the water longer. The proposed solution involves waypoint changes to charted visual procedures to address daytime flights; and with the carriers to develop a longer-term RNAV solution that would allow aircraft to fly the harbor at night, which is what the community and airport have requested. This approach captures both waypoint relocation and a "noise alternative route," which are dispersion concepts.
- In Lake Arrowhead, California, the FAA worked with stakeholders, including local government, congressional offices, industry, and the relevant airport, to adjust the flight path so that aircraft fly over a less inhabited area. This flight path change could be called a "noise alternative route."
- In the San Francisco area, based on input and collaboration with affected communities, the San Francisco Airport (SFO), the Oakland Airport, their respective airport roundtables, elected officials, and airlines, the FAA agreed to complete an analysis to determine if it is operationally feasible to require overnight departures out of SFO to fly over the bay rather than over the city. FAA has since confirmed that flying over the bay rather than the city during overnight departures is operationally feasible.
- In Fort Lauderdale, Florida, when increased operations and runway construction caused increased noise complaints west of Ft Lauderdale Airport, the FAA worked with the local airport and the air traffic operational team to have flights maintain a higher altitude for a more extended period than usual. The surrounding community has recognized the effort and the change.

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- In Jackson, Wyoming, FAA is working collaboratively with the Jackson Hole Airport (the only airport in a National Park), the community, and the leadership at the National Park to determine if it is possible to introduce an RNAV procedure that will adjust the flight path over a less inhabited area and provide less disruption to migrating wildlife in the park.
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The FAA utilizes the Aviation Environmental Design Tool (AEDT), a software system that models aircraft performance in space and time to estimate fuel consumption, emissions, noise, and air quality consequences. The AEDT is a comprehensive tool that provides FAA stakeholders with information on these specific environmental impacts. In addition, the AEDT facilitates environmental review activities required under NEPA by consolidating the modeling of these environmental impacts into a single tool.

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We look forward to continued collaboration with your staff and would be happy to schedule a time to brief you further if desired.

A similar letter has been sent to the Vice Chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations and the Chairwoman and Ranking member of the House Committee on Appropriations.

Polly Trottenberg

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August 18, 2023

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Dear Vice Chair Collins:

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