

# **Part 150: Records of Approval**

## **Westover Air Reserve Base, Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts**

**Approved on 1/26/96**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Westover Metropolitan Development Corporation sponsored an Airport Noise Compatibility Planning Study under a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grant, in compliance with Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR), Part 150. The Noise Exposure Maps (NEM) were developed and submitted to FAA on January 26, 1994. The NEM was determined to be in compliance on July 31, 1995. The determination was announced in the Federal Register on August 11, 1995. The Noise Compatibility Program (NCP) was submitted to FAA for review and approval on June 2, 1995 and notice of FAA's review of the NCP was announced concurrently in the August 11, 1995, Federal Register.

The Part 150 Study was closely monitored by an advisory committee which represented area municipalities, airport users, and community residents. A series of advisory committee meetings was held, with the airport's consultant presenting material and findings. Two public information meetings were held. The consultant addressed comments at all of these meetings, and subsequent written comments as well.

The study focused on defining an optimum set of noise and land use mitigation measures to improve compatibility between airport operations and community land use, presently and in the future.

The resultant program is described in detail in the "Noise Compatibility Program" section of the study, sections 2 and 3. Section 2 describes the NCP elements and Section 3 analyzes alternatives and contains an implementation plan. The program elements below summarize as closely as possible the airport operator's recommendations in the noise compatibility program and are cross-referenced to the program. The statements contained within the summarized recommendations and before the indicated FAA approval, disapproval, or other determinations do not represent the opinions or decisions of the FAA.

The approvals which follow include actions which the Westover Metropolitan Development Corporation recommends be taken by FAA. It should be noted that these approvals indicate only that the actions would, if implemented, be consistent with the purposes of Part 150. These approvals do not constitute decisions to implement the actions. Later decisions concerning possible implementation of these actions may be subject to applicable environmental or other procedures or requirements.

### **2.0 PROGRAM ELEMENTS**

#### **2.1 Noise Abatement Elements**

**2.1.1.** Extension of Existing Civil Aircraft Preferential Runway (Runway 5 for departures and Runway 23 for landings) when the tower begins operations on a full 24-hour schedule. Use from

11 pm to 7 am, until Forecasted 1998 operations of 3-4 nighttime turbojet (above 75,000 pounds) operations occur (sections 2.1.1 and 3.1.1) (identified as "Original 1998 Forecast" in Table 3.2). This measure is recommended in combination with the next noise abatement element.

**Approved as voluntary.** There are currently no civil operations between 11 pm and 7 am, since the airport is closed. The hours of operation of the ATCT and airport (7 am to 11 pm) are established by the Air Force Reserve. A noise abatement benefit of approximately 1.5 DNL would conservatively accrue to occur to up to 2400 people who reside in more densely populated areas to the south of the airport within the 65-75 DNL contour areas (Figure 3.1 and Tables 3.1 and 3.2). A reevaluation of this measure will be needed in order to compare continued preferential use with implementation of the related land use measure to acquire or soundproof residences.

**2.1.2. Noise Abatement Departure Procedures for Military Aircraft on Runway 23** (sections 2.1.2 and 3.1.2). The Air Force operates mainly to the south due to placement of NAVAIDS. As part of noise mitigation for the flow of military operations for C-5s that remain in the local area, Air Force and Bradley Tower (the parent FAA air traffic control facility for Westover) would develop procedures for a right turn after take-off or missed approach to a heading of approximately 360 degrees at an altitude of 600 feet above ground level. Traffic permitting, Bradley would provide individual clearances through Westover Tower. After the initial right turn and upon positive radar contact, aircraft would be vectored by Bradley along a downwind leg and then cleared to turn inbound to intercept a final approach course of one of the instrument approaches used for training in the local area. For C-5s or other military aircraft departing the local area ATC would provide a clearance to turn after takeoff based on aircraft destination--either to a heading of 205 degrees (a 25 degree left turn) for aircraft departing towards the Hartford, Dream, Putnam, Norwich, Gardner, and Madison navigational fixes, or to an initial heading of 255 degrees (25 degree right turn) towards Keene, Pawling, Chester, and Barnes. As above, individual clearances would be through Westover Tower prior to take-off. Following positive radio and radar contact with Bradley, aircraft would be vectored on course. Noise abatement headings could be expected between 10 pm (2200) and 6 am (0600). During other hours, it is recommended that Westover Tower request a noise abatement heading, recognizing that each military jet aircraft cleared to turn will be left to the discretion of Bradley Approach Control.

**Approved as voluntary.** C-5 aircraft SEL contour analysis indicates that, given the Air Force Reserve right-hand local traffic pattern, noise exposure can be minimized with earlier turns (Figure 3.2). For traffic departing the local area, this analysis indicates that, given the need to avoid traffic conflicts within the Bradley Approach Control area and the need to vector aircraft somewhat in accordance with flight plan routes, earlier turns to the left or right can reduce population exposure (Figure 3.2).

**2.1.3. Noise Abatement Departure Procedures for Civilian Aircraft on Runway 23.** When civil aircraft operate to the south, the Air Force and Bradley Approach Control would develop IFR procedures that would permit civil aircraft to make early turns to 205 or 255 degrees after take-off from Runway 23. As in the previous noise abatement measure, assigned headings would be based on aircraft route of flight, issued to pilots by Westover Tower so that turns may be initiated prior to radar contact with Bradley, and expected between 10 pm (2200) and 6 am (0600). At other times Westover Tower would request the noise abatement headings for Stage 2 aircraft and it would be issued at Bradley's discretion, traffic permitting.

**Approved as voluntary.** This noise abatement element, in conjunction with the next noise abatement element, Noise Abatement Departure Procedures for Civilian Aircraft on Runway 5, would reduce noise exposure to approximately 200 people within the DNL 65-75 contour areas (Figure 3.3 and Table 3.3).

**2.1.4. Noise Abatement Departure Procedures for Civilian Aircraft on Runway 5.** This measure is proposed in conjunction with the voluntary acquisition and relocation program proposed below. It

would be applicable between 10 pm (2200) and 6 am (0600) and consists of a departure heading of 080 degrees, extended as practical to 205 or 255 degrees for traffic with clearance toward Hartford and Pawling, respectively. Traffic with clearance toward Chester would be given a subsequent left turn when at least 3 DME from the Westover VOR (in order to remain clear of the Acrebrook subdivision). Clearances would be issued by Westover Tower after agreement on departure clearance procedures with Bradley Approach Control. They would be issued by Westover Tower to pilots prior to take-off so that turns may be initiated as soon as possible , prior to radar contact with Bradley.

**Approved as voluntary.** As stated in the approval of the previous measure, this noise abatement element, in conjunction with Noise Abatement Departure Procedures for Civilian Aircraft on Runway 23, would reduce noise exposure to approximately 200 people within the 65-75 DNL contour areas (Figure 3.3 and Table 3.3).

## 2.2 Land Use Elements

**2.2.1. Voluntary Land Acquisition and Relocation Program.** For approximately 150 residences exposed to 70 DNL or above, the Westover Metropolitan Development Corporation (WMDC) proposes to implement a voluntary purchase and relocation program to eliminate or significantly reduce the number of people remaining in areas of high noise exposure after implementation of all other operational noise abatement elements. WMDC would consider including additional homes in the purchase program on a case-by-case basis. A noise easement would be secured on all acquired property.

**Approved.** It is not considered within the meaning of the Uniform Act, to be a “voluntary” transaction if the homeowners’ property is destroyed and converted to other compatible land uses. If the property’s use will be the same, it is considered a voluntary transaction under the Uniform Act, but the homeowner does not qualify for relocation payments. Only tenant occupants would be eligible for relocation payments.

**2.2.2. Voluntary Sound Insulation Program.** This measure would apply to approximately 900 residences within the 65 DNL contour, as well as those within the 70 DNL contour but not sold under the voluntary acquisition program. A noise easement would be acquired in exchange for sound insulation.

**Approved.**

**2.2.3. Compatible Use Zoning.** To minimize chances that new noncompatible land uses will be developed within the DNL 65 dB contour, it is proposed that each of the five communities of Chicopee, Granby, Ludlow, Springfield, and South Hadley consider adopting suitable zoning to limit residential use in high noise exposed areas. **Approved.** FAA strongly discourages new noncompatible development within the DNL 65 dB contour, and new development may not be eligible for future mitigation using Federal funding.

**2.2.4. Airport Overlay District.** WMDC would recommend that the communities of Chicopee and Granby adopt an airport overlay district which encompasses land within the 65 DNL contour. They would also recommend that the town of Ludlow change the boundaries of its airport overlay district to include all of the land within the forecasted 1998 contour.

**Approved.**

**Subdivision Regulations.** WMDC would recommend that the town of Granby amend its subdivision regulations to require noise easements on all newly created lots within the airport’s 65

DNL contour. WMDC would work with town officials in preparing amendments to the Bylaws of the Town of Granby, Volume IV, Chapter XXII.

**Approved.** FAA strongly discourages new noncompatible development within the DNL 65 dB contour, and new development may not be eligible for future mitigation using Federal funding.

### 2.3 Implementation, Monitoring, and Review Elements

**2.3.1 Pilot Awareness Program.** WMDC would publish a pamphlet of noise abatement practices to be distributed to civilian pilots through the Fixed Base Operator and WMDC's airport management. The pamphlet would include a map of noise sensitive areas around the airport and describe the operational measures which WMDC has adopted for noise abatement, including use of noise abatement departure procedures recommended by the National Business Aircraft Association or by individual aircraft manufacturers. WMDC would also install signs in all terminal areas frequented by civilian pilots and along ramp and taxiway areas controlled by WMDC, instructing pilots to follow noise abatement procedures.

**Approved.** The content and location of airfield signs are subject to specific approval by appropriate FAA officials outside of the Part 150 process and are not approved in advance by this action. Such signs must not be construed as mandatory air traffic procedures.

**2.3.2 Public Awareness Program.** To promote good public relations WMDC would issue from time to time public releases, which it would send to local papers, town libraries, and other public facilities, describing the latest developments in its noise compatibility program.

**Approved.**

**2.3.3 Monitoring Nighttime Operations and Runway Use.** WMDC would log nighttime activity between 10 pm (2200) and 7 am (0700). Logs would include time, type aircraft, registration/flight number, landing or take-off, runway used, and wind and weather conditions. The information would be used to determine compliance with WMDC's nighttime noise rule and to help provide guidance to Air Force contract tower personnel to determine compliance with the preferential runway use program.

**Approved in part;** disapproved in part, pending submission of additional information to make an informed analysis. This measure is approved for purposes of Part 150, except with respect to the information being used to determine compliance with the nighttime noise rule. The WMDC has not submitted for review under Part 150 either the current nighttime restriction or the proposed amendments to its nighttime noise rule (pages 13-15 and 39-42 of the NCP). There is insufficient information for the FAA to determine whether compliance with the noise rule would meet the approval standards contained in 14 CFR Part 150.

Airport noise and access restrictions proposed after October 1, 1990, must be adopted in compliance with the Airport Noise and Capacity Act of 1990 (recodified at P.L. 103-272), 49 USC 47521 (hereinafter referred to as "ANCA"), as implemented by 14 CFR Part 161.

**2.3.4 Using a basic spreadsheet program,** WMDC would compute estimates of changes in noise exposure related to changes in scheduled civil jet operations, changes in civil nighttime operations, or changes in total nighttime civil operations. WMDC would submit an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) to the Massachusetts Secretary of Environmental Affairs for any change in noise exposure greater than 1.5 dBA above the forecasted exposure included in the noise compatibility planning program and would initiate a review of its Noise Compatibility Program. Finally, if noise exposure reaches that forecasted in the noise exposure map, WMDC would initiate an update to the noise compatibility planning study in 1999 and 5-year intervals thereafter.

Each update would address fully the noise exposure and incompatible land use existing at the time.

**Approved.** A basic spreadsheet program may be used as a screening tool. A screening tool, such as the FAA's Area Equivalent Method, may be a useful indicator as to whether there has been a significant change in the noise environment warranting a revision to the NEM per section 150.21 of Part 150.