

Part 150: Records of Approval

Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport, Gulfport, Mississippi

Approved on 8/24/04

The Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport (GPT), Gulfport, Mississippi, Noise Compatibility Program (NCP) describes the current and future non-compatible land uses based upon the parameters established in Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 150, Airport Noise Compatibility Planning. Preparation of the Part 150 study is an update to and replaces the NCP approved by the FAA on April 1, 1994. The program recommends a total of fourteen measures to prevent the introduction of additional non-compatible land uses and to reduce the effect of the noise generated at the airport. The recommendations include two noise abatement measures, one noise mitigation measures, eight land use measures, and three program management measures. Seven measures are, in whole or in part, continuations of existing policies previously approved under Part 150. The recommended program measures are summarized on Pages 12-2 through 12-11 of the NCP.

The measures are identified below by program element and referenced to the NCP by page number. Each element summarizes as closely as possible the airport operator's recommendations as found in the NCP. 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 listed herein include approvals of actions that the Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport Authority (GBRAA) recommends be taken by the Federal Aviation Administration (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. These approvals do not constitute a commitment by the FAA to provide federal financial assistance for these projects. Later decisions concerning possible implementation of the actions may be subject to applicable environmental or other procedures or requirements.

1 - Noise Abatement Element

1. Establish preferential runway use program. (Pages 10-2 through 10-8; page 12-2)

Description: This measure recommends a twelve-month trial period of preferential north flow followed by implementation of either 5 or 10 percent, if the trial indicates the program is safe and likely to shift a minimum of 5 to 10 percent total operations. To implement this shift, GBRAA would work with Gulfport ATC to first establish a trial twelve-month period of informal preferential runway use procedures for its controllers to utilize at GPT. These procedures would instruct local controllers to operate the Airport in a north flow configuration when wind, weather and safety permits. A 5 percent shift could reduce population impacted by 112; a 10 percent shift could reduce population impacted by 149. Should it be determined that a 5-10 percent shift is not being accomplished, the GBRAA may wish to opt for more remedial actions for the number of homes and persons expected to benefit from this program. Use of the appropriate (forecast year) NEM will change recommendations further within this chapter, mainly pertaining to the land acquisition and sound insulation recommendations.

FAA Action: Disapproved. The recommendation to institute a preferential north flow of traffic could adversely affect the efficient use and management of the navigable airspace (Part 150 approval criteria, section 150.35). Factors considered in reaching this decision include (1) Runways 32 and 36 cross at the approach end resulting in a single runway for arrivals, while Runway 14 and 18 do not cross which allows simultaneous arrivals, (2) the NDB approach is available to Runway 14 but not for Runway 32, and as GPT has significant training activity, the NDB approach is requested almost daily.

2. Modify departure flight tracks from Runways 14 and 18. (Pages 10-8 through 10-9; page 12-2; also see Exhibits 7-4, 7-5 and 7-6 on Pages 7-12, 7-13 and 7-14 respectively)

Description: GBRAA would work with Gulfport ATC to implement flight track modifications informally. GPT ATC could revise internal training and operational procedures instructing controllers to prevent southbound aircraft departing Runway 14 and 18 from turning on course prior to reaching the shoreline. While existing flight tracks do not depict any turns before the seashore, aircraft turning before reaching the sea have been observed. This procedure would not be mandatory, only preferred when conditions allow and conducted over a twelve-month trial period to determine its success. Pilots would be instructed to follow runway headings (140 or 180 degrees) until reaching the seashore or climbing to 2,000 feet above mean sea level, where they would be permitted to turn on course to their destination. The implementation of this procedure prevents early turnouts over close-in neighborhoods, which has been identified as an annoyance at public meetings, but does not significantly change the NEM. Therefore success or failure of this recommendation will not impact other recommendation in the NCP.

FAA Action: Approved as voluntary.

2 - Noise Mitigation Element

1. Construct noise barriers at Site C. (Pages 10-14 through 10-17; pages 12-3 and 12-4; also see Page 10-16)

Description: The Part 150 Study identified five residential areas as possible candidates for noise barriers. These sites are located immediately adjacent to GPT and the homes are mostly parallel to the airport boundary. In order to provide any noise reduction benefit, the barrier should be located as near as possible to the homes. Only homes with an unobstructed line of sight to GPT would benefit. A reasonable cost per home affected was

determined to be \$15,000 per unit. The estimated cost of the fence was calculated by dividing the full cost of the barrier by the number of benefiting households in order to determine whether the cost of a noise barrier was reasonable. Based on the \$15,000 per unit threshold, only Site C with 84 homes was determined to be a reasonable candidate for construction of a noise barrier. Because of Site C's high noise levels, sound insulation or land acquisition are likely to be the most appropriate course of action.

FAA Action: Approved. While FAA guidelines do not prohibit more than one type of mitigation in the same area, the NCP states on page 10-15 that a noise barrier will be constructed only if sound insulation or land acquisition are not undertaken. These other measure(s) are the preferred choice.

3 - Land Use Element

1. Maintain current zoning (Pages 11-4, 12-4, and Appendix B)

Description: No change to the existing zoning ordinance is recommended. Maintaining the current City Zoning Ordinance offers the City of Gulfport the opportunity to control the introduction of non-compatible land uses in the future.

FAA Action: Approved for purposes of Part 150 to the extent the zoning ordinance is consistent with FAA policy. FAA's policy, published in the Federal Register: April 3, 1998 (Volume 63, Number 64) prohibits mitigation of homes built after October 1, 1998. The Federal government has no authority to control local land use; the local government has the authority to implement this measure.

2. Amend noise overlay district (Page 12-5, Appendix B)

Description: No change to the existing ordinance is recommended. However, it is recommended that the provisions established under the *Airport Environ and Airspace Zoning District* remain in place and continue to be used.

FAA Action: Approved for purposes of Part 150 to the extent the zoning ordinance is consistent with FAA policy. FAA's policy, published in the Federal Register: April 3, 1998 (Volume 63, Number 64) prohibits mitigation of homes built after October 1, 1998. The Federal government has no authority to control local land use; the local government has the authority to implement this measure.

3. Amend Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Pages 11-4, 12-5)

Description: No change to the existing Comprehensive Land Use Plan is recommended. It is recommended, however, that the provisions established under the current Comprehensive Plan remain in place and continue to be used.

FAA Action: Approved for purposes of Part 150 to the extent the land use plan is consistent with FAA policy. FAA's policy, published in the Federal Register: April 3, 1998 (Volume 63, Number 64) prohibits mitigation of homes built after October 1, 1998. The Federal government has no authority to control local land use; the local government has the authority to implement this measure.

4. Purchase Noise Sensitive Sites (fee simple) (Pages 11-5, 12-5)

Description: The Part 150 Study recommends that the properties within the DNL 75 dB noise contour be acquired. The study identifies 32 residences and one church within this noise contour level for the forecast year (see Table 11.1). Additional homes may qualify under Part 150 for fee simple acquisition if they are located adjacent to the home that would be acquired within the contour and will be exposed to noise levels just under DNL 75 dB. The properties to be acquired will be purchased in accordance with the provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Properties Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended. In addition, project assurances for land acquisition will be submitted with the pre-application for federal assistance.

FAA Action: Approved. FAA's policy, published in the Federal Register: April 3, 1998 (Volume 63, Number 64) prohibits mitigation of homes built after October 1, 1998.

5. Obtain Aviation Easement for Noise Sensitive Sites (voluntary basis) (Pages 12-5, Exhibits 12-1, 12-2, and 12-3)

Description: Aviation easements are recommended for residential structures within the DNL 65 and 70 dB noise contours. This alternative provides for monetary compensation to residents within noise sensitive areas. It may be obtained as an individual measure or in conjunction with other actions such as soundproofing, acquisition, or purchase assurance. This Alternative, however, makes no provisions for reducing noise levels to existing sensitive sites. This alternative would continue implementation of aviation easements for noise sensitive sites established under the previous Part 150 Study.

FAA Action: Approved.

6. Amend Building Codes (Pages 11-7, 12-9)

This alternative will make provisions for new structures to have reduced noise levels and improved energy efficiency. It makes no provisions, however, for the reduction of noise levels for existing structures and/or outdoor activities. This alternative would continue implementation of amended building code requirements established in the previous Part 150 Study.

FAA Action: Disapproved for purposes of Part 150. New noncompatible development, even with sound attenuation, is inconsistent with FAA's policy, published in the Federal Register: April 3, 1998 (Volume 63, Number 64). This policy prohibits FAA mitigation of homes built after October 1, 1998. Sound attenuation will provide a degree of noise mitigation. This disapproval for purposes of Part 150 does not prohibit local authorities to implement this preventive measure. The Federal government has no authority to control local building codes; the local government has the authority to implement this measure.

7. Provide Soundproofing for existing noise sensitive structures (voluntary basis) (Pages 11-8, 12-9)

Description: The program limits soundproofing to existing homes located within the DNL 70 dB noise contour. The number of homes potentially eligible is approximately 435 to 443. Schools and churches within the DNL 70 dB noise contour also are included in this recommended voluntary soundproofing program.

FAA Action: Approved.

8. Continue Noise Disclosure (Pages 11-8, 12-9)

Description: This alternative requires that prospective buyers of land be notified that a parcel is located in or will be located within a noise zone and is subject to noise resulting from aircraft operations. This alternative will continue the requirement on a local level and would require coordination with local realtors. The noise disclosure regulation was established in the previous Part 150 Study.

FAA Action: Approved. The Federal government has no authority to control local regulations; the local government has the authority to implement this measure. New noncompatible development is inconsistent with FAA's policy, published in the Federal Register: April 3, 1998 (Volume 63, Number 64). This policy prohibits FAA mitigation of homes built after October 1, 1998.

4 - Program Management Elements

1. Noise Abatement Pilot's Brochure (Pages 10-9 through 10-12, page 12-3)

Description: Since several of the operational recommendations suggest modification of flight procedures and a general awareness of noise sensitive areas surrounding GPT, development of a noise abatement pilot's brochure is recommended. This brochure would provide pilots with one source of information explaining the various procedures and policies recommended as part of the NCP. GBRAA would make this brochure available to commercial, general aviation and military interests at GPT. The brochure might also be tailored specifically for major types of operators or combined into one document.

FAA Action: Approved. Approval of a pilot's brochure is not approval of aircraft operational procedures described on page 12-3. The NCP includes two operational procedures in Chapter 10; Element 2 has been approved as voluntary in this ROA. Element 2 is to modify departure flight tracks from Runways 14 and 18. Final language for inclusion in publications must be coordinated with FAA prior to distribution.

2. Noise Complaint Procedures (Pages 10-17 and 12-4)

Description: GBRAA staff would develop written internal policy addressing noise complaints and provide a contact point for citizen noise concerns. At this time it is not expected that a separate phone number or phone line is necessary. (Airport records show four complaints on file between 1/1988 to the time of this noise compatibility study.) One option might be to provide a mailbox on the current automated phone system that allows citizens to leave messages about noise concerns. Airport operations or public relations staff on a daily basis could review messages received. Follow-up with citizen concerns could be made according to internal policy. A small additional cost is anticipated and impact on staff time is expected to be minimal.

FAA Action: Approved.

3. Noise Information on the Airport's Internet Site (Pages 10-18 and 12-4)

Description: The noise information developed as part of this study would be included on the Airport's web page and an e-mail address would be listed for those who wish to forward noise concerns electronically. The page would explain the steps taken at the airport to ensure compatibility of airport operations with the community. Some cost would be associated with the development of the webpage. Additional staff time would be necessary to monitor and respond to emails received.

FAA Action: Approved.