

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION



DRAFT WRITTEN REEVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT  
STATEMENT

AIRSIDE IMPROVEMENTS PLANNING PROJECT  
CENTERFIELD TAXIWAY

LOGAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

FAA NEW ENGLAND REGION

JUNE 30, 2006

# **DRAFT WRITTEN REEVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

## **AIRSIDE IMPROVEMENTS PLANNING PROJECT CENTERFIELD TAXIWAY**

### **LOGAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

This Written Reevaluation documents the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) additional evaluation of environmental impacts of the proposed Centerfield Taxiway at Logan International Airport. The Centerfield Taxiway was environmentally assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Airside Improvements Planning Project (EIS). A Final EIS was issued in June 2002. The taxiway would be located between Runways 4R-22L and 4L-22R, as depicted in Figure 1.

On August 2, 2002, FAA issued a Record of Decision (ROD)<sup>1</sup> on projects proposed by the Massachusetts Port Authority and environmentally assessed in the EIS. FAA's decisions relate to approval of projects on the airport's official Airport Layout Plan and approval necessary to proceed with the processing of an application for federal funding. The projects included: (1) construction and operation of unidirectional Runway 14-32, (2) reconfiguration of the southwest corner taxiway system, (3) extension of Taxiway Delta, and (4) realignment of Taxiway November. FAA deferred a decision concerning the Centerfield Taxiway until FAA conducted "an additional evaluation of potential beneficial operational procedures that would preserve or improve the operational and environmental benefits of the Centerfield Taxiway shown in the Final EIS."<sup>2</sup> This additional evaluation was completed with the publication of *Logan International Airport; Additional Taxiway Evaluation Report; Per FAA August 2, 2002, Record of Decision*; May 2006; and this written reevaluation. The taxiway evaluation report is available to the public electronically upon request (781-238-7602) or on FAA's public Web site. ([www.faa.gov/airports\\_airtraffic](http://www.faa.gov/airports_airtraffic))

#### **II. BACKGROUND**

FAA Order 5050.4B, *National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Instructions for Airport Projects*, states that a written reevaluation is appropriate for

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<sup>1</sup> *Record of Decision; Airside Improvements Planning Project; Logan International Airport; Boston, Massachusetts*; Federal Aviation Administration, New England Region; August 2, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 3.

Figure 1



projects that do not commence within three years of the issuance of a Final EIS. The Final EIS for the Airside Improvements Planning Project is presently four years old. In addition, FAA made a mitigation commitment in its Record of Decision (p. 24), deferring a decision to approve the Centerfield Taxiway subject to additional evaluation of taxiway operations north of Runway 15R-33L. This conforms to the requirements of Paragraph 103 of FAA Order 5050.4A<sup>3</sup>. The terms of FAA's commitment (Mitigation Measure 3) are reprinted in the Attachment to this written reevaluation. This written reevaluation documents FAA's fulfillment of this mitigation commitment.

Among other things, Mitigation Measure 3 specifies that FAA will take into account the concerns of residents of East Boston (Bayswater and Constitution Beach) and Winthrop (Court Road) with regard to the Centerfield Taxiway and use of Taxiway November (see Figure 1.) Mitigation Measure 3 also specifies the objective of the taxiway evaluation, "to assess potential beneficial operational procedures that would preserve or improve the operational and environmental benefits of the Centerfield Taxiway as shown in the EIS." Finally, Mitigation Measure 3 specifies in considerable detail the scope of work of the taxiway evaluation, stating it would be conducted in two phases, addressing operations on Taxiway November and on the Centerfield Taxiway. Following this FAA would determine "whether a decision [to approve] can be made based on the data analysis contained in the EIS and evaluation, or whether further documentation [Supplemental EIS] is necessary before such a decision can be made." In accordance with paragraph 1402 of Order 5050.4B, a Supplemental EIS would be published if "Significant, new changes, circumstances or information relevant to the proposed action or its environmental impacts become available."

### III. REEVALUATION

This written reevaluation is based on information contained in *Logan International Airport; Additional Taxiway Evaluation Report; Per FAA August 2, 2002, Record of Decision; May 2006*. This report was prepared under contract to FAA with substantial input from FAA. FAA independently evaluated the report, accepts it as an FAA document, and incorporates it by reference herein.

Consistent with Mitigation Measure 3 of the 2002 ROD, the consultant-prepared report covered a Phase 1 evaluation of Taxiway November and Phase 2 evaluation of the Centerfield Taxiway. Community involvement was an important element. FAA and the consultant worked with six representatives of affected neighborhoods, three appointed by the City of Boston and three appointed by the Town of Winthrop.

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<sup>3</sup> Order 5050.4B became effective April 28, 2006 (during the production of the underlying taxiway report) and replaces its predecessor Order 5050.4A. Both Orders 5050.4A and 5050.4B contain Written Reevaluation paragraphs numbered 103 and 1400 respectively. Essentially, under either Order the responsible FAA official must prepare a written reevaluation to determine if the EIS remains adequate and current and whether substantial change has occurred requiring a supplemental document.

For Phase 1, a participatory process developed nineteen candidate actions pertaining to ground operations in the northern end of the airfield under existing conditions (affecting primarily Taxiway November.) The study thoroughly evaluated each of these and concluded, “that there are no appropriate taxi/queue restrictions, or other alternatives, that would provide significant environmental and/or operational benefits beyond those shown in the Final EIS.”<sup>4</sup>

Phase 2 of the process modeled operational alternatives for the proposed Centerfield Taxiway and Taxiway November. Two alternatives, covering how the Centerfield Taxiway would operate north of Runway 15R-33L, addressed community concerns and bracketed the range of potential environmental effects. Noise and air quality analyses concluded “the environmental differences between the two alternatives are small enough such that there is not a significant environmental benefit to using one alternative over the other. No operational action could be identified that would yield environmental benefits.” Pages 36-39 of the report present a summary of the noise and air quality findings. The analyses are consistent with those performed for the EIS. A comparison of the noise and air quality findings of the EIS with those of the taxiway evaluation report does not change any of the conclusions that were reached in the EIS.

Three meetings with community representatives were held during the study, with the report provided to them shortly after the last meeting on May 18, 2006. FAA will make this written reevaluation available to the EIS mailing list and electronically on FAA’s Web site. FAA will also provide the Environmental Protection Agency with notice of availability for *Federal Register* publication. FAA will invite public comment for a thirty-day period.

#### **IV. DETERMINATION AND FUTURE FAA ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION**

FAA finds that the data and analysis contained in the EIS with regard to the environmental impacts of the proposed Centerfield Taxiway are still adequate, accurate, current, and valid and that FAA has fulfilled its mitigation commitment, as detailed in the 2002 Record of Decision on the Airside Improvements Planning Project, “to assess potential beneficial operational procedures that would preserve or improve the operational and environmental benefits of the Centerfield Taxiway as shown in the EIS.” In addition, FAA finds that there are no substantial changes that have occurred since the 2002 ROD and, therefore, no supplemental documentation is necessary.

FAA will consider comments on this written reevaluation and subsequently issue a

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<sup>4</sup> *Logan International Airport; Additional Taxiway Evaluation Report; Per FAA August 2, 2002, Record of Decision; May 2006; p. 35.*

Record of Decision regarding the proposed federal actions to support FAA's approval of the airport's official Airport Layout Plan and approval necessary to proceed with the processing of an application for federal funding.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bryn A. Reid". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end of the last name.

FOR LaVerne F. Reid  
Manager, Airports Division

Date: 30 June 2006

## ATTACHMENT

### MITIGATION MEASURE 3 FROM RECORD OF DECISION, AIRSIDE IMPROVEMENTS PLANNING PROJECT

#### 3. Deferral of Decision to Approve Centerfield Taxiway Subject to Additional Evaluation of Taxiway Operations North of Runway 15R-33L.

FAA is deferring any decision to approve the Centerfield Taxiway pending additional evaluation of taxiway operations north of Runway 15R/33L. Although the analysis in the EIS states that the Centerfield Taxiway has environmental benefits and does not adversely impact noise or reduce air quality in the areas adjacent to the northern portion of the airfield, residents of the East Boston (Bayswater and Constitution Beach) and Winthrop (Court Road) neighborhoods closest to the existing Taxiway November and proposed northern end of the Centerfield Taxiway have specifically expressed their concerns about the Centerfield Taxiway. Residents of these neighborhoods have also expressed concerns regarding the use of Taxiway November and have questioned FAA's compliance with the existing "good neighbor" policy regarding queuing aircraft on Taxiway November<sup>10</sup>. Given these concerns, FAA will conduct an additional evaluation of taxiway operations in the northern portion of the airfield to assess potential beneficial operational procedures that would preserve or improve the operational and environmental benefits of the Centerfield Taxiway as shown in the EIS. FAA will not make any decision concerning the Centerfield Taxiway until after the evaluation and appropriate environmental review have been completed, as detailed below. It is intended that any procedures or operating restrictions would not limit use of the Centerfield Taxiway in the event of emergencies, key equipment outages, or scheduled maintenance that requires the closure of taxiways at the north end of the airport

Section 3.9 of the Final EIS describes the operational and safety benefits of constructing the Centerfield Taxiway. Section 3.10 describes the environmental impacts of the Centerfield Taxiway and concludes that the deferral of a decision on the Centerfield Taxiway would have no measurable impact on the environmental assessment of the remaining improvements of the Preferred Alternative.

The taxiway evaluation would be conducted in two phases. Phase 1 would address operations on Taxiway November and Phase 2 would address taxi operations on the Centerfield Taxiway. Phase 1 would begin by developing a clear understanding of the concerns that the neighborhoods surrounding the approach ends of Runways 22L and 22R have regarding operations on the existing taxiway system north of Runway 15R/L. Specifically, this first part of Phase 1 would have the following tasks:

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<sup>10</sup> FAA Order BOS TWR 7040.1, "Noise Abatement" states that whenever possible "No more than five turbojets, including one in position, shall be cleared beyond Runway 15L. Only one turbojet is allowed to be held on November Taxiway between Runways 22R and 22L." The limit applies to aircraft north of Runway 15L/33R, the 2,600-foot runway. Under this policy, there is no limit on the number of aircraft between Runway 15R-33L and Runway 15L-33R.

- Identify and review federal and state policies, regulations, and directives related to community concerns with taxi operations north of Runway 15R/33L. These include, at least, noise, air quality, and visual impacts.
- Meet with representatives from neighborhoods surrounding the north end of the airport to better ascertain their concerns, solicit potential actions to address their concerns, and discuss operational difficulties in meeting current policy.
- Review neighborhood concerns in the context of relevant federal and state policies, regulations, and directives in order to determine which relate to neighborhood concerns.
- Assemble and review recent field monitoring results (e.g., noise and air quality impacts) and analyses of taxi operations, their impacts, or potential mitigation measures north of Runway 15R/33L.
- Conduct further field studies, if warranted, to document existing impacts associated with taxi operations (e.g., noise monitoring, air quality).
- Review the results of field studies to determine whether existing conditions approach or violate applicable regulations and what actions are warranted to mitigate the impacts of taxi operations.
- Identify other candidate actions (beyond those suggested by the communities) that can mitigate impacts most appropriately. These actions will focus primarily on operational measures within the control of the FAA (e.g., taxi procedures) but may also include other actions that could address neighborhood concerns (e.g., physical changes to the airport, airline schedule, or gate management actions).
- Review candidate actions and assess them at a high level to determine their effectiveness in addressing neighborhood concerns and impacts to safety, efficiency, capacity, cost, or other consequences.
- Develop a detailed plan, if warranted, to implement promising actions. The evaluation could be terminated if current conditions related to neighborhood concerns do not exceed federal or state standards or if candidate actions are not expected to be effective, safe, or within reasonable cost.

Any decision with regard to approval of the Centerfield Taxiway, including appropriate beneficial operating procedures, will be made following completion of a Phase 2 Scope of Work and evaluation. A written re-evaluation will be conducted by FAA as to whether the decision can be made based upon the data and analysis contained in the EIS and evaluation, or whether further environmental documentation is necessary before such a decision could be made. Any such written re-evaluation will conform to the requirements of paragraph 103 of FAA Order 5050.4A.