



Part 150 Noise Compatibility Study

Study Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting #4 Summary

August 25, 2026, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Spurr Conference Room, North Terminal, ANC; 4600 Postmark Drive, Anchorage, AK 99502

Discussion Summary

Summary Shortcuts:

“Q” = SAC Questions

“C” = SAC Comments

“R” = Project Team Responses

“Note” = Additional Notes or Clarifications Not Presented in Accompanying Slides

“Slide #” = Corresponding Guiding Slide – Click [HERE](#) for full slide presentation.

NOTE: The questions, responses, and comments in this summary are presented for clarity and technical accuracy.

A. Welcome & Overview (Slides #1-6)

- Introductions/Roll Call (see complete list under “Participants” list below)
 - Project team
 - Study Advisory Committee Roll Call
- Project Purpose
 - The project team presented a brief overview of the project; additional information is available on the project website and the presentation slides. Key elements include:
 - **Noise Exposure Maps** to model noise around the airport and assess noise compatibility by land use. The Noise Exposure Maps must be accepted by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).
 - **Noise Compatibility Program** to identify how to reduce the number of people exposed to aircraft noise and the number of non-compatible land uses; these measures, called “alternatives,” are individually approved or disapproved by FAA.

B. Alternatives Purpose – Recap (Slides #7-17)

- The project team presented the goal of alternatives: to reduce the number of people and non-compatible land uses within the 65 DNL noise contour, following federal guidelines.
 - There are three primary types of alternatives:
 - Operational Alternatives – implemented by the federal government. *This was the focus of the August 25th SAC meeting.*

- Land Use Alternatives – implemented by local and state government.
 - Administrative Alternatives – implemented by the airport sponsor (in this case, the Anchorage International Airport [ANC]).
- The project team also provided background on the following:
 - Questions to consider when evaluating alternatives.
 - List of alternatives that requires evaluation under CFR Part 150.
 - Potential land use and administrative alternatives.
 - Policies that guide analysis of the alternatives.
 - Review of noise terminology.
 - Review of 2026 and 2031 draft noise contours.
- **Q.** Who is responsible for zoning? Does the Municipality of Anchorage zone land within airport boundaries?
 - **R.** No. State-owned airports are not subject to local platting and zoning regulations. The Municipality zones land uses outside of airport boundaries.
- **Q.** Does this project consider aircraft vibrations? Does anyone measure this?
 - **R.** No, vibrations are not considered in a Part 150 project. Aviation noise, especially at low frequencies, can sometimes cause objects to rattle, such as a small item on a glass shelf. This is not actually a vibration; it's a secondary effect from the noise. See related discussion on page 6 of the SAC Meeting #2 Summary [here](#).
- **Q.** Have vibration studies been conducted in places with frequent fog, or a high water table? How do the land formations surrounding the airport experience noise differently?
 - **R.** The noise is coming from the sky; it is not exciting the ground. Generally, the vibrations are minimal, but the specifics are outside the scope of this project.
- **Q.** Are takeoffs and landings considered in this project?
 - **R.** Yes. The airborne noise is considered, but the vibrations/ground shaking of the runway is not considered. See related FAQ on the project website (last question under the "Scope" section), linked [here](#).
- **Q.** Point Woronzof continues to experience high rates of erosion; the trail and road are both threatened. Could the ANC runway and the flow of planes be contributing to the bluff instability there?
 - **R.** Part 150 does not address vibration in any way, so this is outside the scope of this project.
- **Q.** Based on the contours, it appears the number of households being impacted by airport noise has increased from 94 to 136 households. What is driving this change? Where do the data come from?
 - **R.** The increase is primarily due to a greater number of operations in the Sand Lake area. The household estimate considers existing land use, Census data, and forecasted operations. At the project outset, the project team considered forecasts from the Airport Master Plan as well as the FAA's forecasts. The project team reviewed and revalidated the external forecasts and determined the Airport Master Plan forecast was appropriate to use for this project. The FAA concurred with that assessment and approved the use of the Master Plan forecasts for use in this project.

- **Q.** Would an airport ever “max out” on capacity and restrict additional growth?
 - **R.** Every airport has a theoretical maximum capacity, beyond which delays will occur. Physical and technological infrastructure (e.g., number of runways, presence of air traffic control tower, instrument approach procedures, etc.) determine an airport’s operational capacity. If an airport is nearing capacity, it will typically initiate a planning process to determine what steps to take to respond. Analysis of airport capacity is typically handled in an airport Master Plan process and is not within the scope of this Part 150 project. Please refer to the most recent Airport Master Plan.
- **Q.** Do the forecasts consider the North Link addition or other expansion projects?
 - **R.** The forecasts look at historic growth, socioeconomic conditions, cargo trends, etc. New construction, development, and expansion are not input on a project-by-project basis, but they are represented in the general estimates of trends. Noise studies have five-year planning horizons because the forecasts are inherently uncertain. ANC will need to revisit actual operations against the forecasts after five years and if they are off by a significant margin, it triggers an update.
 - **R.** A Part 150 is not a ground noise project. A Part 150 can consider ground noise, but typically those operations do not contribute or only contribute slightly to the 65 DNL contours.
- **C.** UPS just built a \$100 million cargo facility in Anchorage. They are clearly anticipating more growth here.
 - **R.** The forecast includes an estimated growth in cargo. This increase is based on overarching industry trends and not the construction of specific facilities.

C. Preliminary Operational Alternatives (Slides #18-21)

- Airports can use Noise Abatement Departure Profiles (NADP) to reduce noise based on how planes depart. These are most relevant to older aircraft that are typically louder than modern planes.
 - Noise Abatement Departure Profile 1: reduces noise levels close to airports.
 - When applied to the ANC noise contours, this results in minimal changes to the number of households inside the noise contours.
 - Noise Abatement Departure Profile 2: reduces noise levels farther from airports.
 - When applied to the ANC noise contours, this increases the number of households inside the noise contours.
- **Q.** How would these abatement departure profiles impact the neighborhoods?
 - **R.** Engine noise is the biggest contributor to aviation departure noise. Planes must climb, and the engines make more noise when they are climbing. Airports can choose to have departing planes make a steeper climb immediately upon departure (loud closest to airport) or have them stay low initially and then climb farther away, which directs the noise farther from the airport. The resulting noise would therefore be shifted to another area.
- The project team determined that if nighttime cargo departures to the south are reduced by 70 percent, the 65 DNL noise contour would revert to being entirely on airport property. This would result in fewer households within the 65 DNML noise contour. The question remains whether this reduction is operationally feasible. Some operational conditions have changed since the last

Part 150; this could be due to changes in area wind patterns or other conditions. The project team needs to continue to coordinate with air traffic to understand why this trend has occurred and whether it would be realistic to revert to fewer southern departures.

- **Q.** Are there some planes that must use the south runway due to their greater weight?
 - **R (from SAC member).** All the largest carriers at ANC (Atlas, FedEx, UPS) have published guidance for pilots. Some runways are only supposed to be used unless operationally required. If Runway 15 is being used, it is usually quite windy from the south. Wind conditions at the airport can differ from those in the neighborhoods to the south.
 - **R (from SAC member).** Atlas reviews all noise complaints that are passed along from the airport. They have never reviewed a noise complaint and found the departure or arrival decisions were not justified by an operational necessity. In talking with other operators, all of them only use Runway 15 for departures at night if necessary because of conditions. For this reason, the proposed operational alternative of reducing south departures at night by 70 percent seems ambitious.
 - **R (from SAC member).** Operators have been talking with ANC, FAA, and the pilots union about adding a standard query to come from Air Traffic Control (ATC). If a pilot requests a southern departure during quiet hours, ATC would ask the pilot to verify that the runway is required for operational reasons.
- **Q.** Reverse thrust can be louder than takeoff noise sometimes. Is this considered in the project?
 - **R.** Yes, in some locations around the airport, reverse thrust can be perceived as being louder than departure noise. The noise modeling data considers departure and arrival modeling, which includes the use of reverse thrust.
- **Q.** If airplanes are not using the south runway, are they taking off to the north?
 - **R.** To the north or to the west. Planes rarely take off to the east.
- **Q.** If there is a reduction in south takeoffs and more north takeoffs instead, would that increase the noise in other areas, such as the Turnagain neighborhood?
 - **R.** The current calm wind departure is to the north. The Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL) contours to the south of the airport are much smaller than the contours to the north (this is reflective of the preferred northern departure). When the 70 percent reduction of southern departures was modeled, the operations were reassigned to northern and western departures. This resulted in a lengthening of the noise contours to the north and west, however, this change occurs over the waters of the Cook Inlet.
 - **R.** ANC has already implemented the most effective noise reduction strategies (e.g., most takeoffs occur over the water). That presents a challenge for this project. There are few easy solutions. One recommended consideration associated with Lake Hood was to encourage a mid-channel turn for LHD departures. This was determined not feasible based on conversations with ATC.
- **Q.** Some cargo planes are quieter than others when they take off. Why is there a difference? Can all cargo planes adopt the behavior of the quieter planes?
 - **R.** The amount of noise a plane makes during departure depends on what is “operationally required” – how heavy they are, how much fuel they are carrying, which runway they are using, and other factors. Every pilot uses standard procedures and instrumentation. The engine noise is a factor of the aircraft type and weight. Some are flying empty to China and they climb fast and are quieter. Others are filled with 200,000 pounds of freight and require more engine power, and take more runway and climb time

to reach altitude. For fuel consumption and maintenance purposes, pilots always try to take off with as little thrust as possible to meet the requirements of the runway.

•

D. SAC Closing Comments

- **Q.** Some European countries are very restrictive about noise. What are they doing differently?
 - **R.** The United States has legislation like Part 161, which limits an airport's ability to restrict aircraft. Airports cannot restrict operations to airports (with some minor exceptions). Other countries' airports don't have these laws and may restrict what types of aircraft can visit an airport.
- **C.** I strongly support the recommendation that ANC conduct a ground noise operation study. It has been almost 25 years since this was done. There appears to be some confusion on what constitutes noise – what we can hear and what is happening on the ground.
- **C.** Thank you for having us. As big carriers, we want to find solutions. All the big carriers have leadership who live and work in Anchorage and we want to be good neighbors.
- **C.** As a carrier operating much smaller aircraft, we're not contributing much to the noise concerns at ANC. However, we do have a specific flight departure route when we fly out of Fairbanks. There are always unintended consequences of changes; additional flight time or taxi time can result in a change in price for consumers. For example, when we are flying out bulk fuel deliveries, sometimes we must increase our costs to cover the additional expense of accommodating more intensive takeoff and landing procedures.
- **C.** I would also like to support the recommendation for an updated ANC ground study.
- **C.** There are tools the Municipality of Anchorage can use to help mitigate noise impacts – for example, through the West Anchorage District Plan. The project team is meeting with the Municipality later today to talk about land use alternatives.
- **Q.** There are many restrictions limiting what can be recommended in a Part 150 project. Would it be realistic to advocate for policy changes to revise these restrictions?
 - **R.** FAA is updating the advisory guidelines for Part 150; the guidelines will likely still be tied to the 65 DNL and are unlikely to undergo substantial changes. Part 150 is regulatory, not advisory. It is statutory. For a change to occur, Congress must revise the law.
 - **R.** There was a recent study examining how people tolerate different noise levels, and the data came back showing people are highly annoyed even at lower noise levels than previously assumed. There is some national discussion on whether the 65 DNL threshold should be revised to be lower. However, it is unlikely there will be any changes within a time frame that would affect this project.
 - **R.** FAA is reviewing their noise policy from aircraft operations. The Reauthorization Act directed them to stand up a national Aircraft Noise Advisory Committee. That committee will be involved with reviewing noise policies, so that could result in some future changes. This is also unlikely to occur within the time frame of this project.
 - **R.** One change the project team would encourage could be revised without statutory change would be removing the limitation that ties alternatives to the 65 DNL. In many cases it may be advantageous for FAA to allow alternatives outside the 65 DNL to be considered. Right now, recommendations that get disapproved through the Part 150 are often still implemented in other ways because communities want to see them. The project team would like FAA to provide greater support for such alternatives.

- **C.** As someone working with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, I have found recent policy changes very limiting when it comes to topics like historic preservation, environmental regulation, and more. The public's ability to provide input is shrinking.
- **C.** As a concerned member of the public, sometimes I just want explanations, even if things won't change. I appreciate all the answers today.
- **C.** Thank you for being patient with my questions and for sharing answers.
- **Q.** Who would fund a ground study?
 - **R.** If the need for a study is triggered by a project, such as a runway extension, it could be required and funded by FAA. Otherwise, it could be eligible for federal funding if it's approved as a recommended alternative under Part 150.
- **C.** Atlas offered to collaborate with ANC to prepare a fact sheet responding to many of the questions and concerns discussed today.

E. Public Comments

- **C.** I have a question about when operators are using the south end. There are other contractors flying cargo over there, sometimes every hour or even more frequent. The planes are getting bigger and are unbelievably noisy. The flyovers are the worst. If I leave the garage door open, the mud room door swings open when the planes are overhead and the trees move. Last winter there was crazy wind for two weeks straight and the south runway was being bombarded. One side of my roof was white with snow, the other was grey from the planes. I know it's an international airport and we can't cut flights because they are going to other countries, so they are working on those time zones. There are so many serious problems here. We're fed up. We want to eventually leave, but who is going to buy our house?
- **C.** I live by Upper Raspberry. I had a noise monitor in 2018 or 2019. The recordings ranged from 65 to 90 decibels, even though I rarely see the big jets. I can wave to Alaska Airlines pilots, they are that low. I use flight tracker, and it can tell you which planes are overhead and how high they are. They are taking off 350 feet above my house. I know they can take off over Connor's Bog and then climb and turn. Is there a height limit for planes? Other carriers (Atlas, UPS, FedEx) are doing their best. But foreign carriers from China – are they bound by the same federal regulations? You can hear a jet coming before you see them. This project is massive, I know you are doing your best to get it under control. I have been here my whole life and I have seen some changes. Have they considered an airport across the inlet, by Point McKenzie?
 - **R.** Foreign carriers operate under the same regulations. ANC cannot restrict operations, e.g., by time of day.
 - **R.** There are altitude restrictions on height over neighborhoods, but these restrictions do not apply to arrivals or departures.
- **C.** I live by the Kincaid Elementary School. I had a monitor on my property. Do the 65 DNL lines on the chart incorporate those noise monitoring devices? I'm a general aviation pilot, I have been here a long time. Based on my personal observation, the noise issue is not from the local carriers. The biggest problem with noise violations are China Air, Korea Air, and Southeast Air. They will do multiple go arounds, they didn't used to do that as much. When the wind is to the east, they will do a hard right turn over Kincaid Elementary and toward Fire Island and come back in again. And the Part 135 carriers in summer – there is a lot of activity with planes using the Chickaloon departure, instead of the east shore of Campbell Lake. I see Beavers and Otters. If pilots would follow the airspace regulations and paths in the charts, wouldn't have nearly as many issues.

- **R.** The project team is required to use the modeling for the noise contours. The noise monitoring is separate but can help verify the contours. The monitoring results are available in the presentation slides for the [second](#) and [third](#) SAC meetings on the project website (<https://anc150noisestudy.com/>).

F. Next Steps

- Reviewed Immediate Next Steps and Project Schedule

Adjourn

Participants

SAC Member – presented in alphabetical order by representative entity/group	
Representative Entity	Name
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (AK DOT&PF) – Anchorage International Airport	Jeremy Hans (filling in for Alex Moss)
AK DOT&PF	Erik Hilsinger
Alaska Airmen's Association	Priscilla Ribic
Atlas Air	Tyler Cresswell
Everts Air Cargo	Susan Hoshaw
FAA Alaska Region	Jack Gilbertsen
Lake Hood Pilots Association	Steve Fishback
Member of the Public - South	Sybille Hogan
Member of the Public - South	Randy Hessong
Member of the Public - North	Kristin Knudson
Municipality of Anchorage – Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions	Aaron Jongenelen
Municipality of Anchorage	Daniel Mckenna-Foster
Sand Lake Community Council	Linda Swiss
Turnagain Community Council	Cathy Gleason
Airport Project Team	
Anchorage International Airport	Ian Moore
Anchorage International Airport	Jennifer Pepin
Anchorage International Airport	Taylor Beardsley
Anchorage International Airport	Teri Lindseth
Consulting Team	
Mead & Hunt	Kate Andrus, Corbett Smith, Ryk Dunkelberg
HMMH	Gene Reindel, Vincent Ma (virtual)
Agnew::Beck Consulting	Shelly Wade, Molly Mylius