



**Seattle-Tacoma International Airport  
Part 150 Noise Compatibility Study Update**

**Technical Review Committee  
Meeting Report  
July 29, 2010  
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

---

**Committee Members**

Isaac Conlen, City of Federal Way  
Lynae Craig, Alaska Airlines  
Chip Davis, City of Burien  
Ron Fincher, FAA – NW Mountain Region  
Tom Hooper, Port of Seattle  
Stephen Kiehl, PSRC  
Denise Lathrop, City of Des Moines  
Cayla Morgan, FAA  
Sharyn Parker, King County International Airport  
John Sibold, WSDOT  
Al Torrico, City of SeaTac  
Karen Wolf, King County -- Office of Strategic Planning and Performance Management

**Port of Seattle Staff**

Mary Ann Chamberlin, Homeowner Relations Administrator  
Tom Fagerstrom, Noise Programs Community Specialist  
Marco Milanese, Community Relations Project Manager  
Stan Shepherd, Part 150 Project Manager  
Kym Sulman, Asst. to the Director of Community Development

**Consulting Team**

Rob Adams, Landrum & Brown, Consultant Project Manager  
Vince Mestre, Landrum & Brown, Noise Specialist  
Margaret Norton-Arnold, Norton-Arnold & Company, Facilitator  
Fala Frazier, Norton-Arnold & Company, Committee Administrator

## **Overview**

The primary purpose of this meeting was to provide information on the June 9 public workshop, the baseline operations and forecasting data, and the draft 2009 noise contours.

Isaac Conlen of Federal Way introduced himself; this was the first committee meeting he had been able to attend. This was also Lynae Craig's first meeting; she is the representative from Alaska Airlines.

## **Review of Public Workshop**

Rob Adams reported on the 2<sup>nd</sup> public workshop, held June 9 at Cedarhurst Elementary School in Burien. About 80 people attended. The format was similar to the first workshop, with individual "study sessions" people could attend to hear information about, and ask questions on, various elements of the Part 150 Study.

Rob thanked TRC members for the feedback they had provided on the data used at the June 9 meeting. TRC suggestions greatly enhanced the information, especially the comments on ways to improve the PowerPoint graphics.

A group attending that meeting was particularly interested in details regarding noise modeling, and, as a result, a follow-up session with Vince Mestre will be held today at 12:30.

Several members of the TRC had attended the public workshop and offered these observations:

- Make sure you are being proactive and reaching out to the underserved populations around the airport, be especially aware of language barriers.
- The format was wonderful – I enjoyed being back in the classroom!
- The attendance level is about what you should expect from here on out. You are getting down to the core group of people who are most interested in the details of the Study. You are getting the people who need to be involved at this point; they live closest to the airport and they are the most concerned.
- I highly recommend that you develop a Q&A sheet that clearly delineates what the Part 150 can and cannot do; restrictions within the 65 DNL; what has been accomplished since the last Part 150, etc. Frame, and respond to, the issues we have heard so far.
- I agree – if something was recommended but not approved by the FAA in the last Study, you should make that very clear to the public. The Portland Airport tracked all of their recommendations and resulting actions, and this was an effective tool.

## **Review of Baseline Operations and Forecasting Data and Draft Noise Contours**

Vince gave a presentation on the existing conditions for 2009. He began with an explanation of the significance of 65 DNL; the FAA requires that any noise mitigation improvements must reduce noise specifically within this contour, and will only fund noise mitigation improvements within the 65 DNL.

The *projected* 2010 65 DNL contour from the last Part 150 Study was much larger than the *actual* contour experience at the airport in 2009. This reduction is primarily due to two factors: quieter airplanes than originally anticipated, and fewer operations than originally anticipated. Although these numbers are still preliminary and will be verified over the next several months, all indications are that any changes to aircraft flight tracks are not likely to result in a reduction within the 65 DNL contour. A hush house or similar noise mitigation remains an option to help reduce ground noise from airplane run-up operations. And, a runway use plan is still an option to help manage the use of the third runway.

A copy of Vince's presentation was provided to all TRC members. Questions and answers following the presentation included:

**Q:** Why did you use 2009 for the baseline? Why not 2008 with pre-3<sup>rd</sup> runway conditions?

**A:** The focus of the Part 150 Study is on existing conditions, and three runways is the existing condition at the airport today.

**Q:** How do you actually track each airline flight?

**A:** Each departure has a profile that gets included into the model. The radar picks up arrivals when they are at 30 nautical miles from the airport, and about 10,000 feet high.

**Q:** The community has been upset about very early morning and very late night ground run ups. What are the "acceptable daytime" hours for run ups?

**A:** 7:00 am – 10:00 pm are considered "daytime hours."

**Q:** What's the significance of the noise remedy boundary?

**A:** That's the boundary the Port set for their sound insulation program years ago, and it is based on previous Part 150 Studies.

**Q:** It's good that all of the temporary noise monitoring sites are west of the airport, as it demonstrates you are responding to public concerns about noise from the new runway. And the supplemental monitoring is basically used as back-up data to verify the contour you have developed, correct?

**A:** Yes, that's the primary reason to do the supplemental monitoring. Our model will tell us one thing in terms of noise impacts, and the monitoring helps to verify and support what we are seeing in the model. If the monitoring and the model are way out of whack, we know we need to re-analyze the data.

**Q:** Why haven't all of the households found to be within the 65 DNL during the last Part 150 Study been insulated?

**A:** Some of those households are in multi-family apartment complexes, and the Port determined during the last Part 150 that it would not pay for sound insulation in those structures. At the time the Port had to look at what we could accomplish with the available funding. And, there was the issue of giving too much benefit to a landlord, when the occupants themselves might have the opportunity to move. Also, the Port does not insulate mobile homes because those don't qualify for the program. And, finally, some people told the Port they did not want their homes to be insulated.

But, moving forward the Port can consider a different approach. The Port will revisit sound insulation for apartment dwellings. The Port will also look into air conditioning so people can stay cool in the summer without having their windows open.

**Committee Member Comment:** This goes back to the environmental justice issue. It seems to me that apartment units should be insulated against noise.

## **Review of Preliminary Forecast of Aviation**

Rob provided a review of the preliminary forecast of aviation activity at Sea-Tac Airport. Airport operations have dropped significantly since 2001, and are expected to remain depressed for a few more years due to the economic recession. They are then expected to grow modestly each year up to 2021. Committee questions and answers included:

**Q:** How do you address errors or changes that affect the forecast?

**A:** If things change dramatically, the FAA has measures in place to address those changes. For example, whenever sustained noise impacts change by  $< > 1.5$  decibels, a new study is triggered.

**Q:** Did you use state population growth numbers to forecast future airline passengers?

**A:** We use the state population growth numbers, but also combine those with economic and travel trends that we are seeing from throughout the country. Landrum & Brown has developed an independent forecast, which we are comparing against the Port of Seattle's own forecast and the FAA Terminal Area forecast. The FAA now must review and approve the forecast.

**Q:** Does the airport have the ability to prohibit certain planes from landing?

**A:** No, the Port of Seattle cannot prohibit a certain type of aircraft from landing at Sea-Tac. The only prohibition, and it's a national prohibition, is on Stage 2 aircraft, those above 75,000 pounds. If Seattle or any other airport decided they wanted to exclude a certain type of aircraft, they would have to complete another study, a Part 161, through the FAA.

**Q:** Have you considered other variables such as the price of fuel and the Greener Skies Initiative in your forecasting?

**A:** Yes, a sensitivity analysis on fuel prices is included in the forecast. And any initiatives from Greener Skies that are in place by 2016 will also be factored into the Study, although these may not have benefits directly within the 65 DNL.

**Q:** Is demand pricing off the table?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** The runway use plan may be an educational component of the work you're doing. For example, our community's perception was that the third runway would be used only during inclement weather, not to help with capacity.

**A:** Yes, there is some difference in how people perceived the third runway might be used vs. what's actually happening. The technical data in the last Part 150 that projected how the runway would be use matches the reality of its use today. Moving forward, the Port will work with the FAA to develop a clear statement about when and how the runway will be used – this is the “runway use plan” we have been referring to.

## **Next Steps**

The next TRC meeting is scheduled for September 23, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> community workshop will be held on October 27.