

**METROPOLITAN AIRPORTS COMMISSION  
ST. PAUL DOWNTOWN AIRPORT ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, 8 January 2008, 4:00pm  
St. Paul Airport**

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**Call to Order**

A meeting of the Downtown Airport Advisory Council (DAAC), having been duly called, was held Tuesday, 8 January 2008, in the Administration Building of the St. Paul Downtown Airport. Chair Glenn Weibel called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. The following were in attendance:

- Representatives:** P. Adamson, G. Berquist, J. Dorer, J. Englin, B. Hagerty, A. Hunt, J. Jungwirth, J. Kummer, J. Miersch, T. Netzell, A. Rudd, K. Schmaltz, G. Weibel
- Staff:** G. Fries, J. Giesen, C. Leqve, P. Mosites
- Others:** A. Claflin – MPCA; T. Diamond – St. Paul; D. Langer – FAA
- Excused Absence:** F. Clayton, G. Burke, C. Peterson, D. Lessard

**1. Approval of the 8 January 2008 Meeting Agenda**

**IT WAS MOVED BY REPRESENTATIVE MIERSCH AND SECONDED BY REPRESENTATIVE DORER TO APPROVE THE AGENDA FOR THE 8 JANUARY 2008 MEETING.**

**THE MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

**2. Approval of the 13 November 2007 Meeting Minutes**

**IT WAS MOVED BY REPRESENTATIVE ENGLIN AND SECONDED BY REPRESENTATIVE MIERSCH TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE 13 NOVEMBER 2007 MEETING.**

**THE MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

**3. Discussion of 13 November 2007 Proposed Resolutions**

**Scott Skramstad, Technical Advisor**, reminded the group that, at the 13 November 2007 meeting, Representative Berquist introduced several resolutions for consideration. **Skramstad** provided the Committee with the MAC's response to the resolutions:

- 1. Resolution: MAC to provide a unique 651 phone number to be used solely for complaints at Holman Field**  
**Skramstad** reminded the group that, at the Committee's first meeting in September 2007, he reviewed St. Paul's resolution regarding the building of a floodwall at Holman Field. He noted that the resolution called for the MAC to develop a process, in consultation with the City, to take and respond to Holman Field airport noise complaints and to have someone available during business hours to answer calls to that complaint line. **Skramstad** stated that the MAC implemented such a process, establishing a phone number for Holman Field complaints, and stated that the phone number is 651.224.2203. **Skramstad** noted that when someone calls that number, her/his call is routed to the Noise Complaint Hotline, which

was upgraded in 2005 and sits on a server that is independent from the MAC-wide system of phones. The Hotline handles noise complaints for all seven of the MAC-owned airports and is staffed full-time during regular business hours by the Noise and Operations Information Specialist. **Skramstad** noted that the Specialist is knowledgeable about aviation and airport noise issues, has experience living under the Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport flight paths and currently resides in St. Paul. **Skramstad** stated that the Hotline system has been effective in accommodating the volume of calls received on a daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis. He pointed out that, to-date in 2007, the Hotline received 21,411 phone complaints, the majority of which – 21,249 – were for operations at Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport. There were 94 phone complaints for operations at Flying Cloud Airport in Eden Prairie, 47 for Anoka County-Blaine Airport and 11 for Holman Field. He added that there were five months in 2007 during which no phone complaints were received for operations at Holman Field. He noted that the Holman Field phone number could easily be linked to the MAC-wide system of phones at no cost, but that removing it from the independent server would mean eliminating the double-redundancy or fail-over protection the server maintains, the instant notifications built in to that server system and the connection to the full-time MAC position dedicated to handling noise complaints. In addition, the MAC-wide phone system can accommodate only 24 messages per voice mailbox. **Skramstad** stated that, based on the number of calls received regarding operations at Holman Field and given the limitations that would be experienced by severing the connection between the Holman phone number and the Noise Complaint Hotline, the MAC does not feel there is a need to establish a stand-alone complaint system solely for Holman Field at this time, but that the Council could re-visit the issue if it so chose at some time in the future.

**Representative Berquist, District 3 Planning Council – West Side Citizens Organization**, stated that the Hotline's current structure is difficult and confusing. He noted that when someone calls the Hotline, s/he must press "1" to leave a complaint related to operations at Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport and press "2" to leave a complaint related to operations at the MAC Reliever Airports, which is confusing. **Berquist** stated that he believes the MAC should be able to make the menu less complicated. **Chair Weibel** stated that it is not uncommon to encounter a list of menu options available over a phone when contacting a wide variety of businesses. **Skramstad** noted that none of the 21,249 phone complaints received to-date on the Noise Complaint Hotline has indicated that using the phone menu of options has been difficult or an impediment to leaving a complaint. **Representative Dorer, District 4 Community Council – Dayton's Bluff**, stated he thought the phone system works fine as it is, but that it might be helpful to list each of the Reliever Airports in the phone menu. **Weibel** asked how the Noise Complaint Hotline works. **Skramstad** stated there are two voice mailboxes, one for complaints related to operations at Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport and one for the Reliever Airports. The mailboxes are separated because of the significantly higher volume of calls received related to Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport. **Skramstad** reiterated that the MAC's perspective is that the system works well as is and that there is no need to change it at this time. **Representative Miersch, District 1 Community Council – Battle Creek**, echoed that sentiment, saying that the receipt of 11 Holman Field-related complaints, out of a total of 21,249 received, did not justify implementing a new system. **Berquist** clarified that he was not seeking a new phone system, but that the MAC set up the system so that callers would not have to wade through a complicated and confusing menu without the benefit of being assured their complaints had been received. **Weibel** asked what happens when a caller is finished leaving a complaint. **Skramstad** stated the caller hears a message that her/his complaint will be filed with the MAC. **Weibel** referenced the Council's mission "to promote and propose reasonable and effective methods to minimize or resolve problems arising from and connected with airport aircraft operations" and suggested monitoring the complaint data for the next three months and having Skramstad report on the data at the May 2008 Council meeting. **Representative Hunt, City of St. Paul**, asked if the Reliever Airports could be listed individually in the phone menu. **Dorer** noted that the menu does list them, but that they are listed alphabetically.

**Skramstad** suggested he could meet with the Noise and Operations Information Specialist to see if there would be any negative repercussions to changing the menu script to say "press 1 for Minneapolis, press 2 for Reliever Airports which include..." and then listing all of the Reliever Airports.

**Weibel** asked if **Skramstad** would bring to the next meeting any changes made to the menu script. **Skramstad** said he would. **Dorer** asked that **Skramstad** bring the original script to the next meeting. **Skramstad** said he would.

2. Resolution: MAC to provide a monthly report to each district council concerning all communications about aircraft noise coming from Holman Field operations, along with the location of the household originating the communication with enough data to indicate which block the communication originated from.

**Skramstad** stated that he believes this request is, essentially, for a complaint map and reminded the group that he has provided members with bi-monthly complaint maps since the Council began meeting in September 2007. He pointed out that the maps include summaries that indicate the location of a complaint on the map, a description of the complaint, the date and time of the complaint and whether or not the complaint was filed via the Internet or the phone. **Skramstad** said he would continue to provide these maps to Council members and added that the maps have been posted on-line at the [www.macnoise.com](http://www.macnoise.com) web site. **Skramstad** reminded the group that its bylaws state its purpose as being, in part, "to disseminate information to the affected communities, neighborhoods and users of the airport", and noted that it was the Council representatives' responsibility to take such information back to the district councils and communities they represent.

In regard to the request to provide individual communication information, **Skramstad** noted that the complaint policy developed and approved by the MAC Legal Department states that "information of a personal nature, including names, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses and individual communication records is not considered public information and will not be divulged by MAC staff".

**Dorer** asked if complaint maps were made prior to the formation of the St Paul Downtown Airport Advisory Council in 2007. **Skramstad** said complaint maps were provided to the 2001 Council, and that complaint maps are provided to the Flying Cloud Advisory Council as well. **Skramstad** stated that, if Council members would like to see additional information on the maps they should let him know and he would work to accommodate those requests if possible.

**Berquist** noted that the resolution called for more specific information to be provided, information that would identify the block from which a complaint originated. **Skramstad** noted that, on the complaint maps currently being provided, a dot representing a complaint is located on the block from which the complaint originated. **Berquist** asked if the street address for each complaint could be provided. **Skramstad** stated that he could add labels to the complaint map that would identify cross-streets near the area where a complaint originated.

**Dorer** asked if the size of a dot on the map corresponds with the number of complaints received. **Skramstad** said that it does, and that the larger the dot the more complaints received from a complainant.

3. Resolution: MAC to provide capabilities within their existing e-mail complaint system to translate and document all messages from non-English e-mail computers.

**Skramstad** noted that MAC Noise Program staff are not aware of having received, or have not received, any e-mail noise complaints in a language other than English in over 11 years, although he acknowledged it is possible that a non-English speaker would want to submit a complaint. He noted that any resident wishing to e-mail a complaint regarding operations at Holman Field can do so by sending an e-mail to [info@macnoise.com](mailto:info@macnoise.com) or to **Skramstad** at [scott@macnoise.com](mailto:scott@macnoise.com). **Skramstad** stated that if a non-English e-mail complaint is received, the MAC will use current available resources to try to

accommodate the complainant and to file the complaint. He noted there is one MAC staff member fluent in Spanish and one fluent in Hmong who have agreed to assist the Noise Program office in addressing non-English complaints.

4. Resolution: MAC to provide a translation option to have someone discuss their complaint during the "work day".

**Skramstad** noted that, in the past 11 years, MAC Noise Program staff has received one request – made through the Noise Complaint and Information Hotline – to discuss a complaint in a language other than English. In that instance, the request was accommodated through an on-site MAC staff member who was fluent in the requested language. **Skramstad** stated handling this request in this manner is consistent with how the City of St. Paul handles similar requests. He noted the City's policy is to utilize staff members to translate requests made in languages other than English. **Skramstad** added that the MAC contracts with Teleguage, which provides over-the-phone translation of over 150 languages. He stated that if a request is made for a commonly used language such as Spanish, it takes between 20-30 seconds to be connected with a Spanish-speaking translator; if the request is for a less commonly-used language, it takes between 2-3 minutes to be connected with a translator. **Skramstad** noted that the MAC staff member staffing the Noise Complaint Hotline has experience using the Teleguage service and will facilitate its use if requested.

**Dorer** asked how information on the translation and language options could be made more aware to the general public. **Weibel** asked if **Skramstad** could provide information to the group at each of its meetings regarding the number of complaints or requests for information received in a language other than English. **Skramstad** reiterated that such a request has been made only once in the past 11 years and said that, rather than creating a new report to track such data, he would inform the group if and when such a request is received in the future. **Weibel** asked the Council if that was satisfactory; no Council member indicated it was not satisfactory.

5. Resolution: MAC to provide each District Council with a monthly report concerning all communications concerning aircraft noise coming from Holman Field Operations along with the location of the household originating the communication with enough data to indicate which block the communication originated from but without the exact address to protect the privacy of the communicator.

**Skramstad** stated that this resolution appears to be similar to Resolution 2 and reiterated that the bi-monthly complaint maps provided to Council members include summaries that indicate the location of a complaint on the map, a description of the complaint, the date and time of the complaint and whether or not the complaint was filed via the Internet or the phone. He also reiterated the MAC's legal policy regarding divulging individual communication records, as stated in his response to Resolution 2.

6. Resolution: MAC to provide as much assistance as necessary to translate and footnote all items in the St Paul Downtown Airport Noise Abatement Plan to make said plan be understandable to all members of the neighborhoods impacted by the aircraft noise; and for the MAC to provide multi-lingual translations of the St Paul Downtown Airport Noise Abatement Plan to distribute to those that are non-English speaking. The language requirements will be provided by each district council.

**Skramstad** reminded the group that he has identified MAC staff members who are fluent in Spanish and Hmong and who have agreed to assist in this effort. He noted that the City of St. Paul has spoken with the District 3 Executive Director and that its policy is to provide a translation of a document if such a translation is requested. **Skramstad** stated that, if *bona fide* requests are made to translate the Noise Abatement Plan, the MAC will use the resources available to it to try to accommodate the requests. In regard to footnoting, **Skramstad** stated that Council members need to recognize that aviation language is inherently technical and that for a noise abatement plan to be effective, it must communicate necessary information to those who will be implementing procedures contained in the plan. **Skramstad**

stated the MAC will use its best efforts to make the St Paul Downtown Airport Noise Abatement Plan understandable to the lay person, but that Council members must accept that aviation language and, therefore, the Plan, will be technical in nature.

7. Resolution: MAC to provide \$3000 for each District Council (1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 17) to assist with the initial community outreach and public input aspect of their agreement.

**Skramstad** stated that the MAC does not provide funding to community groups or district councils. He added that all monies generated on airport property are subject to federal review and possible revenue diversion complaints under Federal Aviation Regulations Part 16. **Skramstad** stated that, therefore, the MAC will not provide the requested funding to the identified District Councils.

**Berquist** stated that on 7 June 2006 the MAC agreed to initiate an update of the Downtown St Paul Airport Noise Abatement Plan. He pointed out that the Council was meeting in 2008. He pointed out that the MAC agreed to establish a process to have someone available during business hours to respond to Holman Field aircraft noise operations complaints. He added he believed there were additional agreements the MAC had made with the St. Paul City Council and stated that he hopes the MAC is fulfilling those agreements.

**Weibel** recapped the resolutions as they were discussed and asked if the Council wanted to move to accept the discussions as held as the resolve to the resolutions. **Dorer** asked if it is the City of St Paul's policy to include in the English version of documents a notice that the document can be provided in a language other than English if requested. **Hunt** stated that longer documents do contain such a notice. **Dorer** suggested such a statement be included in the Downtown St Paul Airport Noise Abatement Plan. **Skramstad** stated that such a statement could be included in the Downtown St Paul Airport Noise Abatement Plan.

**IT WAS MOVED BY REPRESENTATIVE MIERSCH AND SECONDED BY REPRESENTATIVE RUDD TO ACCEPT THE DISCUSSIONS HELD AS THE RESOLVE TO THE PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS.**

**THE MOTION CARRIED BY MAJORITY VOTE.**

**4. STP Noise Abatement Plan: Federal Regulations/Policy Relative to Noise Abatement at Public Use Facilities**

**Scott Skramstad, Technical Advisor**, reminded Council members that copies of the Downtown St Paul Airport Noise Abatement Plan were distributed at the Council's last meeting, during which members reviewed the five elements of the Plan. **Skramstad** further reminded the group that, at the last meeting, members agreed to forward to him, prior to today's meeting, suggestions of ways for the MAC to fulfill its supplemental conditions of agreement by incorporating agreed-to Plan elements. He noted that, also at the last meeting, Council members agreed to forward to him questions they may have had regarding the Plan so that he could address them. **Skramstad** stated that no questions were sent to him by Council members.

**Skramstad** stated he felt it would be beneficial, given questions that were raised about the voluntary nature of elements of the Plan, to discuss realities of operating the Downtown St Paul Airport as a public-use facility and under federal policies.

**Skramstad** introduced Chad Leqve, Manager, MAC Aviation Noise & Satellite Programs, noting Leqve's background and qualifications. He noted that Leqve is one of the primary contacts between the MAC and communities, airport user groups and community groups located around Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport (MSP). **Leqve** addressed the group, noting that the Council is one of the cornerstones of one of the agreements reached between the City of St Paul and the MAC in regard to construction of a floodwall at the

Downtown St Paul Airport. **Leqve** referenced his experience in working with entities such as FedEx, UPS, Delta, United, Northwest and the Cities of Minneapolis, St Paul, Richfield, Burnsville, Eagan, Apple Valley and Mendota Heights on issues related to community concerns and airport operations. He noted that the governing principle in working on such issues has been compromise and pointed to his experience with the Metropolitan Aircraft Sound Abatement Council (MASAC) which had existed since 1969 and was comprised of residents from cities around MSP, and senior VP-level representatives from the airlines operating at MSP. **Leqve** noted that, initially, MASAC made great strides in the area of airport noise, in large part because there was not a large body of federal policy dealing with airport noise issues. In 1990, however, the U.S. Congress passed the Airport Noise and Capacity Act (ANCA) which had an impact on aircraft certification and on what airports could do in terms of restricting access to public-use facilities. As part of the Act, all aircraft manufactured in excess of 75,000 pounds had to be Stage-3 compliant by 2000. **Leqve** noted that the stage of an aircraft is related to, among other things, the amount of noise generated by an aircraft, the weight of the aircraft and the number of engines on an aircraft. He pointed out that Stage-3 aircraft are among the quietest aircraft operating today. As a result of this element of the Act, aircraft operators had to invest in upgrading their fleets to be Stage-3 compliant. In return, the Act balanced that by implementing measures to make sure airports as public-use facilities, as part of the nation's overall transportation asset, could not restrict access or use of an airport. The Federal Aviation Administration established Part 161 which is a complicated technical and legal process by which an airport can seek to be exempted from that mandate. **Leqve** noted that no airport has received approval to be exempted from the mandate since Part 161 was initiated, and that violation of Part 161 can lead to an airport having its grant assurances revoked. **Leqve** also noted that policy developments such as ANCA and Part 161 increased the difficulty in addressing airport noise issues. Referring again to MASAC, **Leqve** noted that it disbanded in 2001 after the airport user representatives left the group due to a lack of cooperation and compromise within the group. **Leqve** stated that, given the federal policies governing the environment in which a group such as the Downtown Airport Advisory Council (DAAC) must work on airport noise issues, success can only be achieved through cooperation and compromise on the part of all members. He pointed to the MSP Noise Oversight Committee and its accomplishments, stating its successes are due to the Committee members' cooperative attitudes and approaches to issues. **Leqve** stated that the Downtown St Paul Airport is not going anywhere and that its use and access to it cannot be restricted, and that he believes there are still opportunities for the DAAC to achieve successes on noise issues if members work together to identify possible solutions. He added that once the Council identifies possible solutions, it would have to approach the FAA for approval and that a unified stance on an issue and solution, including endorsement by airport user and community representatives and technical soundness is, in his experience, likely to be better received by the FAA and to receive a fair reading.

Responding to Representative Berquist's earlier comments on the MAC's obligations, **Leqve** stated that the items included in the supplemental conditions of agreement are important to the MAC.

**Chair Weibel** echoed **Leqve's** sentiments, stating that misunderstandings are often the result of a lack of information and definition; he encouraged Council members to reach out to each other if they have questions on issues.

**Representative Berquist, District 3 Planning Council – West Side Citizens Organization**, stated that creating understanding was his intent in asking for the Downtown St Paul Noise Abatement Plan to be provided in "plain language", noting that if he does not understand it he will have difficulty conveying it to residents in the community. **Leqve** replied that the MAC views the Council members as an important part of the process of communicating with residents and that it is interested in making sure Council members understand the information they need to fulfill that role. **Weibel** noted that if there is something a community representative does not understand, s/he should feel comfortable reaching out to a user representative for information. **Berquist** noted that he would do so when he finds that Council members sitting on the other side of the table were willing to make eye contact with him. **Weibel** replied that he was making eye contact

with Berquist at that moment, indicating his willingness to meet with Berquist and/or his district to explain items that were not clear. **Berquist** acknowledged that Weibel was making eye contact with him.

**Representative Langer, FAA**, commented that, in her experience, the airport operators at the Downtown St Paul Airport are proactive and concerned about noise issues and have approached her about actions they are voluntarily taking on their own to minimize noise impacts.

5. **STP Noise Complaints**

**Scott Skramstad, Technical Advisor**, reviewed the November-December 2007 noise complaints received for the Downtown St Paul Airport. He noted there were 10 total complaints from 5 total complainants, and that all 10 complaints occurred in November 2007. **Skramstad** pointed out that eight of the 10 complaints were received via the Internet and two were received via telephone calls to the Noise Complaint Hotline. **Skramstad** noted that aircraft correlated to the complaints included an AeroCommander, a twin Cessna, Lear jets and a float plane. He also pointed out that five of the complaints correlated to MSP events, rather than to STP events.

6. **Other Items Not on the Agenda**

**Scott Skramstad, Technical Advisor**, stated that the bi-monthly STP complaint maps, the approved minutes for the Council meetings and the revised 2007 Holman Field Noise Monitoring Study are all available on-line at [www.macnoise.com/library/#stp](http://www.macnoise.com/library/#stp).

**Chair Weibel** asked if the Council Bylaws were approved at the last Council meeting. **Representative Dorer, District 4 Community Council – Dayton’s Bluff**, said they were and **Skramstad** indicated the revised Bylaws were included in the e-mail notification for today’s meeting. It was clarified that the Bylaws were adopted at the 13 November 2007 meeting.

**Representative Berquist, District 3 Planning Council – West Side Citizens Organization**, requested a copy of Skramstad’s presentation from today’s meeting and a copy of the audio recording of today’s meeting.

7. **Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting of the Downtown Airport Advisory Council is scheduled for 4:00pm, Tuesday, 11 March 2008. **Chair Weibel** asked that Council members inform Scott Skramstad in advance if they are unable to attend a Council meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Christene Sirois, Recording Secretary  
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