

Public Input Meeting Responses – April 17, 2007 (Questions are in **bolded**)

Click [here](#) for the summary memorandum that was forwarded to members of the MSP Noise Oversight Committee (NOC) regarding the April 17, 2007 Public Input Meeting

What are the air space restrictions (for example, during visual conditions) that prevent using Cedar Avenue (or further west) for arrivals? It seems like this would not be a problem when using Runway 35.

From a noise abatement perspective, the use of Cedar Avenue for arrival operations during visual conditions does not provide an effective solution. A Cedar Avenue visual procedure has the potential to shift operations to non-impacted residential areas and the possible redistribution of noise impacts from one community to another.

However, in the November 2004 Part 150 Update MAC proposed a Noise Abatement Measure (NA-16 – Runway 35 River Visual Approach Procedure), that considers a river visual approach procedure to Runway 35 that routes arriving aircraft over the Minnesota River Valley area. Several issues would need to be resolved prior to implementation of this measure, including airspace design, FAA concurrence, and flight testing. Also, additional analysis would be required to determine if the procedure could be safely used at night.

Also, couldn't Runway 22 be used for late-night and early-morning departures?

The Runway Use System (RUS) establishes runway selection preferences based on impacted population (i.e. the runway that impacts the fewest people receives the highest preference). Noise benefits utilizing the RUS can be obtained during mid- and low-demand periods, which usually occur during the night. Under the RUS the first priority for operations during the nighttime hours is over the Eagan/Mendota Heights Corridor (area that contains the Minnesota River and commercial and industrial land immediately east of MSP). The second priority under the RUS, based on impacted population, is Runway 17/35 and the third priority is Runway 4/22.

In regard to the CDA, are you talking about an FMS arrival with v-nav or just a continuous descent approach? The airbus, 75s and RJs are all FMS-capable.

The Continuous Decent Approach (CDA) flight test conducted by the Partnership for Air Transportation Noise and Emissions Reduction (PARTNER) at Louisville International Airport (SDF) in 2004 was flown by FMS-equipped Boeing 757-200 and Boeing 767-300 aircraft. During the test VNAV was used 96% of the time within the terminal area, prior to glideslope capture.

One of the challenges in CDA is safely implementing the procedure at airports with greater traffic levels and mixed fleet operations (aircraft not equipped with FMS). The FAA has identified in their 2007 AEP Business Plan the following strategic initiative: *“Work with several airports to implement Continuous Decent Approach (CDA) for night operations, and initiate research into CDA applicability to airports with greater traffic levels, general mixed fleet, and mixed operations.”*

It's my understanding that Northwest has one of the oldest fleets in the industry. I've heard that they're in the process of changing out some of the older aircraft. Do you know what Northwest's schedule is on changing over its fleet?

As of June 30, 2006, Northwest Airlines had 105 DC-9 aircraft¹ which are considered some of the noisiest aircraft in the MSP fleet. Operational trends suggest that many airlines, including Northwest, are phasing out their older, noisier aircraft and replacing them with more efficient and cost effective aircraft that incorporate the latest state-of-the-art aircraft noise reduction technology. Although the reduction in older noisier aircraft at MSP represents a positive trend, it is possible that these types of aircraft will continue to operate at MSP for several years.

Why can't we use river approaches or Cedar Avenue approaches?

From a noise abatement perspective, the use of Cedar Avenue for arrival operations during visual conditions does not provide an effective solution. A Cedar Avenue visual procedure has the potential to shift operations to non-impacted residential areas and the possible redistribution of noise impacts from one community to another.

However, in the November 2004 Part 150 Update MAC proposed a Noise Abatement Measure (NA-16 – Runway 35 River Visual Approach Procedure), that considers a river visual approach to Runway 35 that routes arriving aircraft over the Minnesota River Valley area. Several issues would need to be resolved prior to implementation of this measure, including airspace design, FAA concurrence, and flight testing. Also, additional analysis would be required to determine if the procedure could be safely used at night.

I'm tired of listening to "freighters" take off Runway 17 early every morning. Why can't they go down the river or use Runway 22? The "freighters" have got to stop.

The MAC has developed the Runway Use System (RUS) which establishes runway selection preferences based on impacted population (i.e. the runway that impacts the fewest people receives the highest preference). Noise benefits utilizing the RUS can be obtained during mid- and low-demand periods, which usually occur during the night. Under the RUS the first priority for operations during the nighttime hours is over the Eagan/Mendota Heights Corridor (area that contains the Minnesota River and commercial and industrial land immediately east of MSP). The second priority under the RUS, based on impacted population, is Runway 17/35 and the third priority is Runway 4/22. The RUS applies to all jet operations including cargo aircraft and MSP Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) personnel have been briefed on the priorities outlined in the RUS.

I'm an airline pilot and I'm concerned about the use of Runway 17 for departures. I've heard that 37% of all departures take place off of Runway 17 per year. I've heard that air traffic controllers use Runway 17 in order to achieve that percentage, and that that percentage was based on airport capacity. Because the airport is not at capacity, can't that number be switched so that not so many aircraft are using Runway 17?

Over the past several months, there has been a steady increase in operations using Runway 17/35 as the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has begun implementing runway use practices that are consistent with the runway use percentages anticipated prior to the opening of Runway 17/35 (37% of all departures and 16% of all arrivals). The Record of Decision (ROD) approving the May 1998 Dual Track Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) paving the way for the airport expansion states the following: "FAA Air Traffic will establish the final procedures consistent with the conditions set forth in the FEIS, for all runway ends and for airspace at MSP following the Record of Decision."² The document further states: "The runway use percentages in Table A.3-7 are operational goals

¹ Source: www.nwa.com

² May 1998 Dual Track FEIS, page I-6

based on weather conditions (both wind and visibility), direction of flight, noise impacts and operational efficiency; however, the actual use of the runways could vary on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, but should closely approximate the percentage goals over an average year.³(emphasis added)

Also, I never see aircraft utilize Runway 12R and there have been several times when I've had to wait in line to depart off of Runway 17 when there are no departures or arrivals on Runway 12L/12R. Is it efficient to have aircraft sitting to wait to depart off Runway 17 when they could use other runways?

The FAA Control Tower at MSP controls airspace use/decisions and associated aircraft routing in the vicinity of MSP and is the appropriate authority concerning airspace/runway use questions. As such, your questions regarding runway use have been forwarded to the designated FAA official.

Several other airports have restrictions on their new runways (for example, Orange County) – why aren't there any restrictions on Runway 17?

The MAC does not have the authority to impose operationally restrictive policies on aircraft using Runway 17 or any other runway at MSP. Federal guidelines make it very difficult if not impossible to enforce operationally restrictive policies (imposing fines, restricting runways, implementing a curfew) at a public use facility that uses federal funds to procure capital improvements. As a result, the MAC has very little if any flexibility with respect to restricting operations at MSP without impeding on federal guidelines. However, some airports such as San Diego and Reagan Washington National Airport, implemented operational restrictions based on noise before the passing of the Aviation Noise and Capacity Act of 1990, and therefore those restrictions were grandfathered in and are allowed under federal guidelines.

I attended the 23 January 2007 Public Input Meeting and raised questions about the reasonableness of late-night and early-morning operations. I've been woken up at 1:30am and 3:00am by aircraft going overhead. This seems to be getting worse, and I don't know what to expect in terms of whether or not this is going to get better or worse.

Since its opening, Runway 17/35 has been used minimally during the nighttime hours. As noted in a letter dated February 2, 2007 in response to your comments at the January 23rd Public Input Meeting, the Runway Use System (RUS) has been established that prioritizes runway selection preferences based on impacted population (i.e. the runway that impacts the fewest people receives the highest preference). Under the RUS the first priority for operations during the nighttime hours is over the Eagan/Mendota Heights Corridor (an area that contains the Minnesota River and commercial and industrial land immediately east of MSP). Although the RUS defines noise sensitive runway use preferences employed by Air Traffic Control in prioritizing runway selection, it does not preclude the use of Runway 17/35 during the nighttime hours. Greater use of the runway than what exists presently was planned and anticipated prior to the runway's opening, as evidenced by the runway use percentages outlined in the planning documents leading up to the runway opening.

I live in an area that is in a straight line for arrivals. Nighttime operations are a magnitude of difference from daytime arrivals. After being woken several times at night, I visited your web site and discovered that in 2006 there was an average of 25 nighttime operations for an entire month, but that that number began increasing this year. In March 2007 there were almost 250

³ May 1998 Dual Track FEIS, page A.3-17

operations. Have we reached the point where we're close to the anticipated full usage of the runway, particularly in terms of nighttime operations?

No - nighttime operations on the new runway, 17/35, have not reached the levels anticipated before the runway opening. Runway 17/35 has been used minimally during the nighttime hours since its opening; however, greater use of the runway than what exists presently was planned and anticipated prior to the runway's opening, as evidenced by the runway use percentages outlined in the planning documents leading up to the runway opening.

Also, back in 2005 and 2006, I could predict that flights would taper off around 10:00pm. Is there any way to add more predictability to when flights will be over my home?

No – predicting when flights will occur over any given area is difficult. On a daily basis, operational considerations, such as wind and weather patterns, the number of operations, time of day, construction, and other conditions, all play a part in how the airport operates at any given time and which areas may be impacted.

I live approximately one block west of Cedar Avenue, one-half block south of McAndrews. It was my understanding that the flight patterns would be east of Galaxy but it seems like the flight patterns are not what was promised. When was the flight pattern changed?

The flight pattern has not changed over the City of Apple Valley. The actual aircraft flight track locations are consistent with what was modeled in the environmental documentation leading up to the opening of Runway 17/35 and what was presented in the informational meetings held in the City of Apple Valley before the runway opened. The modeled flight tracks were also available on the Noise Program web site and can still be viewed on www.macnoise.com (click on Interactive Maps/Reports, then Flight Tracker, then Runway 17/35 INM Tracks).

In addition, if all of the homes around the airport have been insulated, what is the point of having aircraft fly over Apple Valley?

The MAC has insulated homes closest to the airport that are most impacted by aircraft noise (65 DNL - Day-Night Average Sound Level). In any mitigation program a boundary has to be developed and subsequently, homes on one side of the boundary will receive mitigation improvements while homes on the other side of that boundary will not. This does not suggest that the noise stops on the other side of that boundary or that aircraft will not fly over those areas that are not covered by the program. As aircraft go to and from the immediate vicinity of the airport they will inevitably pass over homes that have not been insulated.

Will our homes also be insulated?

No – the City of Apple Valley is located several miles outside of the 65 DNL contour area and is not eligible for mitigation.

We need to have a viable solution for changing the noise impacts. We already have a CDA approach – it's an ILS. Fly the ILS at 8000 feet, don't bring your gear down until the final approach and that would alleviate all of the noise.

Comment noted. Flying the Instrument Landing System on the glide slope at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) standard 3° descending vertical path will place an aircraft at approximately

3,000 feet AGL (above ground level) over the southern border of Apple Valley (10 miles out at 300 feet per mile on a 3° descending vertical path).

In regard to Runway 17, have runway incursions gone up as you're crossing Pinnacle and Mesaba across extra runways?

No, runway incursions have not increased since the opening of Runway 17/35. For the previous two years before the opening of Runway 17/35 there were two runway incursions on Runway 12R. Since the opening of Runway 17/35 there has been one runway incursion on Runway 12R.

People do river visual approaches all across the United States – things can be done but you're not doing them.

In the November 2004 Part 150 Update MAC proposed a Noise Abatement Measure (NA-16 – Runway 35 River Visual Approach Procedure), that considers a river visual approach procedure to Runway 35 that routes arriving aircraft over the Minnesota River Valley area. Several issues would need to be resolved prior to implementation of this measure, including airspace design, FAA concurrence, and flight testing. Also, additional analysis would be required to determine if the procedure could be safely used at night.

If you're going to create a new runway and destroy an old neighborhood, let's come up with a solution, a curfew, and not use Runway 17/35 at night.

The MAC does not have the authority to impose operationally restrictive policies on aircraft using Runway 17/35 or any other runway at MSP. Federal guidelines make it very difficult if not impossible to enforce operationally restrictive policies (imposing fines, restricting runways, implementing a curfew) at a public use facility that uses federal funds to procure capital improvements. As a result, the MAC has very little if any flexibility with respect to restricting operations at MSP without impeding on federal guidelines.

Your comments and concerns have been incorporated in a memorandum to MAC Commissioners and MSP Noise Oversight Committee members. The memorandum summarizes the input received at the April 17th Public Input Meeting.

I've spoken with you before, I've spoken with Commissioners and City Council members and it's been going on for two years. My question is whether or not there's a light at the end of the tunnel, as it were. I've lost a lot of faith in government – local, state and federal – and have an issue with what appears to be a lack of accountability regarding the airport and noise issues. I'm looking for answers and I'm not hearing any.

Comment noted. The MAC works closely with the local, regional and national Federal Aviation Administration (FAA); a critical relationship for the furthering of aircraft noise reduction. This cooperative relationship with the FAA, the airlines operating at MSP, and the MSP Noise Oversight Committee has helped to foster cooperative solutions in noise reduction and the development of innovative procedures like the Eagan-Mendota Heights Departure Corridor, the Minneapolis Straight-Out Procedure and the Runway 17 2.5 nm Departure Procedure. Working with these groups the MAC will continue these noise abatement efforts and will work towards feasible noise abatement programs and/or solutions. However, as stated in previous correspondence, the overflights you are experiencing are a function of the location of your home to the Runway 35 arrival flight path and it is not possible to eliminate those aircraft overflights.

I think it's wrong that the number of noise complaints is published when nothing is done about them.

People often ask if filing noise complaints will change how the airport operates. Unfortunately, it is not that simple. On a daily basis, operational factors, such as wind and weather, the number of arrivals and departures, the time of day, construction activity, and other conditions, all play a part in how the airport operates at any given time. The FAA has sole authority for determining where aircraft will fly and how the airport will operate. These decisions are made solely upon standard air traffic control procedures (including several noise abatement procedures) and noise complaints are not considered when making these decisions.

Noise complaints are, however, used in conjunction with operational data to corroborate specific events or identify possible trends. Various cities also use the complaints to gauge and assess the level of concern about airport noise in their communities. In addition, complaints provide insight for MAC Noise Program staff as to any specific trends or irregularities that may need to be investigated or assessed.

I've not been added to the mailing list for your newsletter.

Your address has been added to the *MSP Noise News* distribution list. Previous editions can be found on our web site: www.macnoise.com.

Regarding the idea of moving flight patterns over Cedar Avenue, I can tell you – as a City Council member – that moving the flight tracks would only move the problem to another group of people, not solve it.

Concur. From a noise abatement perspective, the use of Cedar Avenue for arrival operations during visual conditions does not provide an effective solution. A Cedar Avenue visual procedure has the potential to shift operations to non-impacted residential areas and the possible redistribution of noise impacts from one community to another.

It is only through political pressure through our elected representatives that something will be done about the noise issues in Apple Valley. We've all seen our neighbors sell their homes and our property values go down because of the noise – we need to do something about it.

Comment noted. The legislative decision to expand Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) at its present location was a long and public process that culminated in legislative direction to expand the airport. This process included extensive evaluations that considered the impacts associated with Runway 17/35.

I think that one of the first questions that needs to be put to our elected representatives – especially as they run for re-election in a year – is what they've done for us on this noise issue.

Comment noted.

Your comments and concerns have been incorporated in a memorandum to MAC Commissioners and MSP Noise Oversight Committee members. The memorandum summarizes the input received at the April 17th Public Input Meeting.

I'd like to know who gave you the right to build Runway 17. Who made the decision to keep the airport at its current location?

The decision to expand MSP at its present location was a long and public process that culminated in legislative direction to expand MSP. This process included extensive evaluations that considered the impacts associated with Runway 17/35.

In 1989, the Minnesota Legislature directed the MAC and the Metropolitan Council (MC) to examine how to best meet the regions future aviation needs. This initiated a seven year series of planning and environmental review studies called the Dual Track Airport Planning Process, examining expansion of MSP at its current location or construction of a new replacement airport in Southern Dakota County. In 1996, the Minnesota Legislature reviewed the Dual Track Airport Planning Process recommendations and the environmental impacts and selected development of MSP as the preferred alternative. This was a significant public process that included a public comment period and two public hearings. The FAA issued a Record of Decision (ROD) in September 1998 that determined the document adequately assessed the environmental effects of the MSP 2010 plan.

What are you going to do about the noise?

For several decades now a significant number of noise initiatives have been successfully pursued and implemented at MSP. Some of these initiatives include operational measures, voluntary agreements, and an extensive noise mitigation program, which to date, represents approximately \$360 million in residential and school sound mitigation and property acquisition in noise impacted areas around the airport.

For over 30 years, the MAC has supported and sponsored a community-industry noise abatement group. Beginning in 1969 with the Metropolitan Aircraft Sound Abatement Council, and now through the MSP Noise Oversight Committee, a number of noise abatement policies and procedures have been investigated and implemented through the cooperative efforts of these groups (e.g. Eagan-Mendota Heights Departure Corridor, Crossing in the Corridor Procedure, the Minneapolis Straight-Out Procedure, Runway Use System, Runway 17 2.5 nm Departure Procedure and Noise Abatement Departure Profiles.)

These efforts continue today, and regularly include the consideration of noise issues and the approval of related proposals/programs by MAC.