

**PUBLIC INPUT MEETING COMMENTS/QUESTIONS
LOCATION: ST LOUIS PARK CITY HALL
27 OCTOBER 2009**

What are the precise locations of the Remote Monitoring Towers (RMTs) in and around St. Louis Park?

Currently, there are no RMTs located within the boundaries of St. Louis Park.

If there are not RMTs in St. Louis Park, what has to be done to have some located in our community?

The MAC does not plan to install additional RMTs in St. Louis Park.

What decibel levels do our neighborhoods have to have in order to qualify for noise mitigation?

Noise mitigation programs are strictly regulated under 14 CFR Part 150 (Part 150 Study), which mandates use of federally-established aircraft noise exposure calculations and thresholds for defining eligibility. The process for calculating aircraft noise exposure includes using the Integrated Noise Model (INM) and inputting numerous pieces of aircraft operations data that specifically include a 10-decibel (dB) penalty for each aircraft operation occurring between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. This penalty is intended to account for the higher human sensitivity to noise during the nighttime hours. The calculations result in noise contours that depict areas impacted by cumulative aircraft noise exposure levels of 60, 65, 70, and 75 dB DNL.

The Federal Aviation Administration specifies that only residences impacted by cumulative aircraft noise exposure level of 65 dB DNL or greater are considered incompatible with an airport and thus eligible for sound insulation programs using aviation-generated revenues.

The MSP noise mitigation program eligibility area can be viewed at: www.macnoise.com/sjp. The City of St. Louis Park is located more than 3 miles beyond the 65 dB DNL eligibility area and approximately 1.5 miles beyond the 60 dB DNL eligibility area. St. Louis Park residents are impacted by aircraft noise levels that do not meet the noise mitigation program eligibility criteria and are lower than the federally-defined threshold for incompatible noise exposure.

Do St. Louis Park residents need to talk to our city representatives in order to receive the same noise mitigation that Minneapolis residents received?

The MSP noise mitigation program eligibility area can be viewed at: www.macnoise.com/sjp. The City of St. Louis Park is located more than 3 miles beyond the 65 dB DNL eligibility area and approximately 1.5 miles beyond the 60 dB DNL eligibility area.

Because residential sound insulation programs are federally-regulated, each program must be reviewed and approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Furthermore, the FAA must approve expenditures of aviation-generated revenues. Providing sound insulation to homes located outside the boundaries of an approved program is a violation of federal regulations.

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What steps would St. Louis Park residents have to take to have their homes tested for decibel levels?

The MAC does not have a program for random sound-testing of individual homes. Further, measured decibel levels of aircraft overflights are used to qualify a home's eligibility for noise mitigation.

Noise mitigation programs are strictly regulated under 14 CFR Part 150 (Part 150 Study), which mandates use of federally-established aircraft noise exposure calculations and thresholds for defining eligibility. The process for calculating aircraft noise exposure includes using the Integrated Noise Model (INM) and inputting numerous pieces of aircraft operations data that specifically includes a 10-decibel (dB) penalty for each aircraft operation occurring between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. This penalty is intended to account for the higher human sensitivity to noise during the nighttime hours. The calculations result in noise contours that depict areas impacted by cumulative aircraft noise exposure levels of 60, 65, 70, and 75 dB DNL.

The Federal Aviation Administration specifies that only residences impacted by cumulative aircraft noise exposure level of 65 dB DNL or greater are considered incompatible with an airport and thus eligible for noise mitigation programs using aviation-generated revenues.

The MSP noise mitigation program eligibility area can be viewed at: www.macnoise.com/sip. The City of St. Louis Park is located more than 3 miles beyond the 65 dB DNL eligibility area and approximately 1.5 miles beyond the 60 dB DNL eligibility area. St. Louis Park residents are impacted by aircraft noise levels that are lower than the federally-defined threshold for incompatible noise exposure and do not meet the noise mitigation program eligibility criteria.

When was the Part 150 study conducted for Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport?

The 14 CFR Part 150 Study for MSP was completed in November 2004.

When were the noise contours developed that were used to determine which homes were eligible for noise mitigation in Minneapolis?

The forecast 2007 noise contours were used as the basis for determining the eligibility area for noise mitigation, and were developed as part of the MSP 2002 14 CFR Part 150 Study Update.

The 2007 forecasts assumed aircraft operations at MSP reaching 582,366. In comparison, actual aircraft operations at MSP totaled 453,566 in 2007 and 449,972 in 2008.

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Will the newly re-constructed runway at Minneapolis-St Paul International Airport give us any relief in terms of overflights when it reopens?

Air traffic patterns were adjusted during the reconstruction period only. Once the runway reopens, air traffic patterns will return to what they were prior to the reconstruction period.

It sounds like the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is the entity that must be dealt with in order to get traffic patterns and runway use changed, correct?

Air traffic patterns and runway use are determined by the FAA based upon weather conditions and air traffic demands and safety.

Does the Metropolitan Airports Commission approach the FAA in order to get those changes made? Or do residents have to address the FAA directly to make things better for our neighborhoods?

The MAC works closely with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on runway use, arrival and departure procedures, and noise issues. While the MAC and the FAA have collaborated on development and use of noise abatement procedures, the FAA has many other considerations that must take priority such as safety, weather, airspace capacity, etc.

In addition, the MAC and the FAA work cooperatively with the airlines operating at MSP and the communities impacted by MSP aircraft operations through the MSP Noise Oversight Committee (NOC). The NOC has helped to work through cooperative solutions and the development of innovative procedures for noise reduction (e.g., the Eagan-Mendota Heights Departure Corridor and the 12L/12/R RNAV Departure Procedure, the Runway 17 RNAV Departure Procedure, Runway 17 2.5 nm Departure Procedure). The MAC will continue to work through the NOC on development of noise abatement efforts and will work to enhance established noise abatement programs and/or solutions. Residents have the option to contact the FAA directly, or work through their respective NOC representatives.

The overflights you are experiencing are a function of the location of your home with respect to flight patterns associated with Runways 12L/30R and 12R/30L. Due to safety and airspace capacity considerations, it is not possible to eliminate aircraft flight paths over your area.

Is noise mitigation the only solution – I don't want to have my home sealed up.

Noise mitigation includes sound insulation products (e.g., leak sealant, insulation, windows, doors, etc.) that are applied to a home's structure, but, in general terms noise mitigation also includes any efforts that are made to address noise impacts such as operational methods and implementation of noise abatement procedures. Airports across the nation will design a noise mitigation program tailored to

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address the needs of the surrounding environment; however, each proposed noise mitigation method requires review and approval by the Federal Aviation Administration.

The MAC's efforts for MSP are documented in the 14 CFR Part 150 Study Update and include establishment of the Noise Oversight Committee, operating procedures, encouraging use of manufactured Stage 3 aircraft, and initiatives for use of technology and Global Position Systems (e.g., RNAV procedures) among other measures. Use of approved noise mitigation measures at MSP occurs daily; however, Air Traffic Controllers (ATC) must first consider safety, weather, and other air traffic demand requirements during their day-to-day coordination of approved noise abatement procedures and operational measures.

Is it better to file noise complaints via the Internet or by phone? Which is more effective in getting things to change?

Community members have an option for entering noise complaints via the internet or via telephone, and both methods equally result in adding noise complaints to the MAC's noise complaint database for analysis and investigation.

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 safety, weather (wind, visibility, etc.), the number of arrivals and departures, the time of day, construction activity, and other variable 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.

Has the Metropolitan Airports Commission considered assessing fines or fees against the airlines and other operators as a way of motivating them to adjust their schedules to decrease the frequency of flights in general and at night in particular?

Imposing fines or fees for operations at public use airports, such as MSP, would be in violation of Federal Aviation Regulations and grant assurances. Although federal policy virtually prohibits mandatory restrictions at airports, such as nighttime curfews, several steps have been taken at MSP to reduce nighttime noise impacts. Some relief is provided by voluntary agreements with airlines to limit scheduled nighttime flights, and to avoid using hushkitted aircraft during the nighttime hours.

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What is the significance of the default address that pre-populates the on-line noise complaint form?

The address that automatically populates the address field is the location of the MAC general offices, and is used as an example only.

Do the noise contours represent peak decibel levels for the areas they surround?

The DNL noise contour map is not developed using noise measurements from the RMTs. However, the noise data collected at the RMTs are used to help validate some of the data that is used to generate noise contours.

The process for calculating aircraft noise exposure includes using the Integrated Noise Model (INM) and inputting numerous pieces of aircraft operations data that specifically includes a 10-decibel (dB) penalty for each aircraft operation occurring between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. This penalty is intended to account for the higher human sensitivity to noise during the nighttime hours. Additional pieces of data used in the calculations include aircraft types and certificated noise levels, atmospheric conditions, aircraft performance, terrain, and other variables. The calculations result in noise contours that depict areas impacted by cumulative aircraft noise exposure levels of 60, 65, 70, and 75 dB DNL. The FAA's methodology is universally recognized and standardized for U.S. airports.

Does the Metropolitan Airports Commission match a complaint to a specific flight?

Yes, when possible.

In reference to the handout Brian Hoffman provided at tonight's meeting, was the Noise Exposure Map generated as part of the Metropolitan Airports Commission's settlement with Minneapolis and the other cities?

No. The noise exposure map was initially developed as part of the MSP 2002 14 CFR Part 150 Study Update and later used to determine noise mitigation eligibility in the lawsuit settlement. (Note: The handout was titled *Airport 101, July 12, 2006*, and the noise contour in the handout was titled *Draft 2007 Mitigated Noise Contours*.)

Are Remote Monitoring Towers placed equidistant from one another to generate the noise contours?

No, the DNL noise contour map is not developed using noise measurements from the RMTs. The process for calculating aircraft noise exposure is federally-established under 14 CFR Part 150, and includes using the Integrated Noise Model (INM) and inputting numerous pieces of aircraft operations data that specifically includes a 10-decibel (dB) penalty for each aircraft operation occurring between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. This penalty is intended to account for the higher human sensitivity to noise during

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the nighttime hours. The calculations result in noise contours that depict areas impacted by cumulative aircraft noise exposure levels of 60, 65, 70, and 75 dB DNL.

Can you clarify – the noise contour maps that are created by virtue of the Federal Aviation Administration's data don't necessarily represent actual sound levels in an area but represent a model that is generated from the data that is plunked into a system, correct?

The DNL noise contour map is not developed using noise measurements from the RMTs, but it is a calculated average that is developed using the Federal Aviation Administration's prescribed process and tool, the Integrated Noise Model (INM).

The INM uses several operational variables and input data for the development of noise contours. These variables and data include actual aircraft flight paths, forecasted number of operations, aircraft noise measurements from the FAA's Part 36 noise standards certification database, aircraft types, atmospheric conditions, aircraft performance, terrain, and other variables as necessary. The INM also adds a 10-decibel nighttime noise penalty to aircraft operations expected to occur between the hours of 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. to take into consideration the relatively low nighttime ambient noise levels and the fact that most people are sleeping during this time. These variables are then used to map an average annualized day of noise impacts considering all arrivals and departures to and from the airport. The FAA's INM methodology is universally recognized and applied at all U.S. airports.

How can I find out the actual average, on-the-ground noise level in St Louis Park or any given area in the Twin Cities?

The MAC does not have a program for sound-testing of individual homes. Community members have the option to purchase and operate their own equipment, or arrange for a contracted noise consultant to test noise levels for St. Louis Park or any given accessible area of the Twin Cities, at their own expense.