

CHAPTER 10

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

FIRST PUBLIC WORKSHOP

The first public information workshop for the FAR Part 150 Noise and Land Use Compatibility Study at Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW) was held on March 31 to explain the purpose of a FAR Part 150 Noise and Land Use Compatibility Study, to provide a draft of the Noise Exposure Maps (NEM) information for public review and comments, and to assist in the development of the Noise Compatibility Plan (NCP).

The public information workshop was held southwest of the airport, at a location in close proximity to residential communities affected by aircraft flyovers. The workshop was attended by an estimated 80 citizens of whom 69 signed in. Comment sheets were passed out as attendees entered the workshop to be handed in at the meeting or mailed within the following two weeks; these comment sheets are presented in Appendix A. Seventeen boards were displayed for public review. Informational handouts and brochures were also available at the workshop; these can also be found in Appendix A. Of the questions and concerns that citizens had, the three most frequent comments included:

- The planes are too loud;
- The planes fly too low;
- The planes fly over my house too frequently.

The public workshop was advertised in the Fort Myers News-Press (the local paper of greatest circulation) on March 21 and March 29. Information about the workshop was also distributed to an extensive number of local TV, radio, and newspapers. The meeting had extensive coverage by television, radio and newspaper media.

SECOND PUBLIC WORKSHOP

The second public information workshop for the FAR Part 150 Noise Compatibility Study at Southwest Florida International Airport was held on November 17 to update the public on the progress that has been made since the first workshop in March. Information from the first public workshop was presented again, along with the proposed draft overlay zones and draft recommendations for operational procedures intended to reduce noise exposure on the communities surrounding the airport.

The second workshop was held in the Gateway community, north of the airport, where residential communities are affected by aircraft flyovers. This workshop did not have as high of an attendance as the first one, with an estimated 29 citizens. Similar to the first workshop, comment sheets were passed out as attendees entered the workshop to be handed in at the end of the evening or mailed within the following two weeks. These comment sheets are presented in Appendix A. The second workshop also differed from the first in that the majority of the comments provided were positive, in support of the recommendations.

The public workshop was advertised in the Fort Myers News-Press (the local paper of greatest circulation) on November 7 and November 14. Information about the workshop was also distributed to an extensive number of local TV, radio, and newspapers. The meeting had extensive coverage by television, radio and newspaper media.

FIRST PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was held before the Board of Port Commissioners on January 10, 2005 at the Southwest Florida International Airport Training and Conference Center. At the opening of the hearing 10 members of the public addressed the Board. Following the public comments, a presentation was made to the Board responding to comments and presenting the recommendations of the study. Following the presentation, Board members had specific comments on the proposed noise overlay zones. The Board indicated that further analysis pertaining to the limits and requirements within each noise overlay zone needed to occur. A transcript of the hearing is included in Appendix A.

The public hearing was advertised in the Fort Myers News-Press (the local paper of greatest circulation) on January 6, 2005 and January 7, 2005.

SECOND PUBLIC HEARING

A second public hearing was held before the Board of Port Commissioners on May 9, 2005 at the Southwest Florida International Airport Training and Conference Center. One speaker addressed the Board prior to the presentation of the revised study recommendations. Following this comment, a presentation was made to the Board identifying the changes that occurred to the noise overlay zones since the January 10, 2005 hearing. Following the presentation, the Board voted to submit the NCP to the FAA for review and approval. A transcript of the hearing is included in Appendix A.-

The public hearing was advertised in the Fort Myers News-Press (the local paper of greatest circulation) on May 8, 2005.