



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

AUG 18 2016

Mission Support Services
800 Independence Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20591

Mr. Gary P. Mascaro, CM, CAE
Aviation Director
Scottsdale Airport
15000 North Airport Drive
Scottsdale, AZ 85260

Dear Mr. Mascaro:

Thank you for your June 15, 2016, letter cosigned by your aviation management colleagues for the state of Arizona concerning the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Notice of Intent for the Phoenix Metroplex Environmental Assessment (EA).

The FAA has committed to more direct and meaningful engagement with airports and communities to more effectively identify and address environmental concerns. We know such engagement does not guarantee outcomes that eliminate all noise impacts, however, decisions that take airport and community input into consideration are more likely to reflect the collective public interest, receive broader community acceptance, and experience fewer implementation and post-implementation concerns. To that end, we updated our Community Involvement Manual and continue to update our Performance Based Navigation (PBN) project outreach plans across the National Airspace System. Although the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (PHX) was one of the early pioneers in PBN or NextGen procedures with the first published in 2000, we realize there are still ongoing concerns with procedures implemented in 2014 and we will continue to try and work with PHX to address those concerns where possible.

You specifically asked for three commitments from the FAA related to the Phoenix Metroplex EA:

- FAA's public involvement plan for the Phoenix Metroplex EA, including methods for ensuring technical participation by all affected airport managers.
- FAA's commitment to stop designing new routes until community meetings have been held.
- FAA's commitment to utilize alternative noise and emission impact metrics and perform related mapping and analysis, as determined necessary by the community.

As you noted in your letter, the Phoenix Metroplex Project was officially suspended on December 11, 2015. At that time, we anticipated a minimum 1-year delay and I see no change in that estimate. At the end of this year, we will reassess to determine if we continue to delay or if the project can resume at some point next year. As part of that assessment, we will reach out to gain your insights on current issues and concerns. Part of our outreach enhancements in PBN projects like Metroplex require our teams to more frequently and directly engage with local

airports, as well as communities, and you will have that opportunity should the project resume. There is no set schedule or plan developed at this point because the project is on hold. While a specific plan does not exist today for the PHX Metroplex, if we determine that the project should resume, a plan would be developed to include much of the detailed information you have asked for. In general, altitude and track data for alternatives will be shared with local airports and communities in a series of public workshops before the design is complete and comments will be taken. All comments will be answered and considered as the team finalizes the draft airspace redesign. The next step would include the environmental review process and publication of the draft review document with another series of public workshops where comments will again be sought, considered, and answered before a final design decision is made based on the environmental review.

In addition, you requested a commitment from the FAA to stop designing new routes until community meetings have been held. There are no Metroplex design activities going on. The design teams have been disbanded at this point and are doing work on other projects. While the FAA has been evaluating the designs for two alternatives proposed by a special workgroup associated with the implementation of the 2014 PBN procedures, these are not part of the PHX Metroplex.

Finally, you seek the FAA's commitment to use alternative noise and emission metrics. The FAA utilizes scientific and legally accepted standards and metrics nationwide in its environmental review processes. Supplemental metrics are also used as appropriate. The policy and guidance for standards and metrics is found in FAA Order 1050.1F- Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures, as well as in direction from the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). We are exploring whether national standards and metrics should be modified and that work is underway. If and when the PHX Metroplex project resumes, we will work closely with local airports to obtain their input in an effort to address their needs.

We have sent a similar letter to each of the cosigners of your letter.

Thank you for the opportunity to answer you inquiry.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth L. Ray
Vice President, Mission Support Services
Air Traffic Organization