

Hull Airport Committee, Quarterly Report

The town of Hull's Airport Committee is tasked with pursuing solutions for the mitigation of Logan Airport noise and air pollution over the Hull peninsula.

OVERVIEW:

With the advent of NextGen (the Federal Aviation Administration's Next Generation Air Transportation System), the town of Hull has seen an increase in the number of Logan Airport arrivals and departures that negatively impact the quality of life of many residents. Hull lies beneath three heavily concentrated RNAVs (flight paths) that result in neighborhoods being overflown more than 90,000 times a year; more than any community not directly abutting Logan Airport. In addition, Hull became Massport's primary destination for 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. overnight flights (including head-to-head operations), a situation that has prompted numerous citizens to complain about interrupted sleep, a proven health concern.

MASSPORT-FAA JOINT PILOT STUDY:

The Federal Aviation Administration and Massport sponsored a study by MIT's International Center for Air Transportation to find solutions that would mitigate aircraft noise in communities impacted by Logan flight operations. There are two components to this study; BLOCK ONE and BLOCK TWO. Below is a synopsis of the Block One and Block Two proposals and FAA actions taken on those proposals that impact the town of Hull.

MIT STUDY: BLOCK ONE

Logan Departures: Departing flights affecting Hull use runways 22R and 15R. Both tracks place Hull Village, Allerton Hill and points in-between squarely in the sound field. The MIT study proposed a quicker ascent for aircraft departing 22R and 15R and a tighter turn onto flight paths that pass over, or closer to, Boston Lighthouse.

Logan Arrivals: The MIT study proposed an over-the-harbor 33L arrival track that has been reconfigured from what is known as the "JetBlue Light Visual". The town of Hull endorsed the JetBlue track to cut down on the number of arriving flights that impact neighborhoods on the Runway 33L approach skirting Hull Bay.

FAA ACTION

22R – The Federal Aviation Administration rejected recommendations by MIT's International Center for Air Transportation that would have pushed 22R flights further out over Boston Harbor. While this was discouraging news, the aviation experts at MIT are now studying an "RMP overlay" (the newest commercial aircraft are being equipped with RMP technology, allowing them to fly with greater precision). The incorporation of RMP technology might allow the FAA to revisit their decision on 22R departures and permit aircraft to navigate further from Hull's coastline.

15R -- The largest commercial aircraft typically use this runway for departures. The FAA has given preliminary approval to MIT's proposal moving these planes further from Hull's shoreline and the committee anticipates this new flight path will be operational sometime in 2019.

33L – The Federal Aviation Administration modified and approved a new RNAV that would guide inbound flights from the Atlantic Ocean and over Boston Lighthouse. By utilizing this corridor, some Logan air traffic (including overnight arrivals) will be shifted over the Boston Harbor islands. More aircraft will fly this route in coming years as pilots are trained in the procedure and RMP technology is outfitted in more aircraft entering the nation's commercial aviation fleet.

MIT STUDY: BLOCK TWO

To take some of the load off Runway 4R arrivals (which primarily impact the town of Milton) the MIT study proposes several new flight paths for use when winds blow from the north or northeast. This is known as the “Northeast Flow” runway configuration and is currently the only configuration that spares Hull from Logan overflights. As proposed in the MIT study, aircraft on the 4R approach would avoid Milton by cutting across the Hull peninsula. Should any of these Runway 4R alternatives be enacted, our town would stand alone as the only Massachusetts community impacted by all four runway configurations, with the potential for overflights 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Block Two was scheduled for public discussion in the spring of 2018, and again for fall 2018, but those public hearings were not held and Massport has yet to announce a future meeting date.

CONCLUSION:

The Airport Committee, with the support of the Hull community and the advocacy of our Massport Community Advisory Committee representative, Dave Carlon, will continue pushing for implementation of MIT’s Block One recommendations and oppose any Block Two flight paths that would negatively impact our citizens.