

**CITY OF SUNFISH LAKE
DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

RESOLUTION NO. 16-_____

**RESOLUTION REGARDING FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
RECOGNITION OF AIRCRAFT NOISE IMPACTS OUTSIDE THE DAY-NIGHT
AVERAGE SOUND LEVEL (DNL) 65 DECIBEL THRESHOLD**

WHEREAS, the City of Sunfish Lake is committed to protecting and enhancing the quality of life of its residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sunfish Lake, while outside of the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL) 65 decibel threshold, frequently experiences noise from flights departing from the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP); and

WHEREAS, the City of Sunfish Lake seeks to reduce the impacts of aircraft noise on the community; and

WHEREAS, a 2015 noise study by the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) to monitor aircraft noise levels in the City of Sunfish Lake for a period of one week made the following findings:

1. That 253 departing flights registered noise events over 65 decibels; and
2. The 65 decibel threshold was exceeded for a cumulative total time of 1 hour, 20 minutes and 47 seconds; and
3. The measured one week average aircraft DNL was 51.6 A-weighted decibels.

WHEREAS, the City of Sunfish Lake participates in the At-Large Community membership of the MSP Noise Oversight Committee (NOC), which is a balanced forum for the discussion and evaluation of noise impacts around MSP including the identification, study, and analysis of noise issues; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sunfish Lake recognizes that the FAA noise metric for determining noise exposure – the DNL metric – does not convey the magnitude of high single event noise levels due to the averaging over a 24-hour period and that alternative noise metrics aid in making quantitative assessments for aircraft noise impacts and communicating those impacts to surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS, the NOC's March 2011 letter to the FAA Performance Based Navigation (PBN) Integration Group for developing a set of noise criteria for PBN flight procedure design at MSP includes a criterion to provide a noise analysis using "other noise metrics that evaluate the time above impact and single event noise impacts along a given [Area Navigation] track at MSP"; and

WHEREAS, the monthly NOC Technical Advisor's Report incorporates noise metrics to evaluate single event and threshold noise impacts, such as number of events above decibel thresholds, time above decibel thresholds and top ten maximum sound levels (Lmax); and

WHEREAS, the FAA is currently in the process of surveying residents around many of the largest U.S. airports regarding aircraft noise annoyance levels to take an updated look at its established noise measurement methods; and

WHEREAS, the successful implementation of PBN flight procedures, as part of the FAA's Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen) initiative to modernize the national airspace system, requires engagement with airport operators, communities and other stakeholders to ensure the noise impact from new flight paths are conveyed and minimized.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council that the City of Sunfish Lake hereby:

1. Urges the FAA to recognize the impacts of aircraft noise beyond the current federally established DNL 65 decibel threshold when making policy decisions on the impacts of aircraft noise in communities around U.S. airports and supports the use of alternative noise metrics by the FAA to help quantify aircraft noise impacts; and
2. Urges the FAA to utilize alternative noise metrics when evaluating noise impacts from new PBN flight procedures and to communicate with stakeholders, including airport operators and communities, to ensure noise impacts are conveyed and minimized.

Adopted this 2nd day of February, 2016 by the City Council of the City of Sunfish Lake.

Molly Park, Mayor

ATTEST:

Catherine Iago, City Clerk

MEMORANDUM

TO: MSP Noise Oversight Committee (NOC)

FROM: Dana Nelson, Manager, Noise – Environment & Planning

SUBJECT: **UPDATE ON THE FAA'S SURVEY TO RE-EVALUATE NOISE MEASUREMENT METHODS**

DATE: January 6, 2016

In May 2015, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced it would begin evaluating its methods for measuring aircraft noise. For decades federal regulations prescribed a process under 14 CFR Part 150 for calculating aircraft noise impacts using the Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL) metric. In the early 1980s the FAA established 65 dB DNL as the threshold at which federal funding could be available to homeowners for soundproofing or other mitigation.

The DNL metric is an average of all aircraft noise during a 24-hour period, with a 10-decibel (dB) penalty for each aircraft operation occurring between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. This penalty accounts for the higher human sensitivity to noise during the nighttime hours.

The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) assesses aircraft noise impacts, for each of its airports, using DNL noise contours. An *annual* noise contour analysis is conducted for the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP). Communities across the nation, including communities represented on the MSP Noise Oversight Committee, have requested the FAA consider other federally-accepted metrics to express and represent the effects of aircraft noise exposure.

In its news release, provided in Attachment 1, the FAA said its evaluation will be a multi-year process and will begin with a survey of public perceptions of aircraft noise in communities situated around 20 airports nationwide. The FAA is not disclosing the airport communities in which it will conduct the survey. The survey is expected to conclude at the end of 2016.

According to the FAA, the survey results will be used to determine whether an update to FAA policies regarding the DNL metric is warranted, along with the parameters under which a home is eligible to receive federal funding for mitigation.

Viewing this as an opportune time to address the FAA about noise impacts beyond the 65 dB DNL noise level, on January 19, 2016 the City of St. Louis Park will be considering a resolution *Regarding Federal Aviation Administration Recognition of Aircraft Noise Impacts outside the Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL) 65 Decibel Threshold* ("Resolution"). The draft Resolution is provided in Attachment 2. Once finalized, the Resolution is to be delivered to FAA administration in Washington DC. St. Louis Park Director of Inspections and NOC At-Large City contact, Brian

Hoffman will present the Resolution at the January 20, 2016 NOC meeting to inform the NOC of the City's action and request support for the City's Resolution.



**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Attachment 1

Press Release – FAA To Re-Evaluate Method for Measuring Effects of Aircraft Noise

For Immediate Release

May 7, 2015

Contact: Laura Brown

Phone: (202) 267-3883; Email: laura.j.brown@faa.gov

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will soon begin work on the next step in a multi-year effort to update the scientific evidence on the relationship between aircraft noise exposure and its effects on communities around airports.

"The FAA is sensitive to public concerns about aircraft noise. We understand the interest in expediting this research, and we will complete this work as quickly as possible," said FAA Administrator Michael Huerta. "This Administration takes its responsibility to be responsive to communities' concerns over air noise seriously. Our work is intended to give the public an opportunity to provide perspective and viewpoints on a very important issue."

Beginning in the next two to three months, the FAA will contact residents around selected U.S. airports through mail and telephone to survey public perceptions of aviation noise throughout the course of a year. This will be the most comprehensive study using a single noise survey ever undertaken in the United States, polling communities surrounding 20 airports nationwide. To preserve the scientific integrity of the study, the FAA cannot disclose which communities will be polled.

The FAA obtained approval from the Office of Management and Budget last week to conduct the survey and hopes to finish gathering data by the end of 2016. The agency will then analyze the results to determine whether to update its methods for determining exposure to noise.

The framework for this study was developed through the Airports Cooperative Research Program (ACRP), which is operated by the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies of Sciences. This methodology will be used to determine whether to change the FAA's current approach, as well as consideration of compatible land uses and justification for federal expenditures for areas that are not compatible with airport noise.

Aircraft noise is currently measured on a scale that averages all community noise during a 24-hour period, with a ten-fold penalty on noise that occurs during night and early morning hours. The scientific underpinnings for this measurement, known as the Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL), were the result of social surveys of transportation noise in the 1970s.

In 1981, the FAA established DNL 65 decibels as the guideline at which federal funding is available for soundproofing or other noise mitigation. This method was reaffirmed in studies conducted during the late 1980s and early 1990s.

During the ensuing years, aircraft manufacturers incorporated technologies that resulted in dramatically quieter aircraft. However, residents around many of the largest U.S. airports have expressed concerns about aircraft noise associated with the continuing growth of the aviation industry. The FAA is taking an updated look at its approach for measuring noise as part of an ongoing dialogue with stakeholders, including communities and leaders of a number of cities across the nation.

If changes are warranted, the FAA will propose revised policy and related guidance and regulations, subject to interagency coordination, as well as public review and comment.

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