



Massachusetts Port Authority
One Harborside Drive, Suite 200S
East Boston, MA 02128-2909
Telephone (617) 428-2800
www.massport.com

July 28, 2006

Secretary Stephen R. Pritchard
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
Attn: MEPA Office
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston MA 02114

**Re: L. G. Hanscom Field Runway 5/23 Safety Area Improvement Project
Draft Environmental Assessment/Draft Environmental Impact Report**

Dear Secretary Pritchard:

The Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) is pleased to submit this Draft Environmental Assessment/Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEA/DEIR) describing potential environmental effects of proposed improvements to existing Runway Safety Areas at L. G. Hanscom Field. The proposed safety improvements are in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements.

As required by the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) and the Certificate of the Secretary on the Environmental Notification Form, three copies are enclosed for the MEPA office, and additional copies are being sent to the commenters on the ENF and the four towns surrounding Hanscom Field. The distribution list (see Appendix B of the DEA/DEIR) includes federal agencies (Army Corps, Minute Man National Historic Park, EPA, and Fish and Wildlife Service); state agencies (Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Department of Environmental Protection, Executive Office of Transportation, Massachusetts Highway Department, Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission, Massachusetts Historical Commission, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, and the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife); town offices (selectboards, conservation commissions, planning boards, boards of health, and public libraries of the towns of Bedford, Concord, Lincoln, and Lexington); and commenters.

The proposed project involves regrading and other improvements to runway safety areas in order to enhance safety at Hanscom Field. The improvements will not affect existing runways, runway operations, or capacity in any way. No additional pavement is proposed.

Runway safety areas (RSA) are intended to reduce the risk of damage to aircraft in the event of an undershoot, an overshoot, or an excursion from the runway. An RSA also provides access for fire fighting and rescue equipment responding to such incidents. The safety areas at the ends of Runway 5/23 do not conform to current Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) design standards. The Runway 5 End Safety Area is currently 500 feet wide, 520 feet long on the west edge, and 845 feet long on the east edge; the Runway 23 End Safety Area is currently 300 feet wide and 890 feet long. The FAA design standard for runway end safety areas at Hanscom Field is 500 feet wide by 1,000 feet long.

Operating

Boston Logan International Airport - Part of Boston general cargo and passenger terminals - Tobin Memorial Bridge - Hanscom Field - Boston Ferry Pier - Cambridge Beach Pier - Site of the World Trade Center Boston - Worcester Regional Airport



An analysis of six RSA improvement alternatives was conducted and described in the previously published *Runway 5/23 Safety Area Supplementary Feasibility Analysis*. The recommended improvement alternatives for Runway 5 RSA and Runway 23 RSA were approved by the FAA. Within the Runway 5 End RSA, Massport proposes to retain the size and shape of the existing RSA and to regrade turfed areas to meet FAA standards for grades. For the Runway 23 End RSA, Massport proposes to widen the existing RSA from 300 feet to 500 feet, to grade the RSA to conform to FAA standards, and to relocate portions of the perimeter access road and perimeter security fence to the edge of the RSA. There will be no increase in pavement or impervious area, no increase in runway lengths, and no vegetation removal outside of current vegetation management areas.

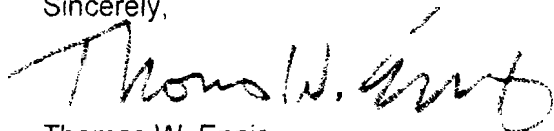
While the project will result in wetland resource impacts at the Runway 23 end, the affected areas are on land previously filled as part of airport construction and are currently actively managed under the Hanscom Field Vegetation Management Plan. To mitigate for project-related impacts to wetlands, a comprehensive wetland compensation plan involving the restoration and creation of wetlands is proposed.

Massport requests an extended public comment period for this DEA/DEIR. We anticipate publication in the August 8, 2006 issue of the *Environmental Monitor*. We suggest a public meeting be held on September 12, 2006 @ 5:00 pm at the Civil Air Terminal, 2nd floor, at L. G. Hanscom Field. We further suggest that the public comment period be extended to Wednesday, October 11, 2006 and that the MEPA decision be issued on October 18, 2006. This would allow over 60 days for public comment from the anticipated publication date.

Lastly, Massport requests that the publication in the *Environmental Monitor* include the proposed dates for the public meeting and public review period, and a statement that the DEA/DEIR will also be available on Massport's web site (www.massport.com).

Thank you for your consideration. We would be pleased to discuss any aspects of the project with you at your convenience. You may contact me at (617) 568-3546 or via e-mail at tennis@massport.com.

Sincerely,



Thomas W. Ennis
Senior Project Manager / Senior Planner
Economic Planning and Development

Attachments

Cc: See attached DEA/DEIR Distribution List (Appendix B)