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

Office of the Regional Administrator
New England Region

1200 District Avenue
Burlington, MA 01803-5299

January 4, 2021

Mr. David P. Carlon, Chair
Massport Community Advisory Committee
One Broadway, 14th Floor
Cambridge, MA 02142

Dear Mr. Carlon:

Thank you for your November 25, 2020, correspondence regarding the Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) Community Advisory Committee (MCAC) Motion of November 4, 2020, pertaining to Area Navigation (RNAV) Study Runway 33 Left (L) Departures. In your letter, you requested the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) commit to developing a procedure for Runway 33L that disperses jet departures, specifically referring to geographic deconcentration of flight tracks more equitably than the current RNAV Standard Instrument Departure (SID).

FAA has reviewed your request. In consideration of the results of prior operational feasibility evaluations completed under the Boston Overflight Noise Study (BONS) and Boston Logan Airport Noise Study (BLANS), the 2013 RNAV SID Environmental Assessment (EA), and the continuing work under the 2016 FAA/Massport Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the FAA is not able to commit to developing a procedure as requested. The FAA continues to engage with Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Massport and MCAC in evaluating Performance Based Navigation (PBN) procedure alternatives that work for all stakeholders. The results of these prior evaluations are further detailed under Background below.

Background:

For more than a decade, from 2002 to 2012, the FAA worked closely with Massport and the Logan Community Advisory Committee on a comprehensive multi-million dollar study of noise from aircraft operations at Boston Logan International Airport (BOS). That study was originally called BONS and later renamed to BLANS (both referred to together as the "Noise Study"). The Noise Study informed the FAA's evolutionary selection of the route design for the current Runway 33L departure procedure, which was studied in an EA and approved for implementation. (*Please see enclosed documents, (1) Final EA, dated May 2013, and (2) Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) & Record of Decision (ROD) For the Implementation of an RNAV SID for Runway 33L at BOS, dated June 4, 2013*).

During the Noise Study, the FAA analyzed four other RNAV SID designs for Runway 33L, but they were deemed not operationally feasible or did not reduce noise consistent with the goals and objectives of the Noise Study. (*Please see History of BLANS RNAV SIDs Considered for Runway 33L, Measures F-HH (v1) through (v4), May 2013 EA, Section 1.3.2*). However, based upon the outcome of these previous designs, the FAA determined that an overlay up to the first turn waypoint at TEKKK, with transitions to join the RNAV routes from the other BOS runways would be operationally feasible and possibly provide greater noise reduction than the four Noise Study measures thereby meeting the intent of the Noise Study.

The final noise modeling results of the then proposed and currently published RNAV SID departure procedure showed no significant or reportable noise increases, with nearly 68,000 fewer residents exposed to aircraft noise levels above 45 DNL. (*Please see Section VI of the June 4, 2013 FONSI/ROD and Chapter 4 of the May 2013 EA*). Additionally, The FAA determined that the departure procedure would not impact other environmental resource categories, such as air quality.

Subsequently, on August 2, 2013, the FONSI/ROD, dated June 4, 2013, was appealed to the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit. On December 19, 2014, the Court denied the Petition for Review, and found that the record indicated with conspicuous clarity that the FAA was cognizant of, and complied with its responsibilities under the applicable statutes and regulations. (*Please see Fleitman et al. v. FAA, USCA, 1st Circ., Docket No. 13-1984*).

MOU Guidance and Continuing Work:

The 2016 MOU between the FAA and Massport outlines activities planned in seeking reductions to overflight noise impacts of aircraft operations within the framework of maintaining safety and efficiency benefits of the PBN procedures at BOS. The MOU establishes Massport as the submitting entity to the FAA for formal proposals.

Consistent with the MOU and our commitment to community engagement, on May 15, 2020, the FAA and Massport attended the presentation of preliminary MIT Block 2 RNAV design concepts for Runway 33L and Runway 22L/R to MCAC. During this meeting, the FAA, in response to community input during the meeting, committed to providing an initial feasibility assessment of the concepts within three months. The FAA assembled a panel of stakeholders to conduct the assessment, consisting of representatives from the airline industry, the FAA Air Traffic Organization, the FAA Office of Environment and Energy, and FAA Flight Standards. On August 14, 2020, the FAA provided a consolidated assessment of the proposed concepts to MCAC with a determination of the eight concepts as "not being candidates for further evaluation."

Additional discussions were held with MIT in September and October 2020 to explore the identified challenges and possible alternatives. As of today, the FAA is working with MIT on alternatives to the MIT Block 2 design concepts, which address concerns raised by the stakeholder panel, and MIT is continuing design work on other Block 2 proposals, including

continuing to explore options for R33L departures. Once the final Block 2 proposals are approved by the MCAC and submitted to Massport, Massport will submit the request to the FAA, which will initiate the formal FAA study and review process as outlined by the MOU.

The FAA will continue to work with Massport and MIT, as outlined in the 2016 MOU, to review future conceptual proposals submitted regarding BOS Runway 33L departures.

As always, while the FAA remains committed to engaging in meaningful dialogue with the community, our mission is the safety and efficiency of the National Airspace System.

Sincerely,

COLLEEN M D'ALESSANDRO

Digitally signed by COLLEEN M D'ALESSANDRO
Date: 2021.01.05 15:22:24 -05'00'

Colleen M. D'Alessandro
Regional Administrator, New England Region

cc: Flavio Leo (Massport), Anthony Gallagher (Massport), Dr. John Hansman (MIT)

Enclosures