

# LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING

## FEDERAL INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE

ON

## AVIATION NOISE

### BACKGROUND:

On March 16, 1993, representatives of the agencies that participated on the Federal Interagency Committee on Noise (FICON) met and agreed to establish a standing committee to be known as the Federal Interagency Committee on Aviation Noise (FICAN). This Letter of Understanding (LOU) defines the purpose, scope, membership, process and products of the FICAN, and formally documents the commitment of the participating agencies.

The Department of Defense (DOD), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) are the primary agencies responsible for addressing aviation noise impacts through general R&D activities. From time to time, Congress also authorizes agencies such as the National Park Service and the Forest Service to conduct specific aviation noise R&D projects. Each agency is funded to independently carry out its R&D program. Agencies such as the Department of Veteran Affairs and Housing and Urban Development draw on aviation noise R&D products in formulating certain policies. Other agencies including the Environmental Protection Agency, the Council on Environmental Policy, the Council on Historic Preservation and the Department of Justice have mission requirements that require cognizance of aviation noise R&D products.

### PURPOSE:

The FICON issued its report in August 1992. One of the FICON recommendations is to *"Increase research (R&D) on methodology development and on the impact of aircraft noise. To foster this, a standing Federal interagency committee should be established to assist agencies in providing adequate forums for discussion of public and private sector proposals, identifying needed research, and in encouraging the conduct of R&D in these areas."*

The purpose of FICAN is to provide the permanent aviation noise R&D forum envisioned in the FICON recommendation.

### **SCOPE:**

The FICAN provides the necessary technical forum for participating agencies to coordinate aviation noise R&D. Other sources of noise will be considered only in relation to aviation noise; i.e., ambient noise and the comparison of impacts of other noise sources with aviation noise. The FICAN will:

- Provide a clearinghouse for Federal aircraft noise R&D;
- Develop recommendations and priorities on needed R&D and noise assessment issues;
- Serve as a focal point for public/private/government questions and recommendations on aviation noise R&D;
- Conduct public conferences on a periodic basis to exchange information on R&D findings, conclusions and new aviation noise topics of public concern; and,
- Establish a network of sources for the accumulation and distribution of technical information on aviation noise to public/private/government entities.

### **MEMBERSHIP:**

Each participating agency will provide appropriate technical representation to all FICAN proceedings. The chair will rotate among the participating agencies on a periodic basis to be determined in initial FICAN proceedings. Any Federal agency may become a FICAN member upon execution of this MOU by a duly authorized official. Each participating agency agrees to provide administrative support commensurate with its level of participation in FICAN either directly, or by contributing funding for a central administrative support contract.

### **PROCEEDINGS:**

The FICAN will maintain a formal agenda of activities scheduled no less than six months into the future. The chair agency will maintain and administer the schedule of activities. The FICAN will periodically hold public meetings (at least annually) to receive recommendations for future R&D efforts and to report on FICAN activities. Working groups comprised of FICAN representatives and other member agency employees or contractors will be formed to address specific issues. Working group products will be fully coordinated among all member agencies before release as a FICAN product.

The FICON Report Recommendation 3.7, Research and Development contains a specific list of issues (attached) recommended for the initial agenda of the FICAN. In addition to this list of issues and recommendations generated from the public sector, each member agency may at any time propose additional issues for the FICAN agenda.

**PRODUCTS:**

The FICAN products will be in the form of reports, studies, analyses, findings, and conclusions. All products will be fully coordinated with member agencies prior to release or issuance.

In order to insure optimum consistency in Federally sponsored aviation noise R&D, each member agency agrees to apprise FICAN of all ongoing or planned efforts and to coordinate projects where appropriate.