

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****RTCA Special Committee 191;
Collaborative Decisionmaking and
Near-Term Procedures**

Pursuant to section 10(a) (2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, 5 U.S.C., Appendix 2), notice is hereby given for the Special Committee 191 meeting to be held April 2, 1998, starting at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at RTCA, 1140 Connecticut Avenue, NW., Suite 1020, Washington, DC, 20036.

The agenda will be as follows: (1) Chairman's Introductory Remarks; (2) Briefing on Prototype Operations; (3) Performance Analysis: a. Methods for Estimating; b. Plans for Studying/Reporting Results; (4) Prototype Operations: a. Lessons Learned; b. Potential Solutions; c. Terminology/Advisories; d. Compression; e. Simplified Sub Rules; f. Next Steps; (5) Collaborative Routing Briefing; (6) NAS Status Briefing; (7) Review of Action Items; (8) Adjourn.

Attendance is open to the interested public but limited to space availability. With the approval of the chairman, members of the public may present oral statements at the meeting. Persons wishing to present statements or obtain information should contact the RTCA Secretariat, 1140 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 1020, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 833-9339 (phone); (202) 833-9434 (fax); or <http://www.rtca.org> (web site). Members of the public may present a written statement to the committee at any time.

Issued in Washington, DC, on March 11, 1998.

Terry R. Hannah,

Designated Official.

[FR Doc. 98-6818 Filed 3-16-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****[Policy Statement No. ANM-98-2]****Passenger Capacity Increases and
Compliance With Type Certification
Requirements for Transport Airplane
Emergency Evacuation**

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of policy statement and request for comments.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the FAA's policy with respect to passenger

capacity increases and compliance with the type certification requirements for transport airplane emergency evacuation. This notice advises the public of FAA policy and gives all interested persons an opportunity to present their views on the policy statement.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before April 16, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Send all comments on this policy statement to the individual identified under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeff Gardlin, FAA Propulsion/Mechanical/Cabin Safety Branch, ANM-112, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98055-4056; telephone (425) 227-2136.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Comments Invited**

Interested persons are invited to comment on this policy statement by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Commenters should identify the Policy Statement Number of this notice and submit comments, in duplicate, to the address specified above. All communications received on or before the closing date for comments will be considered by the Transport Standards Staff.

Discussion

The requirement for full-scale evacuation demonstrations was introduced into the Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) in 1965 by a change to the operating rules. The rule change followed both a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and a public hearing. The primary basis for this change was the identification of deficiencies in "equipment, procedures, and training" discovered during evacuation testing.

The rule applied to all passenger carrying airplanes with more than 44 passengers, and any subsequent increase in passenger capacity of those airplanes of more than five percent. In addition, a new demonstration was required for a "major change" in the cabin interior that would affect passenger evacuation. The time limit for the evacuation demonstration was two minutes, using one half of the available exits.

In 1967, the requirement for a full-scale evacuation demonstration was added to the type certification requirements of 14 CFR part 25. This demonstration, conducted by the airframe manufacturer, was done to help ensure comparable evacuation capability of each new model, and with the knowledge that much larger

transport (widebody) airplanes were under development. At that time, the existing design requirements were not considered adequate to minimize variation in evacuation capability. The introduction of the full-scale evacuation demonstration requirement in part 25 was coupled with a change to the operating rules so that both demonstrations were required to be completed within 90 seconds. The proposal leading to this rule is clear that the reduction in the total time was implemented to take advantage of advances in emergency equipment, specifically escape slides. The manufacturer's demonstration did not have to be repeated for changes in interior arrangement, or increases in passenger capacity of five percent or less, provided that these changes could be substantiated analytically.

In 1978, after numerous evacuation demonstrations had been conducted, the type design requirements were amended again. This amendment allowed the use of analysis and tests to substantiate the evacuation performance of an airplane, and removed the previous explicit five percent limit on passenger increase. The primary prerequisite for this methodology was that there be sufficient test data to support an analysis.

In July 1986, the FAA Administrator established policy limiting the use of analysis to passenger capacity increases of five percent or less, due to the absence of any agreed industry standard on when an analysis was appropriate. This policy was applied while analytical methodologies were refined, such that the FAA could have confidence in approval of larger passenger capacity increases by a combination of analysis and test. The development of improved methodologies was undertaken.

In 1989, the FAA issued Advisory Circular (AC) 25.803-1, Emergency Evacuation Demonstrations, to provide specific demonstration test criteria, and discuss the use of analysis. The AC stated that a full-scale demonstration should be conducted for passenger capacity increases of greater than 5% because of the continued absence of an industry standard on when analysis could be used. However, the AC also acknowledged that it described one means, but not the only means, of complying with the relevant regulation, and therefore did not foreclose applicants from proposing to substantiate compliance by analysis, even for larger capacity increases. In actual practice, there have been approvals for increases in passenger capacity of greater than five percent under specific circumstances (i.e., the

resultant passenger capacity is still well below the theoretical maximum).

The Performance Standards Working Group, under the auspices of the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC) on emergency evacuation issues, was tasked to develop a standardized protocol to determine when an analysis is appropriate. One of the primary objectives of this effort was to reduce the number and severity of injuries that can occur in full-scale evacuation demonstrations. Although ARAC was unable to reach a consensus, it has submitted the group's final document to the FAA in the form of a draft advisory circular. The document submitted to the FAA does not include any limitation on passenger capacity increase with respect to analysis. While the FAA's action here is consistent with the ARAC document with respect to passenger capacity increases, it does not reflect each ARAC participant's views.

The FAA has now determined that standardized methodologies have been developed and there are sufficient data now available, such that a limitation on the use of analysis based only on an increase in passenger capacity is no longer necessary. This position is supported by the aviation industry. In addition, the FAA has also received a letter from a noted independent researcher endorsing the use of analysis in the general case, and not tied to an arbitrary limit on the increase in passenger capacity. Analytical techniques are used to substantiate various certification requirements, including those with safety of flight ramifications, and in all cases the key element in their use is the underlying data to support the analysis. The FAA has determined that evacuation demonstrations should be treated no differently and, where sufficient data are available, analysis is an option. Since the existing advisory circular has been interpreted by the public as effectively prohibiting the use of a combination of analysis and test in cases where the passenger capacity is increased by greater than five percent, the FAA is issuing a formal notice that analysis in such cases may be acceptable. Full-scale demonstrations will still be required when sufficient data are not available to support a combination of analysis and test.

While the FAA is seeking public comment on this policy, it is the FAA intention to immediately apply this policy to two specific certification programs in progress during the period of public comment and disposition of comments. It is the FAA position that

for the Boeing 777-300 and the Airbus A330/340, there are currently sufficient full-scale evacuation data available to support analysis. The Boeing 777-300 involves a fuselage stretch and the addition of a pair of exits with an increase in demonstrated passenger capacity from 440 to 550. The Airbus A330/340 involve a fuselage stretch and increasing the size of a pair of exits with an increase in demonstrated passenger capacity from 361 to 440. In both these cases, a wealth of full-scale evacuation data are available to support analysis and the FAA is confident that the use of analysis is well within the intent of the regulation. Therefore, in accordance with the regulation, conduct of additional full-scale evacuation demonstrations is not required to demonstrate compliance, if a satisfactory analysis is produced. The FAA intends to publish a revised proposed advisory circular that reflects this policy. Resolution of the public comment will be considered in determining whether the policy should be refined for future projects, and so reflected in the advisory circular.

Issued in Renton, WA, on March 6, 1998.

Ronald T. Wojnar,

*Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.*

[FR Doc. 98-6707 Filed 3-16-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Environmental Impact Statement: Howard County, MD

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an environmental impact statement will be prepared for a proposed highway project in Howard County, Maryland.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Renee Sigel, Planning, Research, and Environment Team Leader, Federal Highway Administration, The Rotunda Suite 220, 711 West 40th Street, Baltimore, Maryland 2112211, Telephone: (410) 962-4342.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FHWA, in cooperation with the Maryland State Highway administration, will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to improve MD 32 from MD 108 (Clarksville Road) to I-70, in Howard County, Maryland. Proposed

improvements within the corridor would involve upgrading MD 32 to a four lane access controlled highway, between the town of Clarksville and I-70 for approximately 9 miles.

Improvements to the corridor are necessary to provide for the existing and projected traffic demands. Also, accident statistics indicate that some sections along this roadway (especially MD 32, from south of Triadelphia Road to south of West Ivory Road and from Terrapin Branch to north of I-70) experience accident rates higher than the statewide average.

Alternatives under consideration include taking no action and widening existing MD 32 to a four lane divided highway with various options for constructing new interchanges at Burntwoods Road, Triadelphia Road, Rosemary Lane, Nixon's Farm, Dayton Shop, and MD 144.

Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies, and to private organizations, citizens, and citizen groups who have previously expressed or are known to have an interest in this proposal. It is anticipated that a Public Hearing will be held in the fall of 1998. The Draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to a Public Hearing. Public notice will be given of the availability of the Draft EIS for review and of the time and place of this hearing. An Alternates Public Workshop was held in June of 1996, in addition to monthly focus group meetings to solicit opinions and ideas on proposed improvements from local citizens.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning these proposed actions and EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Research, Planning and Construction. The regulation implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation of Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued on: March 3, 1998.

Renee Sigel,

Planning, Research and Environment Team Leader, Baltimore, Maryland.

[FR Doc. 98-6831 Filed 3-16-98; 8:45 am]

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