



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Notice of Intent

Anchorage Terminal Area Airspace and Procedures Study Notice of Intent for Preparation for an Environmental Assessment.

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Notice of Intent (NOI) for the Commencement of the Anchorage Terminal Area Airspace and Procedures Study (ATAAPS) Environmental Assessment (EA) UIN EAXX-021-12-WSC-1768398367.

SUMMARY: The FAA, in cooperation with the United States Air Force, is announcing the commencement of the ATAAPS EA for the proposed Anchorage terminal airspace redesign. ATAAPS involves changes to the airspace, aircraft flight paths, and aircraft altitudes in the Anchorage basin and surrounding areas. The EA will evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the proposed airspace redesign (Proposed Action) and alternatives, including the No Action alternative. The FAA has not made a final decision on any airspace/procedure amendments related to the Proposed Action. The FAA is currently establishing a timeline for the EA. Project updates will be posted to the FAA ATAAPS webpage at:

https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ara/alaskan_region/ataaps.

This project would increase safety and improve efficiency of the National Airspace System (NAS) and homeland defense capabilities, by optimizing aircraft arrival and departure procedures that serve multiple airports—specifically in the Anchorage basin and surrounding areas—including: Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (ANC), Elmendorf Air Force Base Airport (EDF), Bryant Army Airfield Airport (FRN), Lake Hood Airport (LHD), and Merrill Field Airport (MRI).

As a critical strategic gateway for homeland defense, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) is currently restricted to operating below the facility's intended capacity and fleet mix until surrounding airspace is officially modified. The Instrument Landing System (ILS) for Runway 17 is integral to improving JBER operations and cannot become operational under the current airspace design. (JBER runway designations are currently 16/34 and 06/24, but will be updated due to Magnetic Variation changes to Runways 17/35 and 07/25 before completion of the EA.)

The FAA is initiating this EA and will engage the public, government agencies, and tribes as appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Joseph Bert, Federal Aviation Administration, Team Manager, Environmental/Community Involvement/NAS Analytics, Operations Support Group, Western Service Center|, e-mail: 9-AJO-ATAAPS-Environmental@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

ATAAPS addresses national security concerns as well as air traffic system inefficiencies within the Anchorage basin and surrounding areas. The ATAAPS EA will be prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The EA will consider at least two alternatives: the Proposed Action and the No Action alternative. The Proposed Action being developed focuses on airspace optimization for aircraft routes and controlled airspace within the Anchorage basin and surrounding areas. Area navigation (RNAV)-based standard instrument departure (SID) and standard terminal arrival (STAR) procedures have been in effect in the Anchorage basin and surrounding areas for nearly 20 years. These arrival and departure procedures will be designed with advanced RNAV capabilities and will maintain safety and improve efficiency of the NAS, benefitting pilots, air traffic controllers, and the general public.

The Proposed Action is not anticipated to increase the number of aircraft operations at the study airports or involve the physical construction of any facilities.

The Proposed Action will include the following elements:

- **UPDATED AIRSPACE BOUNDARIES.** Aircraft operating in the Anchorage basin currently fly within the Anchorage Part 93 airspace in which specific, special air traffic rules are in effect (see 14 CFR Part 93). These rules address issues like high-density traffic, unique airspace configurations, and limitations related to military operations and national parks. The evaluation of airspace in the Anchorage basin includes Class C and Class D airspace around affected airports.
- **UPDATED DEPARTURE ROUTES AND/OR FIXES FROM THE STUDY AIRPORTS.** Routes and fixes will connect study airports to optimized high-altitude routes using satellite-based RNAV technology.
- **UPDATED ARRIVAL ROUTES AND/OR FIXES INTO THE STUDY AIRPORTS.** Routes and fixes will connect transitions from high-altitude routes to existing approach procedures for the study airports using advanced RNAV procedures.

The FAA will establish a general study area, wherein proposed procedure changes below 10,000 feet above ground level (AGL) will be evaluated for potential environmental impacts. Additionally, the FAA will evaluate areas where FAA policy requires special consideration for potential noise impacts—which may include national parks, national wildlife refuges, historic sites and traditional cultural properties—for proposed procedure changes below 18,000 feet AGL. The Proposed Action may include procedure changes at altitudes greater than 18,000 feet AGL (high altitudes) within an approximate 200-nautical mile radius of Anchorage; however, these high-altitude changes are considered generally outside the affected environmental study area per FAA Order 1050.1G, *FAA National Environmental Policy Act Implementing*

Procedures. The FAA will provide a notice of availability (NOA) for the draft EA at a future date.

Issued in Des Moines, Washington, on **July 14, 2026**

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