



NEWS

March 31, 2006

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NASAO AND FAA SIGN HISTORIC MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND – This week, the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Association of State Aviation Officials commemorated their successful decade-long Memorandum Of Understanding by signing a new and historic joint initiative on land use planning around the nation’s airports.

During NASAO’s Annual Spring Legislative Conference and the kick-off of its 75th Anniversary celebration on Tuesday, March 28, government officials from the majority of states, FAA Regional Administrators from all nine FAA regions and senior staffers from both organizations gathered in the Administrator’s famed “round room” to witness the historic signing ceremony. FAA Administrator Marion Blakey signed on behalf of FAA and NASAO Chairman Richard Turner of Vermont signed for the 50 states, Guam and Puerto Rico. Late last year, Blakey and Turner both signed an agreement recognizing that airports can be adversely affected by incompatible development and that they must be protected as essential public assets. That agreement paved the way for this year’s MOU on land use policy coordination.

Throughout 2006 the organizations will focus jointly on three actions items, including;

- Cooperatively working with agencies and organizations through the Airport Compatibility Planning Committee to identify strategies to facilitate land use planning around airports.
- Identifying near-term options to improve land use compatibility and appropriate implementation mechanisms.
- Develop national guidelines in a Compatible Airspace and Land Use Advisory Circular that addresses making prudent decisions on compatible land use and encroachment protection of aviation interests, and outline roles and responsibilities of federal, state, local governments and airport operators.

NASAO’s Turner said, “Over the past ten years, FAA and NASAO have been able to achieve a number of very positive accomplishments through this MOU. But this land use agreement is both historic and timely. The biggest threat to the efficiency, utility and survival of airports is incompatible land use and inappropriate development around airports of all sizes. Together, FAA and NASAO have pledged to find ways to better protect these invaluable national resources.”

At the signing ceremony at FAA Headquarters, NASAO also presented its 2006 “Distinguished Leadership Award” to Central and Great Lakes FAA Regions Administrator Chris Blum for his dedication to the MOU process and his excellence in leadership. Blum has served as coordinator and FAA liaison for all MOU activities for the past several years.

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