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<th><strong>Docket Number:</strong></th>
<th>09-AFC-06C</th>
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<td><strong>Project Title:</strong></td>
<td>Blythe Solar Power Project - Compliance</td>
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<td><strong>TN #:</strong></td>
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<td>BSPP Comments on Part B of the Energy Commission's Staff Assessment</td>
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<td><strong>Description:</strong></td>
<td>RCALUC Comments on the Energy Commission's Staff Assessment - Part B</td>
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<td><strong>Filer:</strong></td>
<td>Mary Dyas</td>
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<td><strong>Organization:</strong></td>
<td>Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission</td>
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<td><strong>Submitter Role:</strong></td>
<td>Public Agency</td>
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<td><strong>Submission Date:</strong></td>
<td>11/8/2013 7:21:16 AM</td>
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<td><strong>Docketed Date:</strong></td>
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November 7, 2013

Ms. Mary Dyas, Compliance Project Manager
California Energy Commission, Dockets Unit, MS-14
Docket No. 09-AFC-7C
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento CA 95814-5512

RE: Blythe Solar Power Project – Comments on Part B of the California Energy Commission’s Staff Assessment

Dear Ms. Dyas:

Thank you for providing the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) with a copy of the California Energy Commission’s Request for Comments on Part B of the Staff Assessment of the proposed amendment that would modify the technology and reduce the size of the project.

As noted by Michael C. Baron on page 4.5-2 of the Land Use section, the applicant is requesting to be able to select the specific combination of photovoltaic technologies (single-axis tracking, fixed-axis tilt, or a combination of the two) prior to construction. In this situation, a glare analysis should be prepared for each alternative technology under consideration prior to any decision by the California Energy Commission (CEC). Differences in technology and changes to the locations and/or orientation of solar arrays (including whether the panels are tracking or fixed-axis, since tracking panels may produce glare while in, or while transiting to, the “stow” position) could potentially affect the locations where (and the times when) hazardous glare would occur.

In that regard, we are disappointed that Part B does not include a comprehensive glare analysis. If you review the process that the CEC undertook prior to its approval of the original solar thermal project, you will see that the CEC undertook extraordinary steps in order to understand the impacts that glint and glare from this project would have on pilots attempting to land aircraft at Blythe Airport, including analysis of the effects on a runway end-by-runway end basis and seeking comment from such renowned experts as Clifford Ho of Sandia Laboratories.

Additionally, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has recently (October 23, 2013) established an interim policy requiring ocular analysis of any proposal to establish a solar energy system on the grounds of any federally obligated airport. Sponsors of such projects are required to use the Solar Glare Hazard Analysis Tool (SGHAT) developed by Sandia as a means of determining glare impacts. While the policy is only mandatory for projects on airport grounds, proponents of “solar energy systems located off-airport property … are strongly encouraged to consider the requirements of this policy when siting such systems.” (Page 63277, Federal Register, Vol. 78, No. 205, Wednesday, October 23, 2013) The tool requires the user to outline the location of the proposed solar energy system on an interactive Google map and to enter information regarding the orientation and tilt of the solar panels.
At a minimum, we would recommend that the SGHAT be utilized to evaluate the proposed project pursuant to at least one tracking and at least one fixed-axis alternative.

ALUC has no official jurisdiction over the development of a project on federal land; however, our main mission is the protection of airports from incompatible development. The applicant’s choice of technology has a direct bearing on the potential size of impacts from glint and glare. Due to the “energy zone” that now exists around Blythe and the solar projects already underway, we remain very concerned about the cumulative impacts of solar projects on the Blythe Airport.

As with the original version of the Blythe Solar Power Project, we ask that the CEC direct the applicant to formally submit the proposed project for ALUC review and conditioning. Projects submitted by November 27 and determined to be complete would be eligible for consideration at ALUC’s meeting on January 9, 2014. If you have any questions, please contact me at (951) 955-5132.

Sincerely,
RIVERSIDE COUNTY AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION

[Signature]
Edward C. Coepe, ALUC Director

JIGJG:blks

Attachment: Excerpt, Federal Register

cc: Simon Housman, ALUC Chairman
    Chad Wilshire, Riverside County EDA – Aviation Division
    Robert Eppers, California Pilots Association
    ALUC Staff

Y:\ALUC\Blythe\Part B Staff Assessment BSPP ALUC Staff Comments.1tr to CEC.doc
Routing Symbol APP-400, 800 Independence Avenue SW., Room 615, Washington, DC 20591. Please send two copies.
Fax: 1-202-287-5302.
Hand Delivery: To FAA Office of Airports, Office of Airport Planning and Programming, Routing Symbol APP-400, 800 Independence Avenue SW., Room 615, Washington, DC 20591; between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Please provide two copies.
For more information on the notice and comment process, see the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section of this document.
Privacy: We will post all comments we receive, without change, to http://www.faa.gov/airports/environmental/, including any personal information you provide.
Comments Received: To read comments received, go to http://www.faa.gov/airports/environmental/ at any time.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Ralph Thompson, Manager, Airport Planning and Environmental Division, APP-400, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20591, telephone (202) 267-3263; facsimile (202) 267-5257; email: ralph.thompson@faa.gov.
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FAA invites interested persons to join in this notice and comment process by filing written comments, data, or views. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data.
Availability of Documents
You can get an electronic copy of this interim policy by visiting the FAA’s Airports Web page at http://www.faa.gov/airports/environmental/.
Authority for the Policy
This notice is published under the authority described in Subtitle VII, part B, chapter 471, section 47122 of title 49 United States Code.
Background
There is growing interest in installing solar photovoltaic (PV) and solar hot water (SHW) systems on airports. While solar PV or SHW systems (henceforth referred to as solar energy systems) are designed to absorb solar energy to maximize electrical energy production or the heating of water, in certain situations the glass surfaces of the solar energy systems can reflect sunlight and produce glint (a momentary flash of bright light) and glare (a continuous source of bright light). In conjunction with the United States Department of Energy (DOE), the FAA has determined that glint and glare from solar energy systems could result in an ocular impact to pilots and/or air traffic control (ATC) facilities and compromise the safety of the air transportation system. While the FAA supports solar energy systems on airports, the FAA seeks to ensure safety by minimizing the potential for ocular impact to pilots and/or air traffic control facilities due to glare from such projects.
The FAA established a cross-organizational working group in 2012, to establish a standard for measuring glint and glare, and clear thresholds for when glint and glare would impact aviation safety. The standards that this working group developed are set forth in this notice.
A sponsor of a federally obligated airport must request FAA review and approval to depict certain proposed solar installations (e.g., ground-based installations and collocated installations that increase the footprint of the collocated building or structure) on its airport layout plan (ALP), before construction begins. A sponsor of a federally obligated airport must notify the FAA of its intent to construct any solar installation by filing FAA Form 7460-1, “Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration” under 14 CFR Part 77 for a Non-Rulemaking case (NRA). This includes the intent to permit airport tenants, including Federal agencies, to build such...
installations. The sponsor’s obligation to obtain FAA review and approval to depict certain proposed solar energy installation projects at an airport is found in 49 U.S.C. 47107(a)(16) and Sponsor Grant Assurance 29, “Airport Layout Plan.” Under these letter provisions, the sponsor may not make or permit any changes or alterations in the airport or any of its facilities which are not in conformity with the ALP as approved by the FAA and which might, in the opinion of the FAA, adversely affect the safety, utility or efficiency of the airport.

Airport sponsors and project proponents must comply with the policies and procedures in this notice to demonstrate to the FAA that a proposed solar energy system will not result in an ocular impact that compromises the safety of the air transportation system. This process enables the FAA to approve the ALP to depict certain solar energy projects or issue a “no objection” finding to a filed 7460–1 form. The FAA expects to continue to update these policies and procedures as part of an iterative process as new information and technologies become available.

Solar energy systems located on an airport that is not federally-obligated or located outside the property of a federally-obligated airport are not subject to this policy. Proponents of solar energy systems located off-airport property or on non-federally-obligated airports are strongly encouraged to consider the requirements of this policy when siting such systems.

This interim policy clarifies and adds standards for measurement of glint or glare presented in the 2010 Technical Guidance document. Later this year the FAA plans to publish an update to the “Technical Guidance for Evaluating Selected Solar Technologies on Airports,” (hereinafter referred to as “Technical Guidance”) dated November 2010. This update to the technical guidance will include the standards for measuring glint and glare outlined in this notice. It will also provide enhanced criteria to ensure the proper siting of a solar energy installation to eliminate the potential for harmful glare to pilots or air traffic control facilities.

In advance of the planned update, as part of this Notice, we are clarifying one aspect of the Technical Guidance relating to airport sponsor and FAA responsibilities for evaluating the potential for solar energy systems installed on airports to either block, reflect, or disrupt radar signals, NAVAIDS, and other equipment required for safe aviation operations. Section 3.1 of the Technical Guidance, entitled “Airspace Review,” correctly states that this role is exclusively the responsibility of FAA Technical Operations (Tech Ops). However, subsection 3.1.3, “System Interference,” states: “The study concluded during project siting should identify the location of radar transmission and receiving facilities and other NAVAIDS, and determine locations that would not be suitable for structures based on their potential to either block, reflect, or disrupt radar signals.”

Reading the two sections together, what is meant is that the airport sponsor, in siting a proposed solar energy system, is responsible for the potential for interference with communication, navigation, and surveillance (CNS) facilities. The sponsor should do so by ensuring that the critical areas surrounding CNS facilities. FAA Advisory Circular (AC) 5300–13, “Airport Design,” Chapter 6, defines the critical areas for common CNS facilities located on an airport. Sponsors may need to coordinate with FAA Technical Operations concerning CNS facilities not in AC 5300–13. As stated in Section 3.1, the FAA is responsible for evaluating if there are any impacts to CNS facilities. The FAA will conduct this review after the Form 7460–1 is filed for the construction of a new solar energy system installation on an airport. In summary, airport sponsors do not need to conduct studies on their own to determine impacts to CNS facilities when siting a solar energy system on airport. Section 3.1.3 will be revised accordingly in the next version of the Technical Guidance.

Interim Policy Statement

The following sets forth the standards for measuring ocular impact, the required analysis tool, and the obligations of the Airport Sponsor when a solar energy system is proposed for development on a federally-obligated airport.

The FAA is adopting an interim policy because it is in the public interest to enhance safety by clarifying and adding standards for measuring ocular impact of proposed solar energy systems. FAA will consider comments and make appropriate modifications before issuing a final policy in a future Federal Register Notice. The policy applies to any proposed solar energy system that has not received unconditional airport layout plan approval (ALP) or a “no objection” from the FAA on a filed Form 7460–1 Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration.

Standard for Measuring Ocular Impact

The FAA adopts the Solar Glare Hazard Analysis Plot shown in Figure 1 below as the standard for measuring the ocular impact of any proposed solar energy system on a federally-obligated airport. To obtain FAA approval to revise an airport layout plan to depict a solar installation and/or a “no objection” to a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration (Form 7460–1), the airport sponsor will be required to demonstrate that the proposed solar energy system meets the following standards:

1. No potential for glint or glare in the existing or planned Airport Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) cab, and

2. No potential for glare or “low potential for after-image” (shown in green in Figure 1) along the final approach path for any existing landing threshold or future landing thresholds (including any planned interim phases of the landing thresholds) as shown on the current FAA-approved Airport Layout Plan (ALP). The final approach path is defined as two (2) miles from fifty (50) feet above the landing threshold using a standard three (3) degree glide path.

Ocular impact must be analyzed over the entire calendar year in one (1) minute intervals from when the sun rises above the horizon until the sun sets below the horizon.
Solar Glare Ocular Hazard Plot: The potential ocular hazard from solar glare is a function of retinal irradiance and the subtended angle (size/distance) of the glare source. It should be noted that the ratio of spectrally weighted solar illuminance to solar irradiance at the earth’s surface yields a conversion factor of ~100 lumens/W. Plot adapted from Ho et al., 2011.


Tool To Assess Ocular Impact

In cooperation with the DOE, the FAA is making available free-of-charge the Solar Glare Hazard Analysis Tool (SGHAT). The SGHAT was designed to determine whether a proposed solar energy project would result in the potential for ocular impact as depicted on the Solar Glare Hazard Analysis Plot shown above.

The SGHAT employs an interactive Google map where the user can quickly locate a site, draw an outline of the proposed solar energy system, and specify observer locations (Airport Traffic Control Tower cab) and final approach paths. Latitude, longitude, and elevation are automatically recorded through the Google interface, providing necessary information for sun position and vector calculations. Additional information regarding the orientation and tilt of the solar energy panels, reflectance, environment, and ocular factors are entered by the user.

If glare is found, the tool calculates the retinal irradiance and subtended source angle (size/distance) of the glare source to predict potential ocular hazards ranging from temporary after-image to retinal burn. The results are presented in a simple, easy-to-interpret plot that specifies when glare will occur throughout the year, with color codes indicating the potential ocular hazard. The tool can also predict relative energy production while evaluating alternative designs, layouts, and locations to identify configurations that maximize energy production while mitigating the impacts of glare.

Users must first register for the use of the tool at this web address: www.sandia.gov/glore.

Required Use of the SGHAT

As of the date of publication of this interim policy, the FAA requires the use of the SGHAT to demonstrate compliance with the standards for measuring ocular impact stated above for any proposed solar energy system located on a federally-obligated airport. The SGHAT is a validated tool specifically designed to measure glare according to the Solar Glare Hazard Analysis Plot. All sponsors of federally-obligated airports who propose to install or to permit others to install solar energy systems on the airport must attach the SGHAT report, outlining solar panel glare and ocular impact, for each point of measurement to the Notice of Proposed Construction Form 7460-1. The FAA will consider the use of alternative tools or methods on a case-by-case basis. However, the FAA must approve the use of an alternative tool or method prior to an airport sponsor seeking approval for any proposed on-airport solar energy system. The alternative tool or method must evaluate ocular impact in accordance with the Solar Glare Hazard Analysis Plot.

Please contact the Office of Airport Planning and Programming, Airport Planning and Environmental Division, APP-400, for more information on the validation process for alternative tools or methods.

Airport sponsor obligations have been discussed above under Background. We caution airport sponsors that under preexisting airport grant compliance policy, failure to seek FAA review of a solar installation prior to construction could trigger possible compliance action under 14 CFR Part 16, “Rules of Practice for Federally-Assisted Airport Enforcements.” Moreover, if a solar installation creates glare that interferes with aviation safety, the FAA could require the airport to pay for the elimination of solar glare by removing or relocating the solar facility.
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 person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section. Members of the public may present a written statement to the committee at any time.

Issued in Washington, DC, on October 18, 2013.

Edith V. Parish, Senior Advisor, Mission Support Services, Air Traffic Organization, Federal Aviation Administration.

[FR Doc. 2013-24868 Filed 10-22-13; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Third Meeting: RTCA Tactical Operations Committee (TOC)

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

ACTION: Third Meeting Notice of RTCA Tactical Operations Committee.

SUMMARY: The FAA is issuing this notice to advise the public of the third meeting of the RTCA Tactical Operations Committee.

DATES: The meeting will be held November 7, 2013 from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at RTCA Headquarters, 1150 18th Street NW, Suite 910, Washington, DC 20036.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The RTCA Secretariat, 1150 18th Street NW, Suite 910, Washington, DC 20036, or by telephone at (202) 833–9339, fax at (202) 833–9434, or Web site http://www.rtca.org. Andy Cabula, NAC Secretary can also be contacted at acabula@rtca.org or 202–330–0652.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: Pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. No. 92–463, 5 U.S.C., App.), notice is hereby given for a meeting of the Tactical Operations Committee (TOC). The agenda will include the following:

November 19, 2013

- Opening of Meeting/Introduction of TOC Members
- Official Statement of Designated Federal Official
- Approval of July 23, 2013 Meeting Summary
- FAA Report
- Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) Activity Prioritization
- Regional Task Groups (RTGs)
- Reports on current activities underway by Regional Task Groups: Eastern, Central, Western
- VHF Omni-directional Range (VOR) Minimum Operating Network
- New Tasking: Obstacle Clearance
- Anticipated Issues for TOC consideration and action at the next meeting
- Other Business
- Adjourn

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Azra Hussain, Program Manager, Federal Aviation Administration, District Office, 2300 E. Devon Avenue, Des Plaines, Illinois 60018. Telephone Number: (847) 294–8252/FAX Number: (847) 294–7046.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: In accordance with section 47107(h) of Title 49, United States Code, this notice is required to be published in the Federal Register 30 days before modifying the land-use assurance that requires the property to be used for an aeronautical purpose.

The subject land consists of two parcels. Parcel 1 (approx. 16,567 acres) was acquired through the Federal Aid to Airport Program dated July 23, 1963 and Parcel 2 (approx. 1,939 acres) was acquired by the sponsor as part of a larger parcel (approx. 9,975 acres) for the nominal sum of One Dollar and zero cents ($1.00) on April 19, 2010. The Commissioners of Orange County intend to purchase the property for a nominal sum of One Dollar and zero cents ($1.00) for the construction of County Road CR 300 South/Airport Road. Construction of the road will facilitate access to the airport. The aforementioned land is not needed for aeronautical use, as shown on the Airport Layout Plan. There are no impacts to the airport by allowing the airport to dispose of the property.

This notice announces that this property is being considered for the disposal of the subject airport property at 2300 E. Devon Avenue, Des Plaines, Illinois 60018. Documents are available for review by appointment at the Federal Aviation Administration, 2300 E. Devon Avenue, Des Plaines, Illinois 60018. Telephone: (847) 294–7046 and Zachary D. Brown, Federal Aviation Administration, 7674 West County Road 375 South, Chicago, Illinois 60018. Written comments on the Sponsor's request must be delivered or mailed to: Azra Hussain, Program Manager, Federal Aviation Administration, District Office, 2300 E. Devon Avenue, Des Plaines, Illinois (847) 294–7046.


James Keefer, Manager, Chicago Airports District Office, FAA, Great Lakes Region.

[FR Doc. 2013–24738 Filed 10–22–13; 3:45 am]