

U. S. Department of Transportation

news:

Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590



STATEMENT OF U.S. SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION BROCK ADAMS CONCERNING SST NOISE REGULATIONS, WASHINGTON, D.C., JUNE 27, 1978.

I am announcing today a final decision concerning supersonic transport aircraft in the United States. The ultimate decision as to whether Concorde service is initiated at local airports remains with local airport officials. Airport proprietors continue to have the local option right to limit or ban aircraft operations at their airports through reasonable, non-discriminatory noise rules.

Permanent operating and flight rules concerning SST noise and sonic boom requirements are being issued today to take effect on July 31. They will require all supersonic transports -- except for those 16 Concorde SSTs that will have logged flight time prior to January 1, 1980 -- to comply with noise limits that now apply to subsonic aircraft.

The new rules would permit the 16 British-French Concorde SSTs now in service or under construction to fly in and out of the United States, provided no modifications are made to increase the current noise levels. More stringent requirements will be placed on any future supersonic planes, however.

These 16 existing Concorde may not be modified in any manner that increases the present noise level of the existing technology and no such aircraft will be permitted to fly over the United States except at subsonic speeds.

British Airways and Air France have been operating Concorde on a limited basis since May 1976 at Dulles International Airport near Washington, D.C. and, more recently, at John F. Kennedy International Airport near New York City. During that period, the Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has been conducting measurements to determine Concorde noise levels.

Now FAA has imposed operational rules on Concorde that do not apply to other types of aircraft.

These regulations include a nationwide curfew on Concorde operations, in effect between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. SSTs will be prohibited from flying at supersonic speeds over U.S. land areas. In addition, supersonic transports will be prohibited from creating sonic booms when approaching or leaving the United States.

These are strong standards. They are meant to be. The public need for noise control at our major airports has been established. The public demand for such noise control has been made evident at several public hearings and through written comments.

However, the Concorde is a good faith effort by two of our steadfast allies to develop a new generation of aircraft technology. There is no evidence that this technology, as limited by these rules, poses a threat to our public health and safety -- and we have found no such evidence during 16 months of testing. Therefore, in the spirit of fairness the United States is applying the same principles used when jet aircraft were first introduced by admitting these first 16 Concorde.

We can, on the other hand, take steps to insure that future SSTs be made to conform with the more stringent noise rules now in effect. That is what we have done today.

This decision strives to be fair to all parties and to balance the various demands of our citizens in a non-discriminatory manner.

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