StART Meeting

QUICK MEETING SUMMARY

OCTOBER 28, 2026; 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

HYBRID MEETING (ONLINE & IN-PERSON)

Meeting Objectives

Continued discussion on potential changes to StART's Operating Procedures and overview on how the Federal Aviation Administration and the Port of Seattle ensure safe operations and prepare for all situations at SEA Airport.

Key Outcomes

- **Operating procedures:** StART is moving forward with practical improvements to meeting access, public participation, documentation, and communication. Other proposed changes require further discussion before decisions are made.
- **FAA coordination:** The FAA outlined the responsibilities of five key offices and clarified its role as an advisory and technical partner to StART, rather than a member or decision-maker.
- **Emergency preparedness:** The Port described its comprehensive emergency management program, including coordination with regional response agencies, communications systems, training, exercises, and emergency plans.
- **Part 150 Noise Study:** The FAA approved the airport's noise exposure maps, allowing the study to advance to the next phase of developing a Noise Compatibility Plan.

Sarah Cox, Aviation & Sustainability Director, Port of Seattle, chaired the meeting.

Public Comment

Public comment was moved to the beginning of the meeting as a pilot. Feedback received highlighted the benefit of hearing comments at the end as well, when participants can respond to the full discussion

1. **StART Operating Procedures: Next Steps – Andrés Mantilla, Facilitator, Uncommon Bridges**

Agreed on improvements and next steps

<u>Meeting access and participation</u>

- Continue piloting public comment at the beginning of meetings.
- Hold more hybrid meetings while retaining flexibility to meet virtually or in person when appropriate. Hybrid meetings will not be required for every meeting.

Documentation and communication

- Pilot Zoom AI-assisted meeting summaries to provide members with a timely, high-level recap shortly after meetings. Detailed notes will continue to be prepared and reviewed separately.
- Update the Operating Procedures to address meeting recording, AI-assisted summaries, and documentation practices.
- Strengthen communication between steering committee representatives and community representatives before and after steering committee meetings.
- Establish more regular reviews of the Operating Procedures and an annual process to prioritize StART's work.

Areas requiring further discussion

- Shared leadership, including opportunities for a rotating agenda or more structured participation by different communities.
- A clearer feedback loop explaining how StART's input is considered and what decisions or actions result.
- A process for determining when sufficient consensus exists to move forward.
- More consistent documentation of differing perspectives and unresolved concerns.
- Potentially moving from six membership meetings to four quarterly meetings.

Community feedback

Members emphasized the importance of transparency and consistent communication. Concerns included limited visibility into steering committee discussions, inconsistent communication between city representatives and community representatives, and uncertainty about how StART's input influences decisions.

A suggestion was made to provide a consolidated summary of agreements, commitments, and support provided to different communities to improve transparency.

Next steps

- Prepare the proposed amendments to the Operating Procedures for steering committee consideration in November.
- Continue discussion of the remaining proposed changes, with another update planned for December.
- Further evaluate the implications of moving to four quarterly meetings.
- Encourage cities and steering committee representatives to communicate regularly with their community representatives.

2. **Ensuring Safe Operations at SEA – Jennifer Redding, Senior Advisor, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)**

The FAA provided an overview of five offices that support aviation safety, efficiency, and coordination:

- **Air Traffic Organization (ATO):** Provides technical expertise, data analysis, and airspace and procedure design to support safe and efficient air traffic management.
- **Office of Airports (ARP):** Supports airport operations and design, grant-assurance compliance, and airport planning, including the voluntary Part 150 noise compatibility planning process.
- **Flight Standards Service (FS):** Oversees certification and safety standards for pilots, operators, aviation organizations, and other regulated entities. It also investigates reported low-flying aircraft and accidents and educates the aviation community on aviation safety.
- **Office of the Regional Administrator (RA):** Coordinates FAA priorities across offices and works with federal, state, and local governments, airports, and other aviation stakeholders. It serves as an advisory and technical partner to airport roundtables but is not a member or decision-maker.
- **Western Regional Operations Center (WROC):** Operates 24/7 as a communications and coordination hub for aviation incidents, accidents, natural disasters, and other emergencies across the Western Service Area.

Questions were raised about ongoing research through ASCENT—FAA's Center of Excellence for Alternative Jet Fuels and Environment, including work with Washington State University. The status of a 2026 report and research related to airport operations and housing prices requires follow-up.

3. **Emergency Preparations at SEA – Brian Kyser, Emergency Preparedness Assistant Director, Port of Seattle**

The Port described a comprehensive, port-wide emergency preparedness and resilience program covering both airport and maritime operations.

Coordination and communications

- Uses Everbridge for notifications and WebEOC to exchange incident information with regional emergency management partners.
- Coordinates with state and county emergency management agencies, other airports, airlines, tenants, and local response organizations.
- Participates in regional and national emergency management groups to share information, coordinate resources, and support responses across jurisdictions.

Training and exercises

- Conducts more than 30 training and exercise activities annually, including Incident Command System training, internal departmental training, and training with airline and airport partners.
- Holds two unified command exercises per month, along with quarterly workshops, tabletop exercises, and departmental drills.
- Recently completed the FAA-required triennial full-scale airport emergency exercise. The exercise involved approximately 400 people, including responders, exercise staff, and participants.
- Maintains an Airport Emergency Plan covering a range of potential incidents and coordinates with outside agencies to test and improve response procedures.

The Port also described its Disaster Family Assistance Plan, developed with airline partners and supported by the Red Cross, to assist family members and other affected people following an aircraft incident.

Discussion and questions

Mutual aid and emergency response costs: Representatives raised questions about how costs are shared when city fire, police, and other emergency resources respond to airport incidents. The discussion noted that mutual aid agreements establish arrangements between participating agencies, but specific cost-sharing details were not confirmed. Participants also emphasized that assistance works both ways, with the Port and local agencies supporting one another.

The Port clarified that it has the necessary airport fire response equipment and undergoes required inspections and certification. However, a major incident involving many passengers may require additional personnel and resources from surrounding agencies.

Future exercises: A request was made to consider tabletop exercises focused on a major earthquake, including a Cascadia Subduction Zone event. The Port confirmed that it has not yet conducted its triennial exercise around that specific scenario, although it conducts other full-scale exercises and is considering future options.

Next steps: Continue coordination between the Port and local emergency management agencies, including opportunities for future tabletop exercises and additional information about mutual aid arrangements.

4. **Part 150 Noise Study Update – Tom Fagerstrom, Noise Programs Manager, Port of Seattle**

The Port reported that the noise exposure maps were completed in May and had recently received FAA approval, a major milestone that allows the study to move into the Noise Compatibility Plan phase.

The projected 2032 noise contour extends farther west, north, and south than the current noise remedy boundary. The updated maps will help inform potential eligibility for noise insulation and other mitigation measures, with additional analysis still required.

The Noise Compatibility Plan is expected to consider three types of measures:

- **Noise abatement:** Changes to aircraft operations or flight paths intended to reduce noise at its source.
- **Land use measures:** Actions intended to improve compatibility between airport noise and surrounding land uses, potentially including insulation programs.
- **Programmatic measures:** Improvements to airport programs and tools, such as late-night noise initiatives, flight tracking, and noise monitoring.

Potential noise abatement measures remain under analysis and would require the appropriate FAA review and approval.

Community feedback

A concern was raised about low-frequency noise and physical vibrations affecting homes outside the 65 DNL noise contour, including a senior community near the airport. The concern was that residents may experience substantial noise and shaking even when their homes fall outside the noise contour.

The response acknowledged that low-frequency and sideline noise can be difficult to address. Potential noise-canceling technology is being explored for future testing, and the Port is also working with airlines to encourage the use of newer, quieter aircraft. Further follow-up was offered to better understand the affected community's experience.

The Port also reported that recent public workshops presented draft noise-reduction measures and invited continued feedback through the Part 150 study website and the Noise Working Group.

Action Items

- **Operating Procedures:** Prepare proposed amendments for the November steering committee meeting and continue discussion of outstanding changes.
- **Meeting documentation:** Circulate a high-level AI-assisted meeting summary promptly after the meeting, followed by reviewed detailed notes.
- **Community coordination:** Strengthen communication between steering committee representatives and community representatives, including updates before and after steering committee meetings.
- **FAA information:** Provide a written summary of the five FAA offices and their responsibilities for inclusion in the meeting documentation.
- **ASCENT research:** Follow up on the status of the 2026 report and relevant ongoing research, including work related to airport operations and housing prices.
- **Emergency preparedness:** Continue coordination with local emergency managers on potential tabletop exercises and clarify questions about mutual aid and cost-sharing arrangements.
- **Noise and vibration:** Follow up on concerns about low-frequency noise and vibration affecting the senior community outside the mapped flight path.