

resultant passenger capacity is still well below the theoretical maximum).

The Performance Standards Working Group, under the auspices of the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC) on emergency evacuation issues, was tasked to develop a standardized protocol to determine when an analysis is appropriate. One of the primary objectives of this effort was to reduce the number and severity of injuries that can occur in full-scale evacuation demonstrations. Although ARAC was unable to reach a consensus, it has submitted the group's final document to the FAA in the form of a draft advisory circular. The document submitted to the FAA does not include any limitation on passenger capacity increase with respect to analysis. While the FAA's action here is consistent with the ARAC document with respect to passenger capacity increases, it does not reflect each ARAC participant's views.

The FAA has now determined that standardized methodologies have been developed and there are sufficient data now available, such that a limitation on the use of analysis based only on an increase in passenger capacity is no longer necessary. This position is supported by the aviation industry. In addition, the FAA has also received a letter from a noted independent researcher endorsing the use of analysis in the general case, and not tied to an arbitrary limit on the increase in passenger capacity. Analytical techniques are used to substantiate various certification requirements, including those with safety of flight ramifications, and in all cases the key element in their use is the underlying data to support the analysis. The FAA has determined that evacuation demonstrations should be treated no differently and, where sufficient data are available, analysis is an option. Since the existing advisory circular has been interpreted by the public as effectively prohibiting the use of a combination of analysis and test in cases where the passenger capacity is increased by greater than five percent, the FAA is issuing a formal notice that analysis in such cases may be acceptable. Full-scale demonstrations will still be required when sufficient data are not available to support a combination of analysis and test.

While the FAA is seeking public comment on this policy, it is the FAA intention to immediately apply this policy to two specific certification programs in progress during the period of public comment and disposition of comments. It is the FAA position that

for the Boeing 777-300 and the Airbus A330/340, there are currently sufficient full-scale evacuation data available to support analysis. The Boeing 777-300 involves a fuselage stretch and the addition of a pair of exits with an increase in demonstrated passenger capacity from 440 to 550. The Airbus A330/340 involve a fuselage stretch and increasing the size of a pair of exits with an increase in demonstrated passenger capacity from 361 to 440. In both these cases, a wealth of full-scale evacuation data are available to support analysis and the FAA is confident that the use of analysis is well within the intent of the regulation. Therefore, in accordance with the regulation, conduct of additional full-scale evacuation demonstrations is not required to demonstrate compliance, if a satisfactory analysis is produced. The FAA intends to publish a revised proposed advisory circular that reflects this policy. Resolution of the public comment will be considered in determining whether the policy should be refined for future projects, and so reflected in the advisory circular.

Issued in Renton, WA, on March 6, 1998.

**Ronald T. Wojnar,**

*Manager, Transport Airplane Directorate,  
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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

#### Environmental Impact Statement: Howard County, MD

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an environmental impact statement will be prepared for a proposed highway project in Howard County, Maryland.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Renee Sigel, Planning, Research, and Environment Team Leader, Federal Highway Administration, The Rotunda Suite 220, 711 West 40th Street, Baltimore, Maryland 2112211, Telephone: (410) 962-4342.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The FHWA, in cooperation with the Maryland State Highway administration, will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to improve MD 32 from MD 108 (Clarksville Road) to I-70, in Howard County, Maryland. Proposed

improvements within the corridor would involve upgrading MD 32 to a four lane access controlled highway, between the town of Clarksville and I-70 for approximately 9 miles.

Improvements to the corridor are necessary to provide for the existing and projected traffic demands. Also, accident statistics indicate that some sections along this roadway (especially MD 32, from south of Triadelphia Road to south of West Ivory Road and from Terrapin Branch to north of I-70) experience accident rates higher than the statewide average.

Alternatives under consideration include taking no action and widening existing MD 32 to a four lane divided highway with various options for constructing new interchanges at Burntwoods Road, Triadelphia Road, Rosemary Lane, Nixon's Farm, Dayton Shop, and MD 144.

Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies, and to private organizations, citizens, and citizen groups who have previously expressed or are known to have an interest in this proposal. It is anticipated that a Public Hearing will be held in the fall of 1998. The Draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to a Public Hearing. Public notice will be given of the availability of the Draft EIS for review and of the time and place of this hearing. An Alternates Public Workshop was held in June of 1996, in addition to monthly focus group meetings to solicit opinions and ideas on proposed improvements from local citizens.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning these proposed actions and EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Research, Planning and Construction. The regulation implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation of Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued on: March 3, 1998.

**Renee Sigel,**

*Planning, Research and Environment Team Leader, Baltimore, Maryland.*

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