

DeKalb County



DeKalb Peachtree Airport

(770) 936-5440
FAX: (770) 936-5446

212 Administration Building
2000 Airport Road, Atlanta, Georgia 30341

April 22, 2009

From: Mike Van Wie, A.A.E., Assistant Director, DeKalb Peachtree Airport
To: Carol Comer, Director, Georgia Department of Transportation Aviation Programs

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subject: Atlanta Class 'B' Airspace Preliminary Design

DeKalb Peachtree Airport (PDK) submits the following comments and recommendations regarding the FAA's preliminary Class 'B' Airspace design.

Currently the floor of the Class 'B' Airspace directly over PDK is 8,000 feet and just south of PDK the floor of the Class 'B' Airspace is 6,000 feet. The preliminary design lowers the floor of the Class 'B' Airspace over and south of PDK to 5,000 feet.

1. The preliminary design adversely affects the numerous VFR flight activities in the vicinity of DeKalb Peachtree Airport. These activities include business, recreational, and flight training activities. Compressing these flights into less airspace is inherently dangerous.
2. Lowering the floor of the Class 'B' airspace will result in on-the-ground IFR delays at PDK. The FAA counters this by saying it won't because the ATL traffic is already there; they are just trying to change the airspace to keep the ATL aircraft within the airspace. While the Committee understands the benefits of containing ATL arrivals and departures within Class 'B' airspace the FAA's position is not valid. FAA Order 7110.65 requires controllers to inform pilots when their aircraft is leaving and reentering Class 'B' airspace. This requirement discourages controllers from vectoring aircraft in and out of the Class 'B' airspace. Lowering the floor of the Class 'B' airspace over PDK will in fact encourage controllers to use the airspace. This will make it more difficult for the Departure Controller to issue IFR releases. Additionally, when the IFR release is issued it will likely have a lower initial altitude. Both the on-the-ground delay and the lower initial altitude are inefficient.
3. Lowering the floor of the Class 'B' airspace over PDK will increase airport noise in the communities surrounding these airports. Lower initial altitudes on IFR releases and compressing VFR flights to lower altitudes will increase noise in the vicinity of PDK. Additionally, lowering commercial air traffic into and out of ATL over these areas will increase the noise.
4. On a personal note, the FAA states that this airspace proposal is Categorically Excluded (CATEX) from the environmental process. I don't really understand the logic however it seems to be that this is only an airspace change and airspace does not make noise. This is an absurd position that offends me as a both as an airport professional and as a citizen. Lowering the floor of the Class

'B' airspace will encourage Air Traffic Control to use the airspace. Using the airspace will bring aircraft closer to the ground. Bringing aircraft closer to the ground will increase amount of noise the public is exposed to. The proposal needs to be completely environmentally assessed including the effects at the outlying airports.

In conclusion, DeKalb Peachtree Airport recommends that the floor of the Class 'B' airspace over and south of PDK remain as is and must not be lowered.