

Administration of the airport trust fund

The airport trust fund should be administered by an agency of the Federal Government. Because of the previous experience of the Federal Aviation Administration under the Federal Airport Act, that is the most likely place to vest responsibility for administration of the airport trust fund.

Allocations from the fund should be determined by the agency administering the fund. These allocations should be made on a basis similar to that used to allocate funds under the Federal Airport Act. This would retain in the Government which imposes the user fee the control and responsibility for deciding where the monies raised should be spent. The subcommittee will review the area-population formula contained in the Federal Airport Act to determine whether this method of allocation should be continued. The subcommittee is convinced that control over allocations to communities within a State must be maintained by the Federal Government, if the trust fund is to be administered fairly and if it is to have any substantial relation to the need for airport construction that exists at any particular point in time.

AIRPORT NOISE

Jet aircraft noise at the Nation's airports has become increasingly annoying to persons living around the airports. The noise problem affects airport and runway locations, the flight patterns in and out of airports, and the total amount of airport development cost. The Federal Government's role in the effort to alleviate airport noise has thus far been limited to the expenditure of substantial sums of money for research and development of a quieter jet aircraft engine, noise abatement procedures, and compatible land-use planning.

The subcommittee does not believe the problems relating to airport noise should be intertwined with the question of airport financing. Nor does the subcommittee believe that the Federal Government has any liability for airport noise. The subcommittee prefers to treat this issue separately.

The Secretary of Transportation has recommended legislation to permit the Federal Government to set maximum noise levels at airports and to enforce those standards by regulation. This legislation would also permit the Government to fix the noise level of jet aircraft engines through the certification procedure. This legislation will be considered separately by the subcommittee following the airport hearings. The subcommittee can then determine whether or not this is the proper course for the Federal Government to take.

NATIONAL AIRWAYS SYSTEM

A problem related to airport development is the improvement and modernization of the national airways system, which encompasses the en route air traffic control centers, flight service stations, airport radars, airport traffic control towers, and other navigational facilities manned by the Federal Aviation Administration to assist aircraft in getting to and from the Nation's airports. Substantial capital expenditures must be made over the next 8 years to modernize the national airways system so that it can handle the number and different types of aircraft that will be introduced into the system.