

## FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

### Report on Progress in Identifying, Protecting and Using Federal Historic Properties Pursuant to Section 3 of Executive Order 13287, *Preserve America* Fiscal Years 2020-2023

#### I. Introduction

This report is submitted in fulfillment of the requirement of Section 3 of Executive Order 13287 “Preserve America” (Mar. 3, 2003) that agencies with real property management responsibilities report to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) every three years. Section 3 of the Executive Order directs Federal agencies to prepare an assessment of the current status of its inventory of historic properties, the general condition and management needs of those properties, and steps to meet those needs, and report its progress in identifying, protecting and using historic properties in their ownership pursuant to the mandate in Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The FAA submitted a baseline report in 2004 and progress reports in 2005, 2008, 2011, 2014, 2017, and 2020.

#### II. Identification and Evaluation of FAA Properties

The FAA owns and controls relatively few historic properties.<sup>1</sup> Two FAA properties are listed in the National Register of Historic Places: Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, listed in 1997; and a DC-3 aircraft, tail number N34, listed in 1997.<sup>2</sup> Two additional FAA properties have been formally determined to be eligible for listing by the Keeper of the National Register: Dulles International Airport, determined eligible in 1978; and the Administration Building of the San Juan Combined/Center Radar Approach Control Facility (CERAP), determined eligible in 2013.

The FAA also owns the William J. Hughes Technical Center, a 5,000-acre research facility co-located with Atlantic City International Airport in Atlantic City, New Jersey; and manages both owned and leased buildings at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center at the Will Rogers Airport in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma under a long-term lease with the Oklahoma City Airport Trust. These complexes have been evaluated for the National Register.

There have been no significant changes in the ownership, evaluation, or use of FAA historic properties since the 2020 report was filed. As noted in previous Section 3 reports and described in more detail below, surveying and evaluating FAA assets for National Register eligibility presents unique challenges because most of the agency’s real property assets are structures associated with the National Airspace System (NAS).

#### Listed Properties

##### **Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Arlington County, Virginia**

Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) was built by the Civil Aeronautics Authority, predecessor agency to the Federal Aviation Administration, and opened in 1941. Under the Metropolitan Washington Airports Act of 1986 (Pub. L. 99-591), the FAA entered into a long-term lease which transferred operating authority to the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA). The

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<sup>1</sup> “Historic property” for purposes of this report means any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, and object included on or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with section 301(5) of the NHPA. E.O. 13287 Sec. 7, citing 16 U.S.C. 470w(5) (*recodified at* 54 U.S. Code § 300308).

<sup>2</sup> Aircraft are categorized as structures by the National Register of Historic Places; the DC-3 aircraft N34 is classified as personal property by the FAA for purposes of asset management.

transfer constituted an undertaking under Section 106, and the FAA executed a Programmatic Memorandum of Agreement (PMOA) on 29 May 1987 with the ACHP and the Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) detailing actions to be undertaken to ensure the protection of historic and archaeological resources. Upon the transfer, MWAA assumed responsibility for carrying out the PMOA. The original terminal and the South Hangar Line were listed in the National Register in 1997. MWAA has undertaken extensive renovations and expansion of the airport in consultation with the Virginia SHPO pursuant to the PMOA.

### **Douglas DC-3 Aircraft N34, Potter County, Texas**

The FAA's predecessor, the Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA), acquired this 1945 Douglas DC-3 Airplane in 1957 for use in its flight inspection program. The aircraft, known by its registration number N34, was listed in the National Register in 1997 under Criterion A, for its role in the development and modernization of flight inspection standards and Criterion C, as an example of a significant aircraft design. In February 2013, N34 was moved from Oklahoma City, where it had been stored in a hangar at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center, to the Texas Air & Space Museum, located at the Amarillo International Airport in Amarillo, Texas. N34 is now on public display under a long-term lease that ensures its preservation. The move was carried out in consultation with the Oklahoma SHPO and in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement executed under Section 106. The Keeper of the National Register confirmed N34's National Register status following the move, pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 60.14(b)(5).

### **Determined Eligible for Listing**

#### **Dulles International Airport, Fairfax and Loudon Counties, Virginia**

Dulles International Airport (IAD) was determined eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C in 1978, based on its exceptional significance as the first airport in the United States to be designed specifically for jet planes and as the greatest achievement of architect Eero Saarinen. The distinctive Main Terminal, air traffic control tower (ATCT) and several supporting buildings were determined to meet National Register criteria as part of a Historic District along with the mobile lounges, runways, terminal area landscaping, and the Dulles Airport Access Highway. Like DCA, Dulles is operated by MWAA under a long-term lease, which includes provisions to ensure the protection of historic properties and is covered by the 1987 PMOA. MWAA has expanded the airport in accordance with the original 1964 Saarinen Master Plan and in consultation with the Virginia SHPO, pursuant to the PMOA. MWAA had undertaken the exterior restoration and stabilization of the original ATCT, to allow for potential future adaptive reuse following construction of a new ATCT in 2007. As part of the transition to the new ATCT, the FAA removed the Airport Surface Detection Equipment (ASDE) enclosure on the top of the original tower and replaced it with a replica of the original historic radome (radar dome), thus fulfilling a long-standing commitment by the FAA to restore the visual integrity of the tower.

#### **Administration Building, San Juan Combined Center Radar Approach Control Facility, Carolina County, Puerto Rico**

The San Juan Combined Center Radar Approach Control (ZSU CERAP), located on the southeast corner of the Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport, was constructed in 1965 from plans developed by the firms of Brooks and Barr (Texas) and Horacio Diaz and Associates (Puerto Rico). The architectural design of the complex distinguishes it from other FAA centers constructed during the period. The Keeper of the National Register determined the Administration Building eligible in February 2013 under Criterion C, based on its association with a locally renowned architect and as a significant example of the Modernist architectural style of Formalism. Although the structure is now over fifty years old, it was

less than fifty years old at the time of the Determination of Eligibility and the Keeper concluded that it met the requirements of Criteria Consideration G as an exceptional example of New Formalist architecture in a local context.

A MOA was developed among the FAA, the Puerto Rico SHPO, the ACHP, and various concurring parties. The MOA was signed in August 2017 and outlines the various measures to be planned and executed for the Administration Building.

### **Evaluated for Eligibility**

#### **William J. Hughes Technical Center, Atlantic City International Airport, Atlantic County, NJ**

Atlantic City International Airport was originally established in 1942 as a Naval Air Station; in 1958, the lease was transferred to what is now the FAA but the airport terminal and related support facilities were retained by Atlantic City and are now owned and operated by the South Jersey Transportation Authority. The portion of the complex owned and operated by the FAA includes laboratories, test facilities, support facilities, a non-commercial aircraft hangar and facilities used by the Department of Homeland Security, Transportation Security Lab, the United States Coast Guard, and the New Jersey Air National Guard 177th Fighter Wing. A 1995 Phase I and II Cultural Resources Survey of the William J. Hughes Technical Center is used as the basis for identifying and evaluating historic properties. A copy of the documentation is on file with the New Jersey SHPO. No National Register nominations have been prepared or submitted for properties at this complex.

#### **Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center, Oklahoma County, OK**

A Cultural Resources Survey was completed in 1990 for the buildings and structures at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center. This survey is used as a reference by FAA Environmental Protection Specialists to evaluate assets for potential National Register-eligibility and to prepare requests for concurrence to the Oklahoma Historical Society, which serves as the SHPO. The FAA uses these surveys as a basis for Section 106 consultation, including identification and evaluation or re-evaluation of historic properties, for undertakings at these facilities. No National Register nominations have been prepared or submitted for properties at this complex.

### **Additional Properties**

The vast majority of the FAA's remaining real property assets are components of the NAS, which comprises communications, navigation, and surveillance systems. These include buildings and structures that house technical equipment used to provide air traffic and related services. The buildings, structures, and land are considered real property; the equipment is classified by the FAA as personal property.

Most of the 21,268 FAA-owned assets currently listed in the FAA's Real Estate Management System (REMS) are structures (50.6%); about 43.5% are buildings or housing and the rest is land (5.9%).<sup>3</sup> Another 54 buildings are FAA-controlled. REMS lists real property by individual assets; not just individual buildings, but parking areas, access roads, sidewalks, system cables, fuel tanks, fuel tank yards, underground fuel lines, fencing, lighting and landscaping. As a result, a single facility such as an air traffic control tower might have dozens of separate entries in REMS.

Since the FAA began reporting under Section 3, more of the NAS facilities have reached, or are approaching, fifty years of age and some may be eligible for the National Register. However, these kinds

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<sup>3</sup> <https://rems.faa.gov/>. Land accounts for 79.1% of FAA-leased property.

of resources have not been well-represented in historic studies, and evaluating their technological significance requires specialized expertise. To date, the FAA has not been able to undertake a systematic and comprehensive survey of these assets and instead has relied on the Section 106 process to identify and evaluate properties for National Register eligibility when an undertaking involving those properties is planned or proposed.

The FAA is in the process of updating its existing and aging infrastructure of FAA-managed Airport Traffic Control Towers (ATCTs). Many ATCTs at least 40 years or older are not designed to meet modern requirements based on weight thresholds, power requirements, and/or other existing design limitations. The NHPA and Section 106 process will apply to undertakings regarding the replacement of existing ATCTs to improve the safety and operation of air traffic control at airports as part of, but not limited to, its Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) ATCT Replacement Program (Program). Through the Program, the FAA plans to replace existing FAA-managed aging ATCTs with modern facilities at airports across the nation. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58), also known as the BIL, provided funding to improve ATCTs. At this time, not all ATCTs have been identified for replacement, so the full extent of effects on historic properties for the Program are unknown. Because ATCTs identified for replacement are over 40 years of age, this Program has the potential to affect historic properties, which are typically over 50 years of age in order to be eligible for the National Register. The FAA plans to carry out and fulfill its Section 106 responsibilities for these proposed undertakings.

### **III. Protection and Use of Historic Properties**

The FAA faces special challenges in managing its historic properties. Many of the NAS facilities were designed and constructed to meet technical specifications for a particular system and may not be adaptable to another use. When mission requirements change and technology becomes outdated or obsolete, both the equipment and the facility housing the equipment may become excess property. Many of the systems are unique to the FAA; the equipment would not be of practical use to other entities or could endanger NAS integrity if used for other purposes. In addition, for reasons of safety and security, most of these facilities do not lend themselves to adaptive reuse. The buildings, structures, and/or equipment may contain materials that pose environmental and/or health hazards. Often the facilities are located on secure areas of airports or are co-located with other equipment that will continue to be operated by the FAA or other agencies, and the site cannot be made publicly accessible. For these reasons, the FAA is generally unable to preserve NAS facilities that may qualify as historic properties by adapting them to another use or by partnering with local governments or organizations to protect and use them.

Airports can offer opportunities for preservation of historic properties, as evidenced by MWAA's extensive preservation efforts at Dulles and DCA. Although the FAA does not generally own airport property, the FAA engages with airport proprietors through consultation under Section 106 for projects that are federally funded and/or approved and encourages the continued use or adaptive reuse of historic airport terminals, hangars, and control towers where feasible.

The FAA has authority to dispose of airport and airway property and technical equipment used for the special purposes of the FAA without going through the General Services Administration.<sup>4</sup> Personal property disposed of must have a reutilization and disposition plan to provide advance planning. The Disposition Plan is used by the agency to identify and document historical preservation requirements, including coordination with the Smithsonian Institution, which under long-standing FAA policy is given first right of refusal for excess aircraft hardware and software, system components, navigation and communications equipment, instruments, operating handbooks, and other artifacts.<sup>5</sup> For excess real

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<sup>4</sup> See 49 U.S.C. § 40110.

<sup>5</sup> FAA Order 1200.8C (Sept. 30, 1987).

property, FAA guidance calls for FAA environmental professionals to evaluate any buildings and structures being considered for conveyance, transfer, or sale to another entity as part of a real property disposal action.<sup>6</sup>

The FAA integrates its Section 106 compliance into the process for considering environmental impacts under NEPA. The FAA is updating its guidance on sustainability and climate change in accordance with recent Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidance, consistent with Executive Order 13990, *Protecting Public Health and the Environment and Restoring Science to Tackle the Climate Crisis*.<sup>7</sup> Subject-matter experts meeting the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Professional Qualifications act as agency resources for the Environmental Protection Specialists who oversee reviews for specific projects. These experts include the Federal Preservation Officer (B.A. History with over two years of full-time experience) within the Office of Environment and Energy, the FAA Historian (Ph.D, History) within the Office of the General Counsel, and a Supervisory Policy Analyst within the Office of Aviation Policy and Plans (Ph.D, Archeology). The FAA will conduct Section 106 training for FAA employees in the fall of 2023.

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<sup>6</sup> Real Estate Guidance 5.4.8(revised 1/2012).

<sup>7</sup> CEQ Guidance: National Environmental Policy Act Guidance on Consideration of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change.