

# Environmental Impact Statement on Concorde

Late last week the U.S. Department of Transportation released the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Concorde. The EIS was aimed at assessing the effect of Concorde operations to JFK Airport in New York and Dulles Airport

in Virginia.

Unfortunately, the EIS attempts to obscure the significant environmental impact of the Concorde.

Two of the major issues referred to in the EIS were noise and ozone depletion. If

one just reads the documents the inevitable conclusion is that no serious problems exist in either of these areas. However, with perseverance and the use of a calculator the following findings emerge:

## NOISE

1. The Concorde is twice as loud as the jumbo jets now in service.

2. At up to 16 miles from the point of takeoff the level of noise directly under the plane would require you to shout as loud as possible at a distance of six inches or less in order to be heard.

3. At takeoff the Concorde would cover a 70 square mile area with a noise level that would require you to shout as loud as possible at a distance of four feet or less to be heard (other noisy aircraft only cover a 12.5 square mile area with such an intense noise level).

4. Under current conditions the Concorde would expose 97,000 more people at JFK and 62,000 more people at Dulles for up to two minutes a day to noise levels similar to those described in No. 3 above.

## OZONE DEPLETION

1. The Concorde produces two to three times the amount of nitrogen oxide (NO) per passenger than other commercial airplanes.

2. One Concorde will release 1,658,333 pounds of NO in

the stratosphere per year. This NO destroys ozone (O3) and has a cumulative effect.

3. The expected decrease in ozone will cause at least an additional 500 cases of skin cancer (Nonmelanoma) in the U.S. per year.

4. After the last Concorde stops flying it will take 60 years for the skin cancer rate to drop down to the pre-Concorde level.

The EIS almost entirely obscures the cancer issue. In spite of the above facts about ozone the FAA, in summing up its findings, merely states: "There is considerable evidence to indicate that increased ultraviolet solar radiation increases the incidence of non-fatal skin cancer."

Rather than disclose the hundreds of new cancer cases caused by the Concorde, the EIS attempts to underplay the effects by citing figures such as "0.2% skin cancer incidence increase."

In light of the obvious problems with this EIS, it may be time for Congress to restudy the EIS process. The thrust of this restudy would be to assure that the agency performing the EIS does not have

a vested interest in the resulting decisions.