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## Airports and the Environment

Alan H. Stratford

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## Book Review

AIRPORTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT. By Alan Stratford. New York, New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1974. Pp. 158.

At a time when rampant inflation, travel decline, and fuel costs and shortages have turned the attention of the aviation community to basic survival, environmental concerns have been pushed into the background. The publication of Mr. Stratford's book at this critical time should serve notice that the environmental issues facing aviation have not gone away but will re-emerge as soon as traffic increases and planners must once more consider the needs for added capacity.

Mr. Stratford's principal object in writing the book was "to identify the key factors in the development of air transport which have caused conflict with the environment, and to discuss the corrective forces which have been put to work." To an extent, he has achieved that goal. In his first five chapters, he has outlined the benefits of aviation to the community, nation and world (perhaps somewhat overstated); the airport planning process; the proper role for government intervention; and the basic techniques proposed for noise abatement, generation and measurement. These chapters are supplemented by detailed discussions of what is being done in the United Kingdom. Although not developed in as much detail, the situations in other leading aviation countries are also surveyed. Because of their general, non-technical nature, these five chapters are an excellent primer for someone inexperienced in the field.

A major failing of the book occurs in the sixth and final chapter, "Airports and Society in the 1980s." Although Mr. Stratford recognizes the problems of community opposition and the need for community involvement in the planning process, he fails to give any constructive guides for accomplishing these goals. In fact, the book has two overall weaknesses. It fails to address the political problems involved in airport/aviation planning and it does not attempt to explain the causes of community unrest and opposition. For these topics, the reader must turn elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Gordon McKay Stevenson, Jr., *The Politics of Airport Noise*, 1972. Dorothy Nelken, *Jetport: The Boston Airport Controversy*, 1974.

In summary, the book would be valuable to someone starting out in the aviation noise abatement field or to the general reader interested in an overview of environmental concerns in aviation law. More experienced readers will find it somewhat superficial. In any case, it should be supplemented by other materials that address the non-technical issues in more detail.

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