



“Flying Friendly” – Noise Abatement Procedures at KBED and KPYM

By Sean Brodeur & Gordon Landale

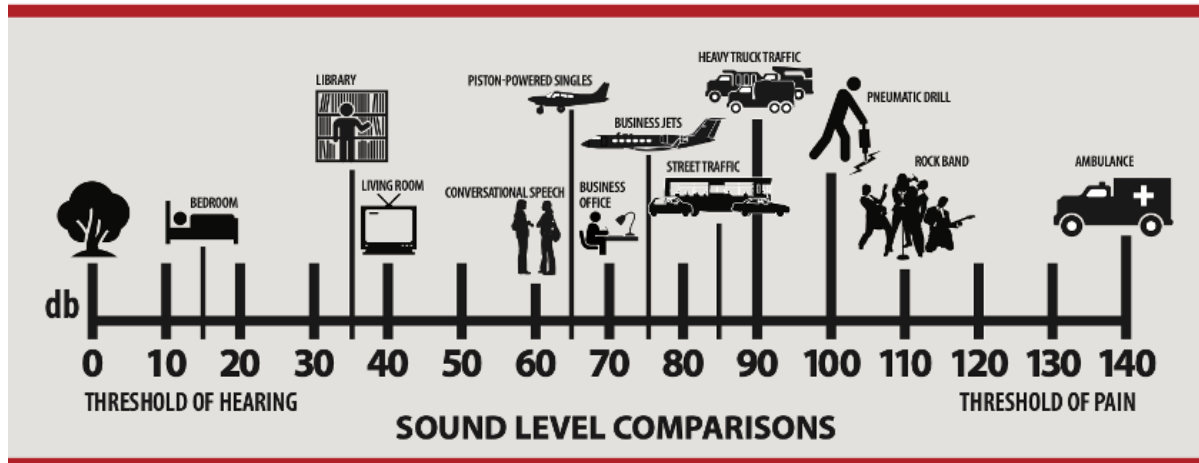
February 2025

Noise abatement is a subject that can be easily overlooked during pilot training. We put effort into learning about aircraft systems, navigation, airspace, weather, and regulations. We spend hours and hours perfecting maneuvers and landings. It is very easy for the topic of noise abatement procedures to slip through the cracks.

Many airports face challenges from surrounding communities as more and more houses are built around them. Most residents who live adjacent to airports are not even aware that the airport exists until they start seeing and hearing airplanes flying overhead. Soon after, these residents may start voicing concerns about “those little airplanes” flying over their homes. What can we do to be good neighbors and help minimize our impact on the surrounding community? One easy step we can take is to follow the noise abatement procedures for the airports where we frequently fly. As pilots, we have the responsibility of being the best aviation ambassadors we can be to help be part of the solution.

In this month’s Pro-tip, we will review the procedures for both KBED and KPYM as you’re more than likely training out of one of those two airports. The risks of not following the procedures are real as some communities in the US have successfully closed airports. In addition, expensive litigation naming the flight schools whose aircraft have ignored the procedures have even caused school closures.

Noise can be measured in about 25 different ways, but the FAA uses five types when determining noise levels around a field. The one most of us are familiar with are decibels (dBA) and what I’ll use here. The chart below from AOPA shows that airplane noise generally falls between 65 and 75 dBA. You may be surprised to learn that an SR22 with an IO-550N has been recorded at the same sound level as a Boeing 737, both being measured by the FAA at 73.6 dBA. An SR20 is 72.1 dBA.



Reducing the noise impact by following the procedures at KBED and KPYM is easy once you've become familiar with the procedures for the traffic pattern and the practice area.

KBED:

1. Noise abatement procedures for the traffic pattern at Hanscom Field (KBED) can be found here:

<https://www.massport.com/environment/noise-abatement/hanscom-field>

Here's a summary of the key points:

- Avoidance of the Minuteman National Historic Park located south of Hanscom, along Route 2A. Downwind legs for runway 11/29 should be flown north of the park abeam of the South T Hangars.
- Patterns for 5/23 should extend south to Route 2 to avoid the park.
- Adhere to AOPA's Noise Abatement Procedures guidance by using Best Rate of Climb speed and/or reducing propeller RPM as soon as feasible after takeoff.
- Regulations prohibit touch and goes between 11PM and 7AM. Avoiding all flight operations between 11PM and 7AM is recommended as a fee will be assessed.
- Flying at KBED is unique because it abuts the Minuteman National Park. As a result, we have suggested traffic patterns dependent on which runway is in use. ATC will often dictate our traffic pattern including our beloved "360s for spacing," which may occur over noise-sensitive areas.

2. Flight Training/Practice Areas at KBED:

Using the correct practice area for maneuvers is critical to reducing our noise footprint over local noise-sensitive communities around KBED. On the way out to the practice area, monitor the radio frequency (123.5) to help increase your situational awareness.

It is critical to avoid the towns of Groton and Ayer, MA, which contain the abandoned Moore Army Airfield and the Fort Devens complex – a busy and active Army property. Flying over Groton and Ayer, MA, should be avoided at all times. There are active anti-noise groups organized in those communities and they monitor general aviation activity in their area via ADSB.

Being especially vigilant to use the correct practice areas and not conduct your flight training over the depicted Groton and Ayer, MA noise sensitive areas. Your cooperation with this fly-friendly policy is appreciated.

KPYM:

1. Noise abatement procedures for traffic pattern at Plymouth Municipal Airport (KPYM) can be found here:

https://www.pymairport.com/noise_abatement

Here's a summary of the key points:

- Climb straight out to at least 850' MSL (700' AGL) before turning in the pattern.
- Avoid the densely populated areas on the southwest and northeast corners of the airport.
- Use runway 24 for calm wind departures.
- Use Best Rate of Climb speed until at least 1000' AGL. Avoid high power setting in level flight low to the ground.
- No touch and go operations between 9:00 PM and 8:00 AM. Avoid flight operations between 11:00 PM and 7:00 AM.
- Limit traffic pattern operations to three takeoffs and landings. If additional landing practice is required, consider using a nearby airport such as EWB or HYA.

2. Flight Training/Practice Areas at KPYM:

In addition to pattern work, using the correct practice areas at KPYM is critical to reducing our noise footprint when practicing maneuvers. There are many flight schools operating in the airspace to the west of Plymouth who use the practice area, so it is important to stay alert and be on the lookout for traffic. Monitoring the practice area radio frequency (123.5) will help increase your situational awareness.

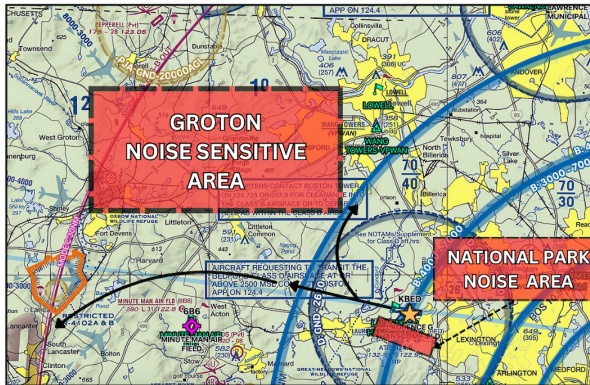
Note the practice area to the east of Plymouth over the coastline which includes part of Cape Cod Bay. As part of your pre-flight planning, discuss with your CFI the practice area you intend to use prior to departing. Please use the maps below as a guide.

Conclusion:

In general, the procedures recommended to minimize noise impact on our neighbors living in the airport areas of KBED and KPYM are easy to follow and contribute to safe operations as well. Thank you for helping to do your part by adhering to fly-friendly policies.

KBED Traffic Pattern Noise Abatement Procedures:

HANSCOM FIELD AIRPORT (KBED) NOISE SENSITIVE AREAS



GROTON AREA

All aircraft flying in the general vicinity of Groton, MA should avoid overflying this noise sensitive area at all times.

MINUTEMAN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

RUNWAY 05/23

- Climb at best rate of climb (Vy) until pattern altitude.
- Fly patterns at 1000' AGL (1200' MSL)

Runway 23

- Conditions permitting, continue on runway heading to 1000' AGL (1200' MSL)
- For left traffic, fly downwind leg approx. 500' east of RW 29 chevrons.

Runway 05

- For right traffic, fly downwind leg east of RW 29 chevrons.
- Conditions permitting, extend downwind leg to Rt 2. Avoid early base turns.

RUNWAY 11/29

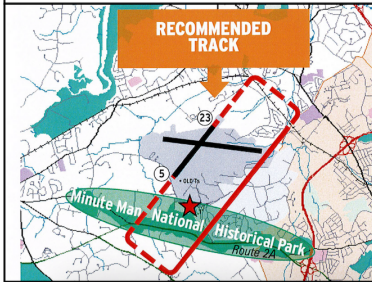
- Climb at best rate of climb (Vy) until pattern altitude.
- Fly patterns at 1000' AGL (1200' MSL)
- Fly the downwind leg as close to 1/2 NM from the runway as practical.

Runway 29

- For left traffic, fly downwind leg approx. 500' south of RW 5 chevrons, or over old T's.
- If available per ATC, use right traffic.

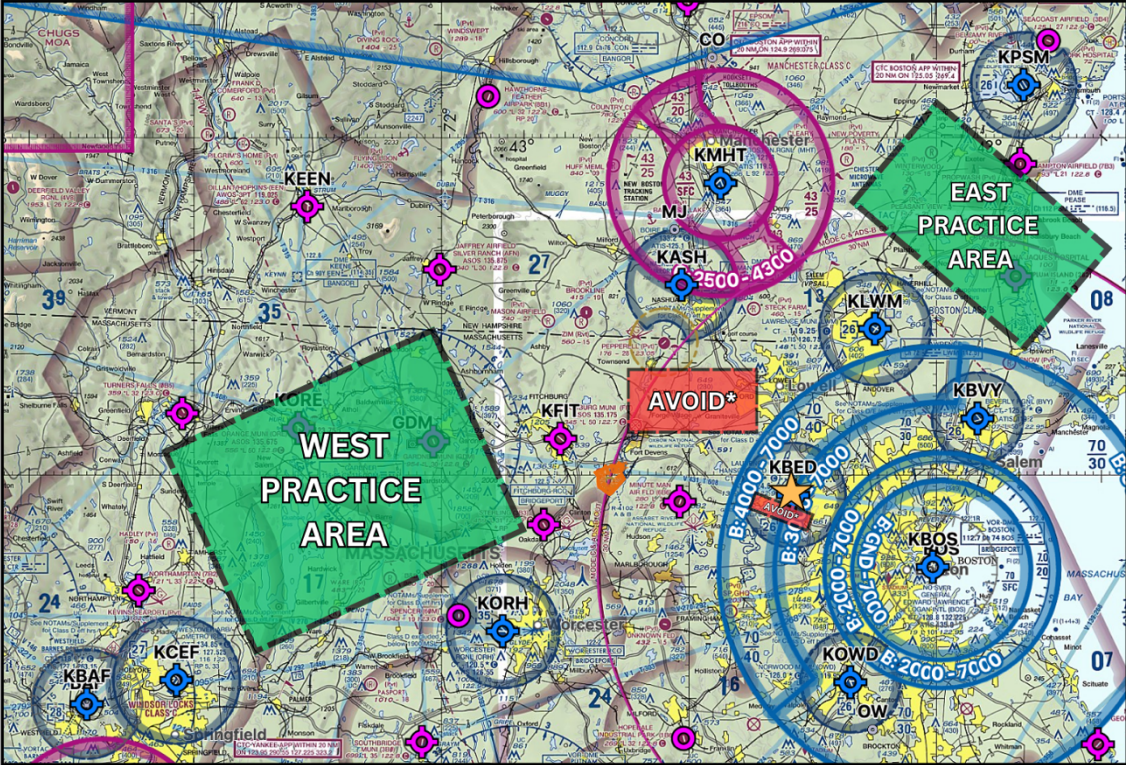
Runway 11

- For right traffic, fly downwind leg approx. 500' south of RW 5 chevrons, or over old T's.
- If available per ATC, use left traffic.



KBED Practice Area Guidance:

HANSCOM FIELD AIRPORT (KBED) RECOMMENDED PRACTICE AREAS

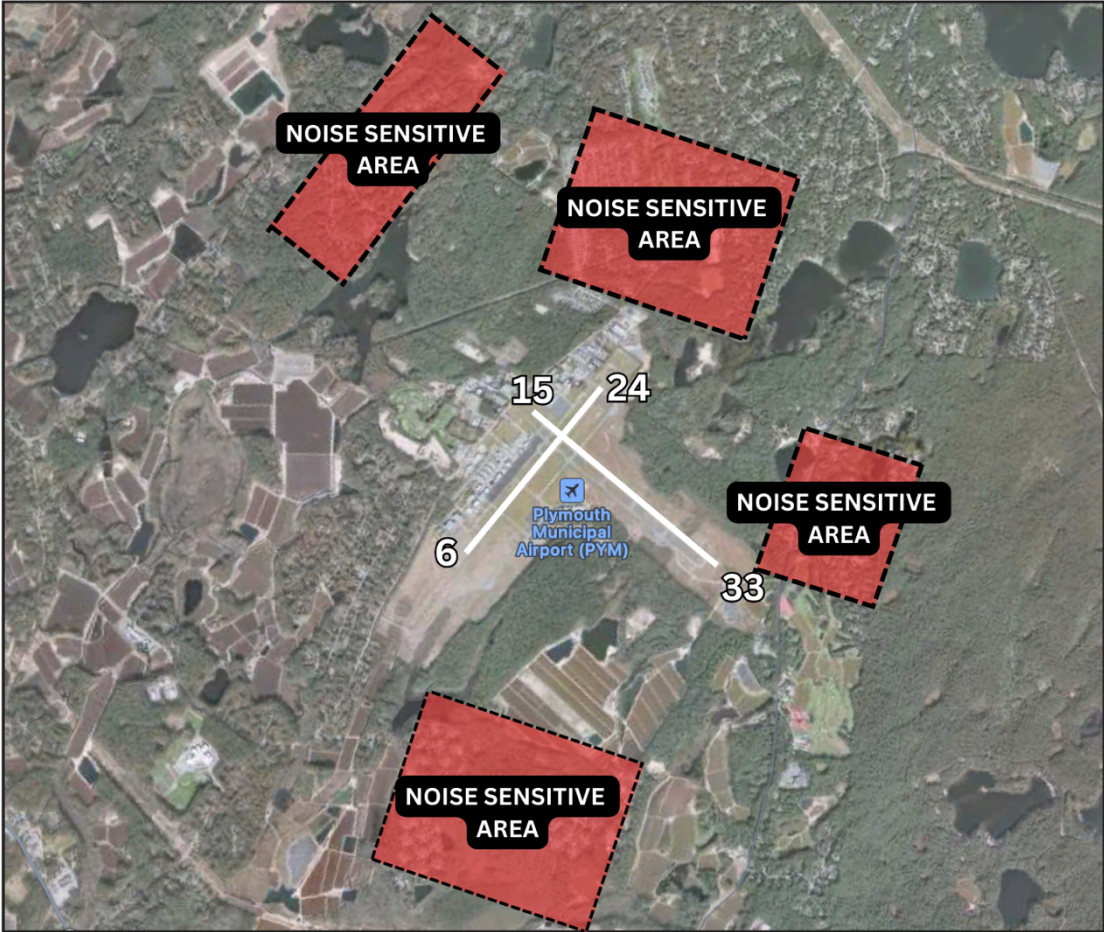


Practice Area Notes
Stay Alert - Other aircraft may be practicing in these areas.
Use ATC Flight Following or monitor practice area frequencies for better situational awareness.
Boston Apr - 124.4 Boston Ctr (Gardner) - 123.75 Practice Area - 123.5

*Noise Abatement
Aircraft should avoid Noise Sensitive Areas and follow all Noise Abatement procedures.

KPYM Traffic Pattern Guidance:

PLYMOUTH AIRPORT (KPYM) NOISE SENSITIVE AREAS

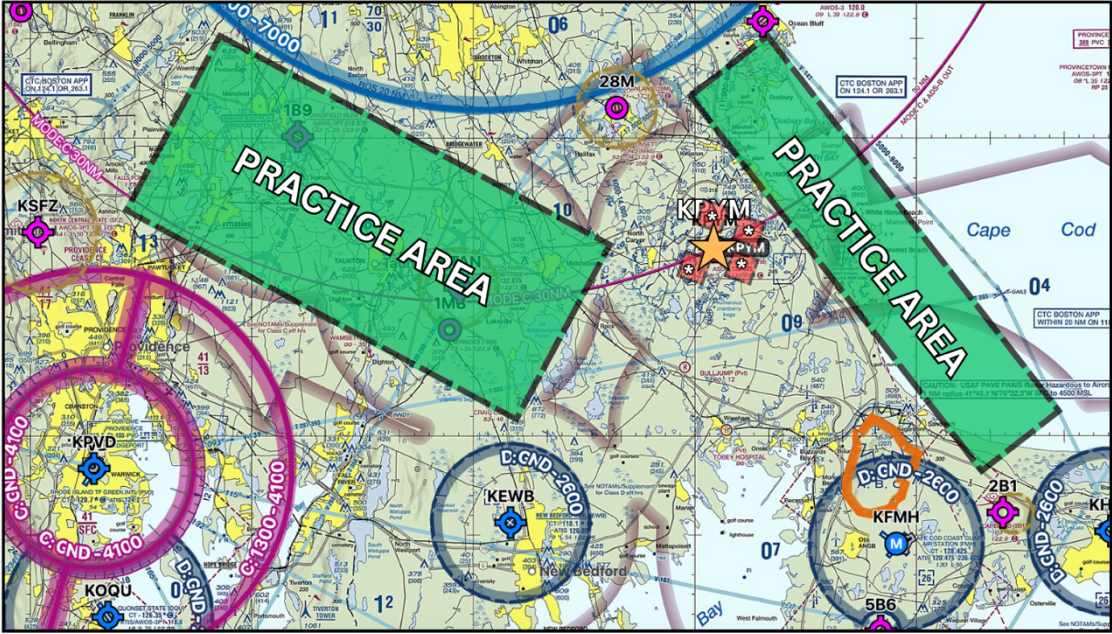


KPYM Noise Sensitive Areas

Aircraft should avoid all flight training in the noise sensitive areas around KPYM. Touch and Go operations are limited to three during any one training session. All flight over noise sensitive areas should be at 1000ft AGL or greater.

KPYM Traffic Pattern Noise Abatement Procedures:

PLYMOUTH AIRPORT (KPYM) RECOMMENDED PRACTICE AREAS



Practice Area Notes

Stay Alert - Other aircraft may be practicing in these areas.

Use ATC Flight Following or monitor practice area frequencies for better situational awareness.

Boston Apr (east) - 118.2
 Providence Apr (west) - 123.675
 KPYM CTAF - 122.725
 Practice Area - 123.5

*Noise Abatement

Avoid Noise Sensitive Areas around departure ends of all runways.