PENNSYLVANIA Airports Economic Impact

The Pennsylvania Airport System

Pennsylvania's aviation industry continues to provide high quality jobs and spur important local spending by on-airport businesses and agencies. The commonwealth's system of 15 commercial service and 117 general aviation airports connects Pennsylvania businesses and residents to the national and global economy. This system is comprised of a network of airports, airlines, air cargo businesses, corporate flight departments, private aircraft owners, and recreational airplane pilots. Manufacturers in the state rely on airports to access markets and to receive supplies. Businesses rely on airports to conduct face-to-face meetings with customers and business associates within the United States and abroad. Leisure travelers use airports to reach recreational and tourist sites and to visit with family and friends.

Pennsylvania's Total Annual Economic Impacts from Aviation

When all of the impacts of Pennsylvania's system airports are added together, nearly 304,500 total jobs can be traced to the aviation industry. These employees receive more than $9.2 billion in total payroll, and generate nearly $23.6 billion in total economic activity. In addition, Pennsylvania's airports provide a number of health, welfare, and safety benefits, the impacts of which are immeasurable. Such services include aerial agricultural spraying, medical transport and evacuation, flight training, law enforcement, wildlife management, military exercises, and search and rescue operations.

Impact Measures

Employment measures the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs related to airport activity, including on-airport construction. A part-time employee is counted as half a full-time employee.

Payroll measures the total annual wages and benefits paid to all workers whose salaries are directly attributable to airport activity.

Economic Activity (Output) measures the value of goods and services related to airports in Pennsylvania. The output of on-airport businesses is typically assumed to be the sum of annual gross sales and average annual capital expenditures.

Total Jobs – 304,464

Total Payroll – $9.2 billion

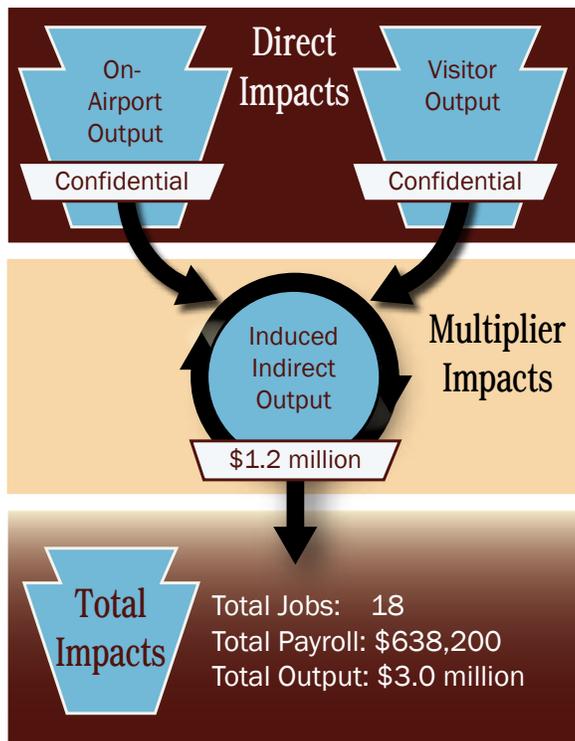### Total Output – $23.6 billion

Study Process

This study, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aviation, analyzes the economic impact of Pennsylvania's aviation industry as a whole, as well as the impacts of its individual airports. The study confirms that many people—beyond the immediate environs of each airport—derive significant economic benefits from the daily operation of the airport system. The study also evaluates some of the less-quantifiable impacts linked with aviation, such as health, safety, recreation, education, and overall community strength.

A detailed modeling effort was undertaken to quantify the economic impacts of on-airport activities (airlines, fixed base operators, flight schools, corporate flight departments, government, and various other business). Also quantified were the impacts derived from the expenditures of visitors who arrive via scheduled service and general aviation aircraft. These on-airport impacts and visitor expenditures support additional economic activity throughout Pennsylvania.

As initial waves of activities associated with the airport system are released into Pennsylvania's economy, successive waves of employment, payroll, and economic benefit occur. These additional benefits are measured using sector-specific employment, payroll, and economic impact multipliers.

Economic Impact of
Reigle Field

Direct Impacts

On-Airport Output
Confidential

Visitor Output
Confidential

Multiplier Impacts

Induced Indirect Output

$1.2 million

Total Impacts

Total Jobs: 18
Total Payroll: $638,200
Total Output: $3.0 million

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates

Impact Types

Direct Impacts include both direct impacts related to on-airport businesses and government agencies, and off-airport impacts, which are usually attributable to visitor spending.

Multiplier Impacts are comprised of indirect and induced impacts. These impacts are attributed to employees spending their earnings at local businesses, and the on-airport businesses purchasing goods and services locally. This re-circulation is commonly referred to as the "multiplier effect."

Total Impacts are the combination of all direct, indirect, and induced impacts.

Qualitative Benefits

Reigle Field is located just south of the Borough of Palmyra in Lebanon County, approximately 17 miles northeast of downtown Harrisburg. Hershey Park is just a few miles from the airport. Access to the airport is available via U.S. 322 and State Route 117.

Reigle Field is classified as a Basic airport by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Aviation. The airport has 65 based aircraft and experiences approximately 30,000 annual aircraft operations. The airport has one runway, Runway 13/31, that measures 1,950 feet long by 40 feet wide and is equipped with nonstandard low intensity runway lighting (NSTD).

Pilots note that when flying from the east, the first landmark they see in Hershey is Founders Hall, the largest unsupported rotunda in the Western Hemisphere. The dome sits at the center of the Milton Hershey School for disadvantaged children. Reigle Field lies about one mile from the dome.

Reigle Field is a privately-owned, public use general aviation airport and has been run by the Reigle family since 1942. All general aviation services are provided by fixed base operator Reigle Aviation. FBO services include fueling, aircraft parking and storage, major aircraft maintenance, and flight instruction. Charter service available at the airport helps to promote the airport's business use. Area employers also have customers and suppliers who fly into the airport. The airport's busiest season is October, when car enthusiasts from around the world gather for the Hershey Auto Show, one of the largest gatherings of antique cars in the world.

In addition, Reigle Field supports flight training and recreational flying. The airport supports aerial advertising, as well as aerial photography and surveying. Local law enforcement agencies and emergency medical operators also utilize the airport on a routine basis. Lastly, agricultural spraying operations occur on a seasonal basis at Reigle Field.