

Chapter 4: NPIAS Threshold Standards

The Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982 directed the Secretary of Transportation to prepare, publish and revise every two years a national airport system plan, the National Plan of Integrated Airports System (NPIAS), for development of public-use airports in the United States. The NPIAS is formulated in conjunction with state and metropolitan-area system plans and its primary objective is to provide the public with reasonable access to safe and adequate airports. The NPIAS report used in this analysis covers the planning period from 2007-2011.

The viability of an airport is also considered in the entry criteria. Viability means that once an airport is built, the community will maintain, or further develop the airport. Ten based aircraft have been used as a benchmark to identify communities which have the necessary activity to support a public airport, provided they do not already have reasonable access to another airport.

NPIAS Classifications and Entry Criteria

The following criteria are used to select and classify airports for inclusion in the NPIAS. This is summarized from FAA Order 5090-3C, "Field Formulation of the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS)," December 2000:

- Commercial service airports⁸
- Cargo service airports⁹
- Reliever airports¹⁰
- General Aviation airports – airports that do not receive scheduled commercial service or that do not meet the criteria for a commercial service or a reliever airport may be included in the NPIAS if they account for enough activity (usually at least 10 locally based aircraft) and are at least 20 miles (or a 30-minute drive time) from the nearest NPIAS airport.

The FAA provides specific NPIAS entry criteria for the various airport types. Those criteria are:

- Number of operations
- Number of based aircraft
- Number of enplanements
- Location relative to other NPIAS airports

Summary

Based on the 2007-2011 NPIAS report, Pennsylvania has a total of 64 AIP eligible NPIAS airports, 11 primary commercial service, five non-primary commercial service, 12 reliever and 36 GA airports. A table listing each of the AIP eligible Pennsylvania NPIAS airports and their respective year-five enplanement and/or based aircraft level from the 2007-2011 NPIAS report is included in Appendix 2.

⁸ Public airports with scheduled air service and having 2,500 or more annual enplaned passengers

⁹ Public airports served by aircraft providing air cargo transportation only, with an aggregate annual aircraft landed weight in excess of 100,000 lbs.

¹⁰ High capacity general aviation airports in major metropolitan areas designated as relievers by the FAA with 100 or more based aircraft or 25,000 annual itinerant operations