

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, pri-

vate 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

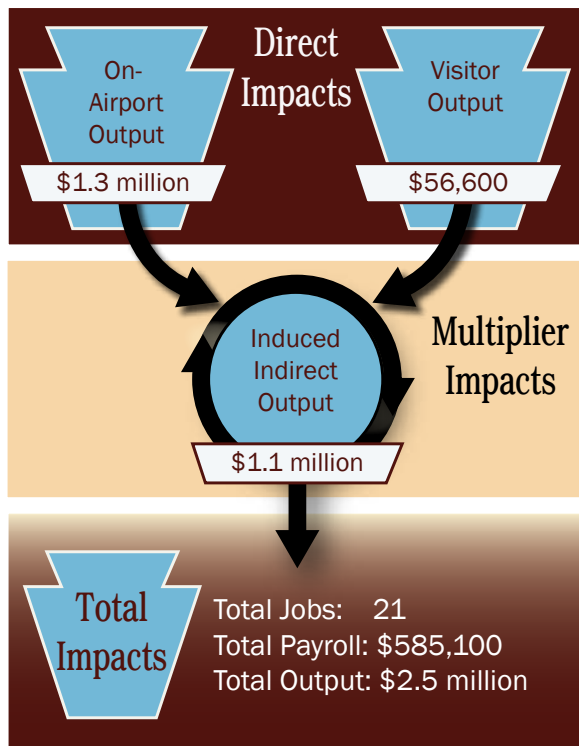
Study Process

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 Somerset County Airport



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

Somerset County Airport is located in the Township of Somerset, Pennsylvania, approximately 30 miles south of Johnstown. The airport is accessible via U.S. Route 219 and State Route 281.

Somerset County Airport is classified as a Basic airport by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Aviation. The airport is home to 29 based aircraft and experiences more than 21,000 annual operations. Somerset County Airport has two runways. The primary runway, Runway 07/25, is 5,002 feet long by 75 feet wide, while the secondary runway, Runway 14/32, is 2,695 feet long by 204 feet wide. The primary runway is outfitted with medium intensity runway lighting (MIRL). The airport is supported with four non-precision approaches (LOC RWY 25, NDB RWY 25, RNAV RWY 25, and RNAV RWY 07).

Somerset County Airport supports the general aviation needs of the local community and region. The airport sponsors the fixed base operator, offering fueling services, aircraft storage, flight training, aircraft rental, and modern terminal facilities. Aside from the FBO, there are two other aviation-related tenant businesses at the airport: Advanced Composite Technologies specializes in custom built aircraft, and Air Plex 281 offers on-site aviation maintenance.

Common activities at Somerset County Airport include recreational flying, particularly by ultra-light aircraft, and corporate flights. Major airport users include Center Rock Inc. and the Pennsylvania Air National Guard blackhawk helicopters, who practice flight approaches at the airport. Seasonal activity includes aerial agricultural spraying, aerial inspections, flight training, aerial sightseeing, and environmental/wildlife patrol. In addition, the airport is utilized for medical, law enforcement, and Civil Air Patrol operations.

Somerset Aero Club hosts a Father’s Day Fly-In event that brings an estimated 2,500 attendees annually. The event attracts both local area residents and pilots flying in from across the country. Pilots also use Somerset County Airport as a gateway to the county’s four state parks and the United Flight 93 Memorial National Park.

The airport is adjacent to an industrial park expected to be complete in late 2011. Between 10 and 20 businesses are anticipated, with the airport’s location being a major attraction.