

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

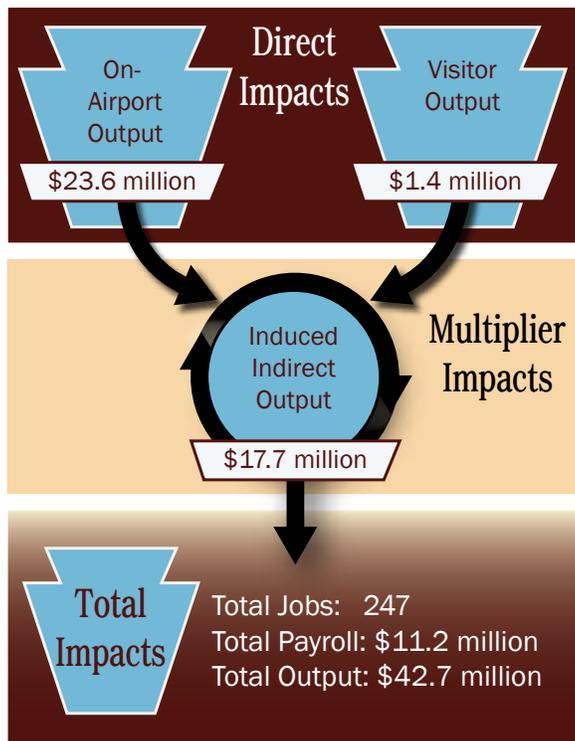
Study Process

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 Washington 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

Washington County Airport is located just southwest of Washington, Pennsylvania, approximately 30 miles south of Pittsburgh. Access to the airport is available via Interstate Highway 70 and State Route 18.

Washington County Airport is classified as an Advanced airport by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Aviation. The airport has 70 based aircraft and experiences more than 35,000 annual operations. The airfield’s only runway, Runway 9/27, is 5,004 feet long by 100 feet wide and outfitted with high intensity runway lighting (HIRL). The airport is served by a precision approach (ILS RWY 27) and two non-precision approaches (RNAV RWY 09 and RNAV RWY 27).

Washington County Airport supports the general aviation needs of the local community and surrounding region, and also serves as a reliever airport for Pittsburgh International Airport. The airport has a total of seven on-site business tenants, including two fixed base operators. Aero National doubles as an FBO and flight school, while Air Charter Service offers charter flights in addition to FBO services. Other on-site businesses specialize in aircraft maintenance, management, sales, and service.

Corporate flights are a daily activity at Washington County Airport. The airport has seen increased corporate activity due to Marcellus Shale energy companies using the facility, adding to the already high amount of business activity. The following companies utilize Washington County Airport with regular frequency:

- Washington/Penn Plastics (based corporate flight department)
- Chapman Corporation (based corporate flight department)
- Meadows Casino
- Tangier Outlets

In addition to corporate activity, emergency medical flights and recreational flying are daily activities at Washington County Airport. Flights by local law enforcement and training activities by the Pennsylvania Air National Guard are also common. Other frequent operations include aerial inspections, ad hoc air cargo flights, and seasonal agricultural spraying.

The Washington Flyers’ Club is based at the airport, and hosts an annual Ride Days to help promote aviation. The event typically attracts more than 100 attendees. The airport is also seen as a tourism gateway for area attractions such as Meadows Race Track and Casino, or for those arriving to hunt or ski in the area.