

LONG-TERM AIR TRANSPORTATION STUDY (LATS) Washington State Aviation Planning Council

PHASE III COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Updated February 2008

Public Communication or Public Involvement

The Governor-appointed Aviation Planning Council is committed to providing and implementing an intensive outreach effort throughout Phase III of the Washington State Long-Term Air Transportation Study (LATS).

The Council recognizes the WSDOT Planning Studies Guidelines “Public and Stakeholder Involvement” and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Advisory Circular (AC) No.150/5070-7 “The Airport System Planning and FAA’s Community Involvement Manual,” FAA-EE-90-03, which provides guidance on system planning public involvement and stakeholder consultation. The FAA Advisory Circular states specifically that:

Appropriate coordination of study drafts with the aviation public, community organizations, airport sponsors and users, and other interested parties is critical to the successful adoption and implementation of the final planning report. It is important that all affected or potentially affected parties perceive that the process is open, that the opportunity for participation exists, and that the study is designed to consider input from all of them.

The following plan embraces that philosophy to assure that the resultant system plan supports the public’s best interest.

The Plan serves three primary functions:

- 1) Outlines a variety of mechanisms that will enable the public to learn about, comment on, and contribute to the LATS Phase III project
- 2) Outlines the outreach goals and strategies of Aviation Planning Council
- 2) Outlines how WSDOT Aviation will support the Aviation Planning Council

The plan includes outreach activities throughout Phase III, which ends on July 1, 2009.

Background

In 2005, the governor signed into law Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 5121, which authorized a long-term air transportation planning study for general aviation and commercial airports statewide. The legislation is also known as the Washington State Long-Term Air Transportation Study (LATS).

The purpose of LATS is to understand what capacity currently exists in aviation facilities and what will be needed to meet future demand for air transportation. The law is comprised of the three distinct components and also contains a high-speed passenger rail assessment element.

Three Phase Approach to LATS

Phase I: What do we have?

Performed a statewide airport facilities and capacity assessment, including an analysis of current utilization.

*Completed
September 2006*

Phase II: What do we need?

Developed 25-year market forecasts of each airport in Washington State, including forecast of aircraft operations, passengers, and air cargo. In addition, the role of high-speed passenger rail was assessed for its ability to relieve future constraints in aviation system capacity

*Completed
July 2007*

Phase III: How will we get there?

The Washington State Aviation Planning Council will consider the LATS Phases I and II findings as well as public input. This data and information will be used to shape future aviation policy and recommend how best to meet the state's long-term commercial and general aviation airport needs consistent with ESSB 5121.

*To be completed
July 2009*

LATS is being developed in three phases. Each phase answers one of the three basic questions fundamental to the development of a systemwide approach to managing Washington's aviation resources.

Phase III: Washington State Aviation Planning Council

In August of 2007, the governor appointed a ten-member aviation planning council to provide recommendations for future airport strategy and investments statewide. Funding for this project is provided by the WSDOT multimodal fund, WSDOT Aviation funds, and grant funds from the FAA.

According to the legislation WSDOT shall provide all administrative and staff support for the Council (RCW 47.68.410)

The Council will work towards a common set of objectives to ensure a consistent and comprehensive approach to developing aviation system recommendations in accordance with state law (ESSB 5121) and Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5070-7 "The Airport System Planning Process."

The Council shall make its recommendations and submit its report to the legislature, governor, Transportation Commission, and regional transportation planning organizations by July 1, 2009. In accordance with ESSB 5121, the Council is required to:

- Make recommendations, based on the findings of the assessment and analysis completed under Phase I (RCW 47.68.390) and Phase II (RCW 47.68.400), regarding how best to meet the statewide commercial and general aviation capacity needs;
- Determine which regions of the state are in need of improvement regarding the matching of existing, or projected, airport facilities, and the long-range capacity needs at airports within the region expected to reach capacity before the year 2030;
- Make recommendations regarding the placement of future commercial and general aviation airport facilities designed to meet the need for improved aviation planning in the region; and
- Include public input in making final recommendations.

The Council's recommended policies and strategies for meeting future statewide aviation capacity needs will be based on the assessment and analysis completed during Phases I and II of LATS. In order for the Council to fulfill this mandate, they will have to be well informed as to both the nature of the specific issues and the implications of alternative strategies that might be pursued in order to address these issues.

The final Washington State Long-Term Air Transportation Plan will be based on action by the governor and legislature. The overall goal of any state airport system planning process is to ensure the statewide system of airports are safely, efficiently, and adequately serving immediate and long-term air transportation needs.

Council Membership

In accordance with ESSB 5121, the Washington State Aviation Planning Council consists of appointees from varying geographical areas and with diverse backgrounds. Council members are:

- Carol Moser - Member of the Transportation Commission (serves as Council Chair)
- John Sibold - Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Aviation Director
- Juli Wilkerson - Director of the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development
- John Townsley - Member of the general public (eastern Washington)
- Paul Roberts – Member of the general public (western Washington)
- David Field - FAA technical expert
- Gratton O. Sealock (Neal) - Commercial airport operator
- James McNamara - Member of the Growth Management Hearings Board
- Penelope Loomis - Washington Airport Management Association representative
- Donald Garvett - Airline representative

Biographies and contacts for each of the members are located [here](#).

The Council shall consist of ten Council members appointed by the governor for a two-year term beginning July 27, 2007. Council members will serve without compensation and may be re-appointed by the governor. Council members will elect a Vice-Chair at the initial meeting of the Council. If a Council member must resign for any reason, the governor shall appoint a replacement.

Situation Analysis

Washington's aviation system is a public-private partnership comprised of 141 public use airports in 2005. Airports are an essential component of Washington State's overall transportation system, providing critical links to people, goods, and services. They are a lifeline to and from isolated rural communities, especially for medical and emergency services, and enhance the quality of life for residents in their work and leisure. Additionally, airports allow for easy access by out-of-state visitors, supporting Washington's tourism business.

Airports play a vital role in the state's economy by facilitating jobs and commerce. Preliminary findings of the **2001 Aviation Forecast and Economic Analysis Study** conducted by Bucher Willis and Ratliff Corporation found the combined total for all airports in the system generated 171,311 jobs, over \$4 billion in wages and exceed \$18.5 billion in annual sales output. In spite of its importance to the state economy, inadequate planning, an antiquated funding base, a fluctuating economy, and local land use conflict threaten the long-term health of Washington's aviation system.

In 2004, WSDOT Aviation was requested by its Aviation Advisory Committee to address three questions:

- Is Washington positioned to respond to a rapidly changing aviation environment?
- Is Washington using its limited resources effectively and efficiently to meet the state's long-term interests in aviation? What should the key priorities be?
- What strategic changes need to be made to satisfy the state's aviation policy, i.e., preservation, safety, capacity, and environmental protection?

With the input of key stakeholders, including intensive work by study groups on system planning, education and outreach, and safety, WSDOT Aviation identified key issues and goals needed to satisfy Washington State's interest in a healthy aviation system. The study groups were comprised of local elected and planning officials, airport representatives, pilot organizations, universities, and members of the state legislature.

WSDOT's 1998 Aviation Policy Framework

It is in the state's interest that:

- Aviation facilities and services be preserved that provide access for all regions of the state to the nation's air transportation system, provide for emergency management, and support local economies.
- Transportation by air be safe.
- There be sufficient airport capacity to respond to growth in demand to ensure access across the state, the nation, and the world.
- Negative environmental impacts of airports on people and the natural environment be mitigated.

The Aviation Advisory Committee identified guiding principles:

- Maximizing value and impact of public investment in the aviation system statewide.
- Increasing consistency and collaboration between the FAA, State of Washington, and local aviation policies, rules, and regulations by class of airport, recognizing that different types of airports have different regulatory and policy needs.
- Assuring adequate capacity to accommodate future aviation system needs, especially through airport preservation and enhancement.
- Anticipating and strategically respond to emerging aviation system trends and issues.
- Striving to maintain serviceability and fairness in current public investments in the aviation system, taking into account different classes of airports.

The Aviation Advisory Committee also identified the need for additional data, necessary to better define the system and its strategic priorities, including:

- Gaps in availability of aviation facilities for emergency medical, fire fighting, disaster relief, national defense, and air taxi needs.
- System wide performance, role, and interrelationship of airports.
- Future capacity needs.
- Projected cargo needs.
- Gaps in airport capacity that may inhibit economic development of rural areas, or that prevent full participation of rural communities in political processes at the state level.
- Reliever airports that are necessary to meet general aviation (GA) needs near large commercial airports, which if unmet would increase congestion at the commercial airports.
- Capacity of reliever airports to continue to meet the demands of GA aircraft.

It is in response to these recommendations and the subsequent legislative direction set forth in ESSB 5121 that LATS is being conducted.

Public Outreach / Public Involvement Objectives

LATS is a three phase approach to determine “what we have, what we need, and how we get there” in terms of air transportation capacity in Washington State. It is important

to be proactive about communicating this message. The Council will work towards the following outreach objectives:

- Increase public awareness about the project.
- Prevent surprises: actively engage the public.
- Minimize and correct any misrepresentations about what the study is and what it is not.
- Promote use of the Web as primary source of information.
- Document stakeholder/public involvement.
- Minimize and correct any misrepresentations in media coverage.
- Engage the public in decision-making and gather concerns, questions, and ideas.



Study Team Role:

Equip the Council with tools and resources to accomplish its mission.

- Coordinate with the Council to develop meeting agendas that support the Council's work program and decision process. (*The Council chair reviews, edits, and approves all agendas. Agendas are derived from the Council work program that is continually reviewed by council*).
- Provide detailed summaries of Council meetings, which are reviewed and revised by the chair and approved by the Council.
- Support Council's public outreach goals to encourage feedback and participation throughout the process.
- Assure that the Council deliberations are accessible to the public via the WSDOT Aviation Web site.
- Develop a report that summarizes the recommendations of the Aviation Planning Council.
- Provide the Council and the Chair with timely policy and technical information necessary for the Council to fulfill its mandated responsibilities.
- Help build public awareness of the LATS process, and facilitate public involvement around the issues being addressed by the Aviation Planning Council.
- Conduct additional technical studies that may be required for the Council to fulfill its mandated responsibilities.

Council Role

The Aviation Planning Council plays a unique and critical role by both guiding public outreach efforts of WSDOT Aviation, as well as conducting its own community outreach. As outlined in its Charter, members of the Council are committed to:

- Credibly represent their respective interest groups, but also be able to take a “system” perspective of needs throughout the state aviation system.
- Participate in outreach to their constituency groups and throughout the community.



According to the Governor’s Office, Council members may speak to their constituents about the council’s work and seek feedback. However, when speaking specifically about the council, it is important to stay on message. Members should also refer to the materials handed out at the Governor’s training course and the Boards & Commissions handbook for more information.

Key Audiences

A diverse group of stakeholders has interest in the LATS Phase III project and in the work of the Aviation Planning Council. The following table summarizes potential stakeholder groups, identifies overall concerns associated with the project and suggests outreach tools to address concerns and ensure participation in the process. The table will be updated throughout the project as new stakeholders are identified and new concerns and tools emerge. The Aviation Planning Council approved the following list:

Audience	Priority Concerns	Outreach Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governor ○ Legislature ○ Transportation Commission ○ Airports / Sponsors ○ Urban communities ○ Rural communities ○ Cities, towns, counties ○ General Aviation pilots ○ Airlines ○ Airline passengers ○ Regional Transportation Planning Organizations/ Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs/MTPOs) ○ Business communities ○ Business aviation ○ Association of Washington Cities ○ Association of counties ○ Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association (WA-APA) ○ Passenger rail ○ Freight ○ Environmental ○ Neighborhood associations ○ Special interest groups ○ Aviation Advisory Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adequate background information about state aviation system and policies ○ Adequate background and technical information regarding LATS ○ Delivery of technically sound system plan to be used for the basis of making long-term airport investment decisions ○ Local constituent concerns ○ Intermodal integration and efficiency ○ Data collection/airport inventory and overall fact finding data reported accurately ○ Opportunity to contribute to a comprehensive plan for future airport development ○ Impacts of capacity recommendations ○ Impacts on airport planning and investment ○ Land use conflicts ○ Noise ○ Relationship to local land uses ○ Economic development ○ Funding ○ Emergency access ○ Community impacts ○ Airport maintenance ○ Funding of airport maintenance ○ Funding equity ○ Availability of airports ○ Stability of Search and Rescue functions ○ Impact on long-term facility and services planning ○ Taxes ○ Costs ○ Consistency with regional/metropolitan transportation ○ Impact on transportation facilities ○ Economic development ○ Impacts on costs of doing business ○ Impacts on distribution systems ○ Social issues ○ Transportation system integration ○ Capital facility ○ High-speed passenger rail connectivity with major urban areas ○ Alternate modes of transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing coordination with key audiences ○ Regularly scheduled Council meetings ○ Prepare briefing items in advance ○ Provide technical expertise and resources ○ Clear messaging about legislative directives and expectations ○ Initial interviews to gain perspective of expectations ○ Ongoing coordination with legislative and Governor's staff ○ Regular briefings ○ Start early and disseminate study goals, objectives, and tasks early ○ Clear messaging about study purpose and outcomes as well as what the study does not include ○ Multiple opportunities for involvement ○ Easily accessible information, presented in simple formats – leverage Web site and existing aviation forums associations/meetings ○ Outreach to identify deficiencies in aviation airports ○ Clarity about how designation hierarchy works ○ Involvement in any recommendations about aviation funding ○ Clear information about decision process

Key Messages

Critical

Washington's aviation system faces a growing crisis, due to growth pressures, uncertainty about future funding, and changes in the aviation industry. The system connects Washington's communities, no matter how remote, and drives Washington's economic health.

Deliberative

To effectively meet Washington's long-term air transportation needs, decision makers will use systematic and objective information to identify future aviation system needs, along with different ways to meet those needs.

Fair

The Council will consider the aviation needs of very diverse communities, who rely on aviation in very different ways, and will assure that future decisions address social and environmental concerns along with access and capacity needs.

Team Members and Affiliations

WSDOT Aviation Team

John Shambaugh, Project Manager
Nisha Marvel, Communications and Public Outreach

Consultant Team

SH&E

Dave Hollander, Vice President
Sonjia Murray, Director
Helen Lin, Senior Analyst

PRR

Rita Brogan, CEO
Steve Smith, Associate
Kimbra Wellock, Associate

URS

John Yarnish, Principal Airport Planner

WHP

David Williams, Project Manager
Sara Funk, Senior Professional

Public Communications Tools and Tasks

Media Releases – Continuous through project

Media releases will be issued at key milestones in the progress of Phase III to announce dates of public outreach meetings and key Council news and findings. All news releases will reinforce the key messages outlined in this communication plan. WSDOT will distribute releases through its Aviation News Service (serving about 6,000 subscribers) and Web site. The Council will distribute the releases to their respective contacts and constituents.

WSDOT and its consultant team have lists of priority and regional media outlets. Additions to this list are encouraged and will be made throughout the process.

Public Information Materials – Continuous throughout project

Print materials will be made available to support the Aviation Planning Council and the public. WSDOT will use its Web site for distribution of the materials presented to the Council and any additional public outreach documents.

Web Site – Continuous throughout project

The WSDOT Aviation Web site will feature a special section dedicated to LATS that will include media releases, links to relevant publications, links to Aviation Planning Council summaries, information on Phase III progress, and opportunities for public involvement. Throughout the study process, WSDOT Aviation will post finalized working papers, presentation materials, and other related reports. There will also be an interactive area for periodic public comment and the ability to sign up for notification of meetings, reports, presentations, etc.

Along with updating the LATS Web site, WSDOT is finalizing the release of an updated system plan database with improved airport facility and capacity information and forecasts based on LATS findings.

WSDOT staff maintains the site, but the content is derived from the Council work program.

E-Newsletter – four throughout Phase III

E-Newsletters will be issued to WSDOT Aviation's extensive database of aviation stakeholders to announce opportunities for public input, and to inform the public about Council events, milestones, and findings during Phase III. WSDOT anticipates distributing at least four newsletters, with at least one accompanying the release of the Phase III system plan/final report by July 1, 2009.

E-newsletters will be posted on WSDOT's Web site and distributed through its listserve and the distribution lists of the Council.

Aviation Planning Council Meetings / Workshops – Scheduled for the 1st Thursday of every month (Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Aug, Sept, Nov 2008 & Feb and May 2009)

All meetings of the Aviation Planning Council will be open to the public. Up to ten minutes will be allocated at the beginning of each meeting for public comment. Each person will be allowed up to two minutes to speak. The times and dates of all meetings will be posted on the WSDOT Aviation Web site, along with meeting summaries and resource documents. Approximately ten minutes will be given for public comment at each meeting and workshop.

Regional Public Meetings – July and October 2008

As in Phases I and II, WSDOT will host four public outreach meeting in Phase III to provide information on key milestone and solicit feedback. WSDOT anticipates two public meetings – one on the east side and one on the west – during the midpoint of the study. Two final meetings – on the east and west sides – will also be held at the end of the process to solicit input on the draft Council recommendations prior to their submission to the governor. Regional meetings will be publicized through WSDOT's

Web site, listserv, and distributions lists of individual Council members. Media releases will also be distributed.

Online Survey – March 2009

To obtain feedback on Phase III efforts, WSDOT will conduct an online survey using Knowledge Networks, which has a scientifically selected sample of Washington State households (including those without computers or the Internet) to which it has provided online access. This sample totals more than 1,000 Washington State residents. Its proprietary methodology combines probability sampling (RDD) and the Internet to incorporate the views and opinions of a representative sample of Washington residents. The 15-minute survey will assess public opinion on the issues discussed during Phase III by the Council. Because it is in a visual format, the questionnaire can include some static graphics, such as maps or charts.



Electronic Town Halls – July and October 2008

Two, 60-minute Electronic Town Hall meetings will be held online, via a moderated session with 150 participants each, who would be recruited from Knowledge Network's panel sample. They will be provided a stipend for their participation. The meetings will be timed to support the deliberations of the Aviation Planning Council. Subject to further discussion with the Council, the first meeting could focus on the problem definition phase of the planning process, the second meeting could focus on policy tradeoffs, and the third could consider the system investment alternatives. One advantage of the online format is improved sample representation and the capability of including visual and graphic displays along with complex policy alternatives.

Briefings to Organizations – as requested

WSDOT Aviation will be available to present information on study issues or Council findings when requested by local jurisdictions, airport sponsors, and aviation stakeholder groups. To the extent possible and practical WSDOT will try to accommodate a group's request for a briefing. Briefings can be scheduled by contacting Nisha Marvel at aviation@wsdot.wa.gov or 360-651-6310.

Coordination with Regional Transportation/Metropolitan Planning Organizations - Ongoing

The participation of RTPOs and MPOs will continue to be actively sought during Phase III. In addition to including these organizations in the ongoing program outreach, the project team will seek to brief RTPOs at their quarterly coordination meetings in February, May, August, and November.

Aviation Technical Advisory Committee (ATAC) - Ongoing

The ATAC is staffed with professionals possessing technical knowledge and expertise on multi-modal transportation issues, aviation system planning, airport operations, current and future industry trends, and market and capacity needs. They have provided important review and guidance during Phases I and II and will be available to the Council on follow-up issues or for further review of technical information.