



## **Executive Summary LATS Online Survey**

WSDOT Aviation

August 2006

### **Purpose & Methodology**

The Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has begun Phase I of a three-year comprehensive airport system study to guide and coordinate future investments in Washington's public use airports. The purpose of the statewide Long-term Air Transportation Study (LATS) is to examine our state's aviation system and develop a plan for longer term strategic investments in the system.

Phase I of the study includes outreach to airport users, managers, customers and the general public to gauge their awareness of local airport facilities, the problems they face and the important role they play in their communities. This survey follows-up on questions taken from extensive phone interviews with key stakeholders in June and July. An online survey was developed and emailed to the WSDOT Aviation Division's database and a link was posted to the WSDOT Aviation Division's website. The Aviation Division database consists primarily of general aviation pilots and airport managers. A total of 523 responses were completed and collected between August 10, 2006 and August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Following is an analysis of the responses:

### **Survey Highlights**

- 34% of those responding had heard of the LATS but over 84% had never visited the website.
- 90% of the respondents were GA Pilots, followed by the general public (14.8%), local business/other industry (11.3%) and elected, government or public agency representatives (5%). Multiple responses were given of a respondent's role.
- Nearly all respondents (99%) were aware of the airports serving their communities.
- Respondents overwhelmingly (92%) preferred email as the communication method for receiving LATS updates and information, followed by the LATS website (13%)
- Respondents were located in Vancouver, Washington, Spokane with the majority residing in the Puget Sound/Olympia region.
- Over 70% of respondents feel that there would be strong community opposition to airport expansion in their communities.
- 72% of respondents feel that adequacy of local airport funding was the most important issue for securing the future of local airports followed closely by the level of aviation service to their community at 68%.
- Land use constraints were viewed as the most challenging issue for securing the future of local airports with 44% of the respondents but only 56% felt it was an important issue for securing the future of local airports.
- Over 68% of respondents believe that local airports are well maintained. However, over 56% still feel local airports need improvements.

## Key Findings

**Question 10:** The following questions relate to issues that could pose challenges for airports in Washington today. For the community in which you either live or work, please rate how challenging the following issues are from 1 to 4, where 1 is not a challenge at all and 4 is a major challenge. Then indicate how important these issues are in securing the future of your community's airports, where 1 is not at all important and 4 is very important.

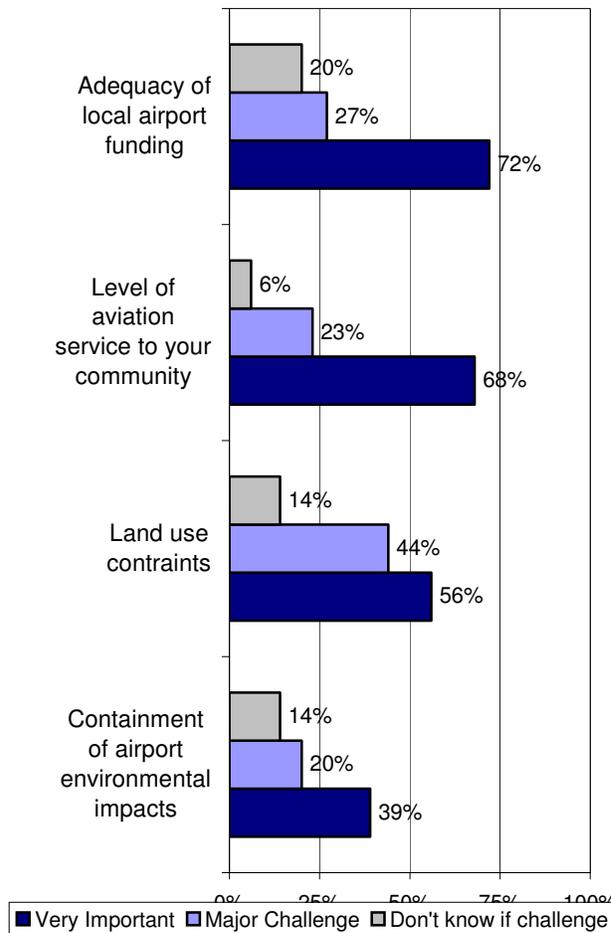
### **Adequacy of local airport funding is considered the most challenging and most important issue in securing the future of local airports.**

When asked to rate the importance of certain issues that pose challenges for securing the future of their local airports, respondents rate the adequacy of local airport funding (72%) and the level of aviation service to their community (68%) as the most important. However, land use constraints are viewed as the most challenging issue (44%), while being moderately rated as important (56%) for securing the future of their community airport.

While land use constraints were viewed as the most challenging issue, over half of the respondents felt that the level of aviation service to their community was also a challenge.

Containment of airport environmental impacts did not rate as highly as the other issues in challenges and importance. It should, however, be noted that 44% felt that it was a challenge while 14% didn't know if it was a challenge. 65% felt it was important to securing the future of local airports.

It should also be noted that while most of the respondents indicated the adequacy of local airport funding was very important, a fifth of them (20%) indicated they *did not know* if this posed a challenge for their local airport.



**Question 11:** Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following

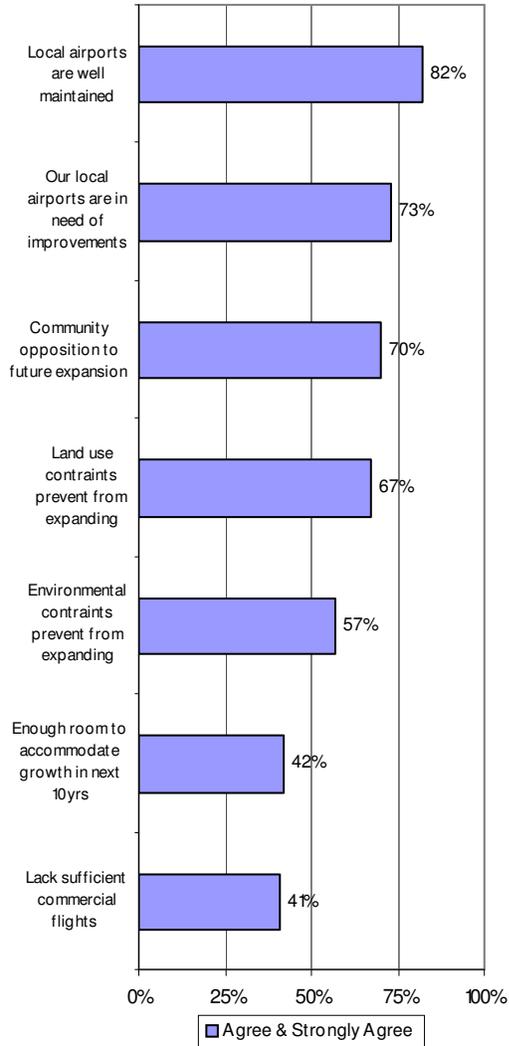
**70% of the respondents either agree or strongly agree that there is community opposition to future expansion of local airports.**

There is also strong agreement (67%) that land use constraints will also pose problems for future local airport expansion. Together, community opposition and land use constraints could make it difficult to make needed improvements at local airports.

**There is strong agreement that local airports are well maintained, but are also in need of improvements.**

More than three fourths (83%) of the respondents either agree or strongly agree that local airports are well maintained. However, almost the same number (73%) agreed or strongly agreed that local airports are in need of improvements.

There is less concern about environmental constraints, as just over half (57%) agree that environmental constraints prevent airports from expanding in their communities. There is also less concern about having sufficient room for expansion and having enough commercial flights service their local airports is not viewed as a problem.



### About the Respondents

Most respondents were GA pilots and members of the general public. Very few elected officials or government agency representatives participated in the survey. Almost all (99.6%) were aware of their local aviation facilities.

#### Role in Aviation (multiple responses allowed)

General Aviation Pilot	90.6%
General Public	14.8%
Other	12.6%

Local business/private Industry	11.3%
Airline employee	4.8%
Local government official	2.7%
Local Elected Official	1.5%
State agency	1.1%
Planning Agency (RTPO/MPO)	.4%

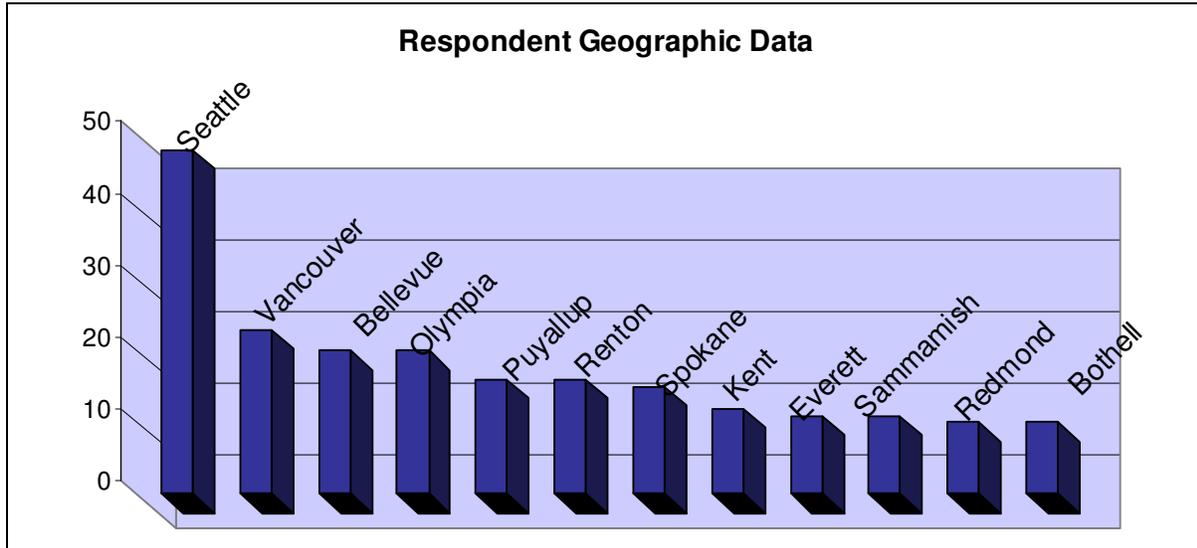
***There is limited awareness of LATS***

Almost all the respondents are 99.6% aware of the airports that serve their community, including commercial service and general aviation facilities. However, prior to this survey only 34% of the respondents were aware of LATS. Even fewer respondents (16%) have visited the LATS section of the WSDOT Aviation website.

***Email is the preferred communication method***

Three quarters (76%) of the respondents are currently members of the *Aviation News Service*, which is the WSDOT Aviation email notification service. When asked specifically how they would like to be informed of LATS as it progresses, most all (92%) of the respondents preferred to be informed via email. The second most preferred communication method was via the WSDOT aviation website (13%).

***Zipcode Data***



Seattle	48	Mount Vernon	3	Monroe	1
Vancouver	23	Ocean Shores	3	Nine Mile Falls	1
Bellevue	20	Pasco	3	Odessa	1
Olympia	20	Tukwila	3	Orting	1
Puyallup	16	Wenatchee	3	Port Ludlow	1
Renton	16	Battleground	2	Portland	1
Spokane	15	Bremerton	2	Poulsbo	1
Bothell	9	Camano Island	2	Prosser	1
Kent	12	Cashmere	2	Rainier	1
Everett	11	College Place	2	Randle	1
Sammamish	11	Ferndale	2	Republic	1
Redmond	10	Graham	2	Ritzville	1
Edmonds	9	Hoquiam	2	Seabeck	1
Kirkland	9	Kenmore	2	South Bend	1
Woodinville	9	Lakewood	2	Spangle	1
Auburn	8	Lopez Island	2	Steilacoom	1
Bellingham	8	North Bend	2	Stratford	1
Lake Stevens	8	Okanogon	2	Sumner	1
Port Angeles	8	Port Townsend	2	Sunnyside	1
Anacortes	7	Pullman	2	Vaughn	1
Friday Harbor	7	Seatac	2	White Salmon	1
Issaquah	7	Silverdale	2	Wilkeson	1
Walla Walla	7	University Place	2	Winthrop	1
Arlington	6	Washougal	2	Woodland	1
Mukilteo	6	Yakima	2	Yelm	1
Port Orchard	6	Aberdeen	1	Aberdeen	1
Richland	6	Ashford	1	Ashford	1
Gig Harbor	5	Belfair	1	Belfair	1
Kennewick	5	Benton City	1	Benton City	1
Sequim	5	Buckley	1	Buckley	1
Snohomish	5	Burlington	1	Burlington	1
Tacoma	5	Carnation	1	Carnation	1
Bonney Lake	4	Chelan	1	Chelan	1
Burien	4	Cheney	1	Cheney	1
Eastsound	4	Cinebar	1	Cinebar	1
Federal Way	4	Colfax	1	Colfax	1
Lynnwood	4	Concrete	1	Concrete	1
Maple Valley	4	Conway	1	Conway	1
Moses Lake	4	Duvall	1	Duvall	1
Oak Harbor	4	Ellensburg	1	Ellensburg	1
Shoreline	4	Fox Island	1	Fox Island	1
Stanwood	4	Hansville	1	Hansville	1
Bainbridge Island	3	Kelso	1	Kelso	1
Blaine	3	Longview	1	Longview	1
Chehalis	3	Maple Falls	1	Maple Falls	1
Clarkston	3	Marysville	1	Marysville	1
Enumclaw	3	Mattawa	1	Mattawa	1
Ephrata	3	Medical Lake	1	Medical Lake	1
Lacey	3	Medina	1	Medina	1
Mercer Island	3	Milton	1	Milton	1

## LATS Feedback and Comments

We need an airport serving the eastside for general aviation. 4000 foot runway with an IFR approach. Running out of space at BFI and RNT. Airport should be built in Fall city or close northbend. Real lack since Bellevue shut down. Need to be a priority. Close down Bandera State... not a good runway even in the driest summer.

If it gets any more money out of the legislature for local airports, I'm all for it!

The Study appears to be very comprehensive, almost too detailed.

TOTAL waste of time.

The map of WA airports is potentially extremely useful. Unfortunately, you have to increase the magnification a LOT to read the map. When you do that the map is not very readable.

informative

I'm encouraged to know that WSDOT and Wash state are working on this before it becomes a crisis.

Anything that can be done to promote and support general aviation is good.

The information is incomplete, inaccurate (slanted), & late. E.g., the Legislature did not "request" the Aviation Division to conduct the study -- the Legislature \*directed\* you by statute law to do the study.

Sounds good

It is unclear how the LATS team intends to incorporate information from industry regarding new technologies and systems available today. My company has worked for the past 10+ years with NASA, the FAA, and the Florida Department of Transportation leading a research team in the development of new systems for GA airports. When I asked to brief the LATS team, I was told they were not interested in briefings, but at Phase 3 of the LATS project I could submit a proposal. A proposal is too late! Your team needs to be aware of what is available so that they can adequately plan and direct the systems the State of Washington desires for their airports. If they are faced with evaluating a proposal full of systems about which they know nothing, how can they adequately represent the state, the flying public and the citizens of Washington? It appears to be a flawed process.

This is a well-thought-out study that should provide substantial input to regional air transportation planners and community leaders.

It appears WSDOT has well developed, realistic plans, particularly when compared to other areas with which I am familiar.

Only that Aviation service are needed and LATS is a good start.

WSDOT has a very good, functional, informative website

Don't let them ever shutdown TIW!

Informative, could use a bit more jazzing up for readability.

Sorry, don't remember.

Ground transportation to and from aviation facilities has become a large problem. I believe airport funding is a high priority for Washington, but also, access to and the facility with public high speed ground transportation is also of issue. As I live in Seattle, the trip via car up I-5 to Arlington Airport has become very crowded and undesirable. I may consider using closer airport facilities for my general aviation needs such as KPAE and KBF1 because of this.

Yes, we need an airport in Clark County. The FAA is willing to invest in a new airport and the need to site on before all the land is houses.

Please do not shortchange the General Aviation community in your evaluation or recommendations.

I filled out the survey of our Airport Facilities in response to the LATS request.

Number one concern is developments that approach existing airports and eventually threaten closure of the airports. Usually the airport is operating long before the developments are a threat. This should not be.

Glad to see it.

Appears to be oriented to those with business interest / ownership in airport.

We need to keep airports open, and make general public aware of how they benefit from these local airports.

Auburn Airport really needs an instrument approach - nay help the state could provide would be much appreciated.

I don't visit it as often as I should. Would it be possible for you to send an email to the aviation community after posting major updates to the Web site?

Studies, with the high winds that we often get in the Tri-Cities area, we do not have good runway line-up with the wind. At RLD the wind is often in between 19 and 25. The old runway was 22 and that was just about perfect.

It is very informative and user friendly.

good and necessary effort in face of pressure on our airports

Yes, General Aviation and the supporting infrastructure is vital to the future of flight