

Aviation Planning Council Update

What is the Long-Term Air Transportation Study (LATS)?

LATS was authorized in 2005 by ESSB 5121 to plan for Washington State's long-term general aviation and commercial aviation capacity needs. LATS includes three phases:

- Phase I (*completed in September 2006*): Assessed the existing facilities and capacity at the state's airports.
- Phase II (*completed in July 2007*): Included long-range activity forecasts for each airport, market analyses of the commercial airports, a high-speed rail evaluation, air cargo study, and future airport capacity assessment.
- Phase III (*present-July 1, 2009*): Governor Gregoire formed a 10-member Aviation Planning Council to review the fact finding in Phases I and II and determine long-term airport development priorities to guide investment decisions and shape statewide policy.

WSDOT, along with consultants SH&E, PRR, URS and W& H Pacific, conducted the analyses and forecasting in Phases I and II, and currently serve as staff to the Council.

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.

What is the role of the Washington Aviation Planning Council?

As stated in ESSB 5121, the Aviation Planning Council is charged with using LATS Phases I and II data and public input to determine:

- How best to meet commercial and general aviation capacity needs.
- 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 2030.
- Recommendations regarding the placement of future commercial or general aviation facilities to meet the need for improved aviation planning in the region.

The Council's final recommendations will be submitted to the Governor, Washington State Legislature, regional transportation planning organizations and Washington State Transportation Commission by July 1, 2009.

Who is on the aviation planning council?

- Carol Moser, Transportation Commission (serves as Council Chair)
- John Sibold, WSDOT Aviation Director
- Larry Williams, Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development
- John Townsley, General public east
- Paul Roberts, General public west
- Dave Field, FAA technical expert
- Neal Sealock, Commercial airport operator
- Jim McNamara, Growth Management Hearings Board
- Penni Loomis, Washington Airport Management
- Don Garvett, Airline representative

What did we learn from LATS Phases I and II?

- Significant capacity constraints are anticipated by 2030. Airfield capacity constraints are expected to emerge at ten airports, mostly in Puget Sound.
- Several of these are among the state's busiest airports including Sea-Tac, Boeing Field, and Harvey Field.
- Approximately one-quarter of Washington's public-use airports are expected to have aircraft storage capacity shortfalls by 2030.
- Passenger rail improvements will not provide meaningful capacity relief to the air transportation system.
- Trends contributing to the loss of service at smaller commercial service airports are expected to continue through 2030.
- The loss of airports could reduce available capacity in high-growth regions.

What is the Council's process for making recommendations?

The Council has met nine times at meetings held throughout the state. All meetings have been open to the public. The Council's work effort has included:

- Reviewing Phases I and II results and learning from aviation industry experts.
- Developing a list of key issues and challenges facing the state aviation system.
- Formulating draft statewide aviation guiding principles and policies that were forwarded to the public for input.
- Developing evaluation criteria for draft aviation alternative strategies.
- Producing draft aviation alternative strategies in the areas of capacity, land use and stewardship.

The draft aviation alternative strategies are currently out for public review until April 17.

What are the draft aviation alternative strategies?

Please visit <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/NR/rdonlyres/7DEB75EF-F2E0-425B-8013-3D0486021FA6/0/FinalWorkbook.pdf>, or see the attached fact sheet for a list of the draft alternative strategies.

Do the draft strategies reference specific airports?

Capacity forecasts indicate that there are several locations that will be at or approaching capacity limits by 2030, including Spokane, the Tri-Cities, the Puget Sound Region and several other areas. We know where the capacity constraints are and where capacity exists.

The Council is considering a range of potential strategies, from administrative changes to ways of increasing capacity.

The Council is eager to receive public input before it meets in May to develop its advisory recommendations to the Governor and Legislature.

Is the public involved in making recommendations?

Public involvement and outreach has been a high priority throughout the LATS and Aviation Planning Council process. Public outreach has included statewide open houses, online surveys, electronic town halls, briefings, news releases, public meetings, etc. The Council is required to use public input when making its final recommendations to the Governor.

What are the next steps?

The Aviation Planning Council met for the last time on May 26 at the Museum of Flight in Seattle. During that meeting, the Council will review public comments on the draft alternatives, and approved guiding principles, policies and recommendations. Final recommendations will be forwarded to the Governor on July 1, 2009.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON LATS, CONTACT NISHA MARVEL,
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