

1. Customer satisfaction is key to WSDOT registration program amnesty period

The goal of making sure aircraft owners and pilots are registered with the state is not just about collecting fees. It also builds positive relationships with the aviation community, according to Nisha Hanchinamani, manager of the Aircraft and Pilot Registration program of the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) Aviation. That's one reason why WSDOT Aviation has begun making available to pilots and aircraft owners user-friendly on-line registration and providing them a 90 day "customer friendly" amnesty period that allows aviators to discharge registration fees before a July 1 deadline to legally comply.

By law, Washington state requires pilots, aircraft owners and mechanics to register annually with WSDOT Aviation. Presently, about 4,000 aircraft owners register each year with WSDOT. Another 10,000 owners in the state don't. Some 4,000 pilots register with the state. About 20,000 more don't.

To inform people about the law, the registration process and the benefits of registration, WSDOT launched its customer friendly information effort. Hanchinamani and other WSDOT staff also are busy partnering with state agencies, associations and others to get that message out.

Why now?

WSDOT customers, like pilot and airport organizations, along with elected officials have asked for better enforcement of registration. Aviation listened and is now working with the Washington State Legislature to improve enforcement capabilities. In collaborating with the Washington State Senate, WSDOT helped create Senate Bill 5961 to remove the criminal consequences of not being registered and instead makes compliance a civil penalty.

A companion bill, SB 6056, also provides solutions clients want to see in better enforcement of the registration law. If passed, it would mandate that WSDOT Aviation be informed of a change in ownership of a registered aircraft within 30 days. Aircraft owners also must show proof of registration when leasing hanger or tie down space at state municipal or port district airports.

Why is registering so important to the aviation public?

First of all, it's the law (RCW 47.68.233) Secondly, registration fees will go directly to support aviation educational outreach programs, as well as the state's air search and rescue operations, and maintenance of public use airports throughout Washington State.

When do I have to register?

You need to be registered when you first solo, and renew annually during your birth month. New resident pilots need to register within 30 days. Registration renewal forms are mailed two weeks prior to your expiration date once you are on the list.

Other benefits for registering?

As a Washington State registered pilot you will receive a free 137 page Pilots Guide filled with information on Washington Airports, invitations to attend free training seminars and refresher courses and a quarterly newsletter full of information pertaining to Washington Aviation.

How do I register?

- **On-line**, go to the Aviation web page at www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation and follow the procedures. Submit your form with your credit card information on WSDOT's secure server. The registration card can be printed from a personal printer.
- **By mail**, send the completed form and a check for \$8.00 to:
WSDOT Aviation
PO Box 3367
Arlington, WA 98223-3367
- **To register in person**, Send the completed form and a check for \$8.00 to:
WSDOT Aviation
PO Box 3367
Arlington, WA 98223-3367
- **For more information**, call WSDOT at (360) 651-6300 or in state, (800) 552-0666.

2. Aviation receives praise for registration program

Pilot Bob Lyon e-mailed WSDOT's Olympia office about the WSDOT and pilot registration. Here's what he had to say:

"While I'm not a big fan of the legal requirement, my Washington State pilot registration is one of the best aviation values I know of. Well worth the \$8 fee. In particular, the Washington airport guide is one of the most useful cockpit aviation publications (in the cockpit or on the ground) I have.

Thanks very much to those who put together and publish the guide, as well as everything else WSDOT provides for pilots in Washington. Great website, too.

3.Kudos to Washington Pilots Association

The benefits of partnering with the state’s aviation community were evidenced in the April-May issue of the Washington Pilots Association newspaper.

On Page 1 of the recent “Wings” publication were pilot and aircraft registration information provided by the WSDOT.

“This is what we mean by ‘getting the word out,’” John Sibold, WSDOT Aviation director says. “We really appreciate having WPA ‘s support and assistance in providing its membership the news they need to know including the registration program.”

The admiration must be mutual. In a box above the registration information, the Association, and President H. Allen Smith, said: “WPA supports the efforts by the WSDOT to enforce pilot and aircraft registration; to more uniformly spread the burden of financial support for aviation.”

4.In the “other” Washington

While members of WSDOT were busy in Olympia providing testimony and briefing materials to the state’s Transportation Committees on Senate Bills 5961 and 6056, its director, John Sibold, was busy on Capital Hill in the “other Washington.”

Primary goal of the trip was to guarantee the continuation of the non-primary entitlement program to Congress and to members of the National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO) at its Legislative conference held in March.

Part of AIR 21 entitlement program, the non-primary entitlement program is a high priority in providing funding opportunities to Washington state’s (National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) airports. According to Sibold, the federal money, which now supports federally eligible airports up to \$150,000 for pavement maintenance, is vital to the integrity of all general aviation airports in this state. Without it, many airports could not survive on the small budget of services provided by WSDOT.

This money is very, very important to our clients,” Sibold said. “For aviation in Washington state to remain vital, we need to leverage federal money into aviation needs here.”

Sibold’s efforts paid off. NASAO conference attendees approved the AIR 21 reauthorization recommendations, including non-primary entitlement funding recommendations. His efforts also succeeded with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) aviation committee. The committee, representing all 50 states, also agreed to adopt the NASAO position on AIR 21 reauthorization and entitlement funding.

Sibold did not stop there. He also met to discuss Washington state objectives on the AIR 21 reauthorization recommendations with Congressman Rick Larson, (D, Second District – WA), who sits on the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; and Congressman Jim Oberstar’s office (D-MN) Ranking Minority Member on Committee. Some of the people who actually write the legislation drafts – David Heymsfeld, Minority Staff Director for the Committee; and David Schaffer, Chief Counsel on the House Aviation Subcommittee – got visits from Sibold, too.

NASAO’s AIR 21 recommendations include:

- ❑ Reauthorization at a level no less than \$3.5 billion in 2004.
- ❑ No subsidy of security costs through Airport Improvement Funds (AIP).
- ❑ Continued funding of the Small Community Air Service Program.
- ❑ Continuation of Non-Primary Entitlement Program intended to provide assistance to general aviation airports.
- ❑ Minimum funding of \$120 million a year for Essential Air Service Program.
- ❑ Allow states to determine the highest and best priorities for state apportionment funds.
- ❑ Continue Contract Tower Program.
- ❑ Allow flexible financing methods for smaller airports.

For more information about these funding recommendations, go to <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation/News/FundingRecommend.htm> on the Internet.

5. Aviation sends project list to Congress

A \$5.1 million aviation project list has been finalized for fiscal year 2004. The development projects, which focuses on security and safety lighting projects at system airports, goes next to Congress. The projects were identified via individual airport plans and compiled into the state system plan. Several dozen airports will reap the benefits of the project list if recommendations are passed.

6. Airport web cams are becoming a reality

It was recently reported that Arlington Airport has its web cam up and running, providing pilots with a real-time snapshot of what’s going on at the airport and automated weather reports. Since then, WSDOT personnel have met with the Washington State Patrol (WSP) to install a web cam at the Olympia Regional Airport.

Once WSP officials give the project the nod, the web cam will be mounted with a power and telephone tie-in. The Port of Olympia already has approved the project.

The Jefferson County International Airport also will soon have a web cam up and a 1-800 number available providing pilots better access to the airfield. The Port of Port Townsend, owner of the airport building the camera will be installed on, recently okayed the project. Yakima and Moses Lake also are discussing the use of web cams at their airports.

WSDOT is funding the project and believes the web cam is an investment in pilot safety. If successful, web cam access will give pilots real-time airport information similar to what WSDOT offers highway commuters. To check out the experimental web cam program, visit www.WSDOT.wa.gov/aviation.

7. Cell phone towers and air space

The City of Yakima is considering the installation of a cell tower near its Yakima Air Terminal at McAllister Field. Located nearby is the state-owned Tieton State airfield. WSDOT Aviation has asked Yakima city officials to demonstrate that the cell tower would not penetrate FAR Part 77 “imagery surfaces” outlined in the Wireless Communications Ordinance on height hazard airway zones. The FAA must also review and approve the application.

The WSDOT also has been asked to review and comment on a joint proposed wireless communications facilities ordinance for Thurston County. The draft regulation would guide the development of cell towers, antenna’s and support structures in that county. Presently the proposal does not specify any prohibitions that would keep communication facilities from being located near airports or that would penetrate critical air space. WSDOT has asked Thurston County to add FAR Part 77 specifics to the ordinance.

8. Airport aviation database upgrade ready for rollout

Airport stakeholders look forward with enthusiasm to the new Aviation System Plan database, which is an update to the 1997 record. The easy-to use database soon will be available on the web with information on airports operations, development needs, land use, transportation linkages and other useful data. Specifics will include runway end coordinates, runway lengths and locations and elevations of controlling obstructions.

The first system plan database was inaugurated five years ago as part of the WSDOT Aviation’s goals relating to planning for the future of state aviation. Since then the plan has evolved to reflect the changes in the aviation industry as well as to better integrate it as an element within Washington’s transportation network and national aviation system. The FAA and WSDOT have committed significant resources and time to create the new database of aviation data.

That decision has resulted in a redesigned, online database that contains a physical inventory of the cataloged airports, adjacent land uses, rural airport economic analysis, based aircraft and operations forecasts and recommended maintenance plans for the 129 public use airports in Washington.

The value of the project provides easy access to vast amounts of information and was designed with great flexibility allowing the customer to tap data on everything from capital development needs for an individual airport to identifying which airports statewide that can handle new instrument approaches. The database is critical for WSDOT and FAA in creating funding priorities and assessing the value of those investments on the statewide system.

The plan will also help prepare for the future state aviation system, protecting airports, measuring the economic value of airports, identifying rural air service opportunities, promoting state airports as recreational opportunities, educating the public on a broad base of aviation uses and advocating general aviation as an important economic tool to the State of Washington.

Stay tuned for the imminent release of the database update found at <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/aviation/Planning/database/default.cfm> and for more information contact John Shambaugh, Senior Planner, at 360-651-6306.

9. Fire season preparations under way

With all the rain and snow the state has received in the past two months, it's hard to believe that soon many parts of Washington, along with the foothills and forests between the Eastern and Western parts of the state, will become potential fire hazards. With that in mind, the WSDOT has begun preparations to make sure the state-owned airfields used by fire fighters during the summer months are ready for business.

Jim Scott, WSDOT Airport Maintenance Supervisor, recently visited several key airfields used during fire season. At the Methow State Airport in Winthrop – home to the North Cascades Smoke Jumper Base – he met with Manager Steve Dickenson. While touring the facilities, Scott learned how the airport maintains day-to-day operations when the smoke jumper operations are on alert.

While on the road, Scott also met with Steve Boumann, Aviation Unit Manager for the United States Fire Service (USFS). Besides Methow, USFS also uses Tieton, Lake Wenatchee, Easton and Ranger Creek airfields as command centers for fire patrol and emergency operations during fire season.

To coordinate USFS operations with WSDOT “need to know” requirements, a special communications system is being set up should any state-owned airports need to be closed during fire season.

10. Search and Rescue responds to phantom sighting

Many pilots will tell you that there are two ways to fly across Snoqualmie Pass. Old-timers swear there is a third way out of the mountains. If they're right that might explain how a very lucky pilot made it home safely.

According to Karl Moore, WSDOT Search and Rescue Coordinator, on a recent Sunday the FAA's local office received a call about a small plane circling, t low in the clouds over Snoqualmie Pass. So low was the plane flying that the caller could read its registration number from the ground.

A preliminary search was begun that included mountain rescue ski patrols. But no evidence could be found that the plane had crashed or was even missing. The FAA confirmed that the plane was registered to a Midwest-based pilot who, it is hoped, found his way back to the prairies.

11. The grass is always greener

If it had not been the middle of winter, with snow covering an airfield in a remote location that will remain anonymous, one would have thought the cows roaming there had simply found that illusive green grass.

Instead, according to WSDOT's Jim Scott, it was the work of a nearby farmer who jimmed the fence surrounding the closed airfield trying to find better grazing land for his herd. Instead of greener pastures, the unnamed rancher will pay for cleaning up the field and securing the damaged enclosure.

12. Wright Brothers' flight nearing century mark

July marks the 100th anniversary of the famous first flight at Kitty Hawk, South Carolina, and the birth of aviation. If your organization is planning special programs or projects to honor aviation's centennial birthday, WSDOT Aviation would like to hear about it at avoutc@wsdot.wa.gov or by regular mail addressed to Aviation Education and Outreach Coordinator, 3704 172nd Street N.E., Suite K2, Arlington, WA 98223-3367. Make sure to include date, time, location, and a contact name, phone number and e-mail address.

13. Training, Special Events calendar

WSDOT Aviation Training

May 2 – Air Search and Rescue Orientation Course (ASAROC) 101 orientation, Eastern Washington.

September 13-14 – Mountain Flying Clinic, Wenatchee.

September 27-28 – ASARCO 101 orientation, Western Washington.

November 8-9 – ASAROC 101 orientation, Eastern Washington.

All training is by pre-registration. To sign up, call (360) 651-6300 or in-state call 1-800-552-0666. Pilots must be registered with the State in order to participate.

In The Community

Through May 4 – Space Art: The Earth from Orbit, Sundays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., The Museum of Flight, Seattle. Free with Museum admission.

April 20 – American Air Heroes Speaker Series. Roger Lerseth, Distinguished Flying Cross recipient and Navy A-6 Intruder pilot. Sunday, 2 p.m. The Museum of Flight, Seattle. Free with Museum admission.

April 24 – FAA Flight Safety Seminar. FAA Seattle Flight Standards District Office presents information on a wide range of aviation safety topics. Attendance counts toward the requirements of the FAA's Pilot Proficiency Awards (WINGS) Program. Thursday, 7 p.m. Free to the public at the Museum of Flight, Seattle.

April 26 – Cascade Warbirds Fly-In. A flurry of color, noise and history kicks off the Museum of Flight's 2003 fly-in season with World War II and Korean War vintage military aircraft on display. Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free to the public at the Museum of Flight, Seattle.

April 26 – The Resurrection of Glacier Girl. Centennial of Flight lecture series, Saturday, 2 to 3 p.m. Free to the public at the Museum of Flight, Seattle.

For more information about Museum of Flight activities, visit www.museumofflight.org on the Internet.

July 9 to July 13 – Northwest EAA Fly-In. Arlington Municipal Airport, Arlington. For more information, visit www.aerovents.com on the Internet.

Our Mission Statement

The Washington State Department of Transportation keeps people and business moving by operating and improving the state transportation systems vital to our taxpayers and communities.