

Washington State Airports Disparity Study 2019

Overview:

- The federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program is intended to create a level playing field for firms owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals.
- This report provides Washington State airports a legally defensible foundation for their DBE Programs. The study is required by federal law (as a condition of receiving funds from Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration).
- Due to the unique nature of this study, 64 airports with different contracting and DBE programs, the FAA requested WSDOT manage this study. This study does not focus on WSDOT, but encompasses all FAA-funded construction and consulting projects in Washington state.
- Determines the availability versus the utilization of minority- and women-owned businesses.
- Evaluated 64 Washington State Airport's implementation of their DBE Programs.
 - Recommends areas for improvement.
 - Recommends additional race- and gender-neutral measures the airports should consider adopting to improve their DBE participation.

Study Process:

- Colette Holt & Associates (CHA) was contracted to analyze 64 Washington State Airport's contracting activities and implementation of the DBE Program.
- Beginning in January 2018, CHA:
 - Conducted interviews with 143 business owners and members of stakeholder organizations, and collected information from 180 business owners through electronic surveys.
 - Conducted a statistical analysis of the Washington State Airport's contracting activities during Federal Fiscal Years 2012-2016 covering utilization of DBE firms compared to availability of DBE firms.

Study Findings:

Availability:

- The estimated percentage of firms that are available for FAA funded contracts.

Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American	White Women	DBE	Non-DBE	Total
1.1%	2.1%	1.4%	2.6%	6.3%	13.4%	86.6%	100.0%

* The sum of all figures do not equal the total availability due to rounding.

Disparity Ratios:

- Is a statistical analysis of the utilization of DBEs compared to the availability of these firms in its airport construction and consulting markets.
 - A disparity ratio of 100 percent is considered parity, or in other words, each firm is receiving the amount of business you would anticipate given their availability in the relevant market.
 - A Disparity ratio under 80 percent signifies significant disparity. However, less than 100 may still be evidence of exclusion.

	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American	White Women	DBE	Non-DBE
Disparity Ratio	38.8%	252.4%	68.1%	143.2%	52.3%	101.3%	99.8%

Study Recommendations for DBE Program Enhancements:

- Provide increased access to contracting opportunities.
- Partner with other organizations to provide outreach and networking opportunities for DBEs, prime contractors, and Airport staff.
- Focus on leveling the playing field for prime contract participation, including reducing contract sizes by unbundling.
- Adopt an Small Business Enterprise Target Market Program designed to set aside some smaller or less complex contracts for bidding only by SBEs as prime contractors.
- Consider Adopting a Mentor-Protégé Program for Aviation Contracts that could be used by all the Washington State Airports.
- Provide training to DBEs on how to perform on FAA-assisted work, including FAA Specifications and Performance Standards.
- Provide training to Airport staff about the DBE program.
- Consider utilizing race-conscious DBE goals on their FAA-funded contracts.

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