



Aviation Technical Subcommittee Highlights of the September 24, 2020 meeting

Meeting Participants:

- Mike Hewitt (MWAA)
- Shawn Ames (MAA)
- Mark Rawlings (DDOT)
- Richard Golinowski (MWAA)
- Kevin Clarke (MAA)
- Keith Meurlin (WATF)
- Rich Roisman
- Jeff Breeden (FAA)

TPB Staff:

- Tim Canan
- Arianna Koudounas
- Abdul Mohammed
- Karen Armendariz

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND APPROVAL OF HIGHLIGHTS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (JULY 23, 2020)

The meeting – which was held by Microsoft Teams teleconference – was called to order by Mr. Hewitt at 10:30 A.M. The highlights of the previous meeting were approved.

2. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Canan updated the subcommittee with general announcements related to the TPB's Air Systems Planning Program, including CASP 35 and the upcoming Air Passenger Survey Response Rate Study. Mr. Canan shared that funding has been granted for both CASP 35 (\$277,000) and the FAA supplemental AIP grant-funded Air Passenger Survey Response Rate Study (\$195,000). He shared that as part of the CARES act, the non-federal match of CASP 35 was waived, while it was not for the Air Passenger Survey Response Rate Study. He also shared that COG will be teleworking through the end of 2020.

3. TPB EQUITY RESOLUTION UPDATE & REGIONAL DISCUSSION ON EQUITY

Mr. Canan and Ms. Koudounas updated the subcommittee on the recently adopted TPB Equity Resolution and heard from subcommittee members on their respective institution's work regarding equity and inclusion. Mr. Canan emphasized that TPB and COG's greater work moving forward will be conducted with the application of an equity lens. Mr. Hewitt shared that MWAA has added a mandatory 45-minute long unconscious bias training for all staff to complete. Mr. Ames shared that BWI was awarded the Guardian Award for business diversity this past week.

4. AIR PASSENGER SURVEY RESPONSE RATE & QUALITY STUDY UPDATE

Ms. Koudounas and Mr. Canan led the subcommittee in a discussion on next steps for the Air Passenger Survey Response Rate Study, including the timeline, the scope of work, the consultant selection process, and anticipated applications of the study's findings. Mr. Canan shared that the grant is now in place, and that since the project is starting later than planned, there may be the

question of whether the study can be completed in time to be incorporated into the 2021 Washington-Baltimore Regional Air Passenger Survey (APS). Ms. Koudounas began by noting that “quality” was added to the study title due to the significant decline in the quality of survey responses, especially in the 2019 APS, and then proceeded to walk the subcommittee through the study scope of work. She noted that the study will be conducted by TPB staff and hired consultants, with advisory input provided by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The scope of work includes the following tasks:

1. Establish TAC responsibilities and meeting schedule; develop study work plan.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of the current APS program.
3. Conduct field work to improve survey distribution methodology and response results.
4. Complete the draft report.
5. Complete the final report.

Mr. Canan shared that TPB staff intend to utilize TPB’s on-call consultant, ICF, for the study. Mr. Hewitt asked for clarification regarding the “field work” component of the study. Ms. Koudounas clarified that the field work would be a limited amount of site observation-based visits as deemed necessary for the consultant to gain a stronger understanding of individual airport operations and the survey distribution logistical implications therein. She added that this work may also include field work-based research, and stakeholder interviews and/or focus groups.

5. 2019 WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE REGIONAL AIR PASSENGER SURVEY GEOGRAPHIC FINDINGS REPORT UPDATE

Mr. Mohammed updated the Aviation Technical Subcommittee on the geocoding process for the 2019 Washington-Baltimore Regional Air Passenger Survey Geographic Findings Report and associated next steps. He shared that he aimed to provide preliminary findings with the ATS prior to the November meeting. Mr. Roisman asked, “I see that you have a 56% match right now, before doing the allocation process – have you compared with previous surveys?” Mr. Mohammed shared that the quality of the survey responses is experiencing issues similar to that of the 2013 survey. He indicated that he has run the allocation process approximately 15 times to date – and that 80-90 percent of the responses should be able to be salvaged.

6. 2021 WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE REGIONAL AIR PASSENGER SURVEY DISCUSSION

Mr. Canan and Ms. Koudounas led subcommittee in a discussion on the 2021 Washington-Baltimore Regional Air Passenger Survey. Mr. Canan began by asking the ATS: “where do we expect air travel to be a year from now? What are the outlooks of the three airports and the industry overall? Where should the role of the survey be? Should it be conducted regardless of where we are with travel so that we can measure the extent to which COVID-19 has impacted travel, or do we want to hold off on resuming the survey until we approach more normal travel conditions once again?”

Mr. Hewitt responded that he did not know what would happen, but that on an intellectual level, he would love to know how the air passengers that are traveling to the airport are getting there. He has access to data on modal volumes with taxicabs and TNCs, but he has not looked at that

information yet and would be curious to see how the modal shift plays out in these conditions. He also shared that it is a question of volume: do we risk not having a statistically significant sample if air passenger volumes continue to be very low? Another concern is that every penny spent is being scrutinized, and there is the question of whether MWAAs will be able to participate in the survey next year. While that fate is not definitive as of yet, Mr. Hewitt shared that if he asked for that funding this month, the answer would be no.

Mr. Meurlin shared that the Washington Airports Taskforce has been monitoring trends at the three airports, across the country, and within Europe and Asia. He stated that this will be a long slog before the industry gets out of it: he firmly believes it won't be before 2024 until we return to 2019 levels. Leisure travel is coming back first, well before business; you which can be seen in terms of traffic on the Beltway versus I-66, because government is coming back to work before the private sector. While the industry can trust the airports and airlines to clean-up, this trust cannot yet extend to an individual level. He added that there isn't any money at IAD (or MWAAs) right now – it's going to be very difficult to fund this survey, but that it would be really interesting to have the typical APS be trimmed down and almost anecdotal, while also having statistical validity, to find out who is traveling through our airports. The last projection he heard on a global scale is that in 2021 the industry will still be down 40 percent from 2019 – the V is going to be more like a U. If the industry gets to 60 percent of 2019 in 2021, people will be saying that that's a victory. BWI is rebounding quicker because of Southwest and the populations that they serve, especially on the domestic market.

Mr. Roisman agreed that from an intellectual standpoint, he would love to see what's going on. On the interstate system, with the exception of Northern Virginia, the Commonwealth is back to pre-pandemic levels, with there still being a 20-30 percent reduction in Northern Virginia. He added that Arlington County is interested in the findings of such a survey, given that they are entering into NEPA for the CC to DCA Connector Project. Mr. Roisman reminded everyone that TPB still needs to be able to guarantee the safety of its field workers: TPB staff and contractors. In terms of funding – he advised that TPB staff determine what its latest deadline is for the 2021 APS and push it back as far as possible.

Mr. Ames added the importance of gauging the reluctance of individuals' willingness to participate in the survey as well. Mr. Canan agreed and added the COVID-related risk involved in transitioning to a tablet-based platform. Ms. Koudounas offered the possibility of having the survey interview staff operate the tablet, but that concerns remained with verbal communication due to muffled audibility between masks, and the user concern of being within six feet of one another while conducting the interview. Mr. Roisman shared that we should leverage the regional health-related resources at COG for guidance.

Mr. Mohammed shared that COVID-19 is significantly impacting the forecasting horizons. While it is not the same as post-9/11 in 2001, it is a somewhat comparable situation. Mr. Meurlin added that compared with post-9/11, the challenges are greater with COVID-19.

Ms. Koudounas shared that there may be some sensitivity around air passengers being asked why they are traveling during a global pandemic. On the other hand, she added that there may be resources available for compiling anonymous data on COVID-19 travel trends. Mr. Canan added that the delayed start of the Air Passenger Survey Response Rate and Quality Study is posing an opportunity for exploring new research methodology strategies. On a more optimistic note, Mr. Hewitt added that there are likely all-time travel time lows to the airport!

7. FUTURE CASP PROGRAM WORK

Mr. Canan and Ms. Koudounas led the subcommittee in a discussion on topics and research methodologies that the CASP program may explore in future FAA-funded CASP grant applications. Mr. Canan began the discussion by asking what planning studies are of interest to the subcommittee moving forward, keeping in mind that TPB staff will need to submit the next round of applications by Spring of 2021.

Mr. Roisman asked if FAA dollars could be banked to do the survey in full in 2021 if there is an airport funding shortfall. Mr. Breeden clarified that the AIP is prohibited from funding surveys. Mr. Breeden added that both Virginia and Maryland do have State System Plans that are updated on a continuous four to five-year cycle; TPB staff should make sure to review those plans and ensure that TPB is not duplicating efforts.

Mr. Hewitt spoke to the recently completed RASP: “Sometimes at the airport-level, we don’t see the bigger picture.” Adding that within the RASP each airport spoke about the studies it wanted to see conducted, but at a regional level, he asked if TPB staff see any regional misalignment. Mr. Canan responded that while TPB doesn’t look at planning efforts from an airport-specific standpoint, TPB looks at them from a ground access-specific standpoint. He also added that Ms. Koudounas has been exploring the possibility of an airport worker-specific study.

Before moving onto the next item, Mr. Canan flipped the conversation back to Ms. Koudounas to elaborate on the airport worker-specific study: “As we look at ground access and we think about how people get to the airport, even at best times in terms of public transit, we only have about 15 percent of air passengers taking Metro to DCA. Whether it’s rail or bus, your airport workers are the most reliant on public transportation. By having a study that focuses on airport workers, you are starting with your base of individuals who are still relying on the transportation system – both pre-COVID and during COVID. This is useful information regardless, and it also has a significant equity component. Everyone keeps using the term “build back better” – how can we apply that to thinking through the psychology of both airport workers and air passengers.” She also shared that she recently spoke with Kelly Woodward at the Dulles Area Transportation Association (DATA) regarding an airport worker ground access transportation study they conducted through TPB.

Mr. Clarke shared that he would be supportive of an airport worker-focused ground access study. He elaborated that organizationally, BWI has a big push on quality of life. Anything that can be done to improve quality of life for employees would be of significant interest to the Executive staff. Mr. Ames added that this would be of interest to their tenants and the on-coming Amazon staff. Mr. Clarke added that it pertains to resiliency, sustainability, and customer service.

Mr. Hewitt shared that in the past, especially at DCA, they forecasted a deficit of employee parking. He shared that the day shift of employees works well with transit, but the night shift is more complicated. He has reviewed past IAD employee surveys, including one asking, “where do people come from?” The findings at the time mostly highlighted that staff did not have many

options. He added that while this will change to some extent due to the Silver Line extension, the limited hours of Metro do pose challenges to staff that work late night / early morning shifts.

Ms. Koudounas reflected on Mr. Hewitt's comment and added that highlighting the gap in service would be an important input for making the case, on a regional scale, for creating or expanding transit service that meets the needs of airport and other front-line, low-wage workers.

Mr. Roisman cautioned the subcommittee of the challenge in making the case for more transit service when transit agencies are operating at a significant deficit. However, he added that if everything is bottoming out, why not consider new possibilities for making improvements in the future. He underscored the discussion by reiterating that the airports have each done a range of airport worker studies, and that he would be happy to help facilitate communication between Mobility Lab and other entities that may have additional helpful resources.

8. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Mr. Hewitt shared that the Secure National Hall Project is moving back onto schedule due to low passenger traffic at the airport, and that IAD opened its TNC pick-up, which is now at a separate curb than where arriving passengers go to meet private vehicles.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

10. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 A.M. The next subcommittee meeting was scheduled for Thursday, November 19, 2020 from 10:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. via Microsoft Teams.