
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4290

Highlights of the meeting of the Aviation Technical Subcommittee

Thursday, March 27, 2014, 10:30 AM to 12:00 noon
MWCOG Meeting Room 2

Meeting Attendees

- Laura Richards (DDOT)
- Mike Hewitt (MWAA)
- Tony Storck (MAA)
- Keith Meurlin (WATF) – via teleconference

COG/TPB staff in attendance

- Clara Reschovsky
- Rich Roisman
- Bob Griffiths
- Abdul Mohammed
- Jon Schermann

Chair Mike Hewitt called the meeting to order at 10:30am.

1. Approval of highlights from the previous meeting (January 23, 2014)

The January 23, 2014 meeting highlights were approved with corrections. The approved meeting summary will be available on the MWCOG website.

2. Proposal for COG Board of Directors 2014 Regional Airports Forum

Mr. Griffiths, Acting Co-Director of Transportation Planning, presented a proposal for a regional airports forum to be held for the COG Board of Directors. The genesis for this event came from a conversation with Matthew Letourneau, the 2014 President of the COG Board and member of the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors representing the Dulles District. Supervisor Letourneau has met with the COG Executive Director, Chuck Bean, and expressed a desire to have the region's airports included as part of this year's overall COG Board series of discussions on regional infrastructure. Supervisor Letourneau is specifically concerned with decreasing air passenger and air cargo volumes at IAD and perceived air cargo competition with other locations such as Norfolk and Philadelphia.

The 2013 Air Passenger Survey and update to the Air Cargo Element of the Regional Airport System Plan provide a good opportunity to provide information to the COG Board on the above issues, from a regional system perspective looking at all three regional airports as part of the

forum, and also looking at the economic impact of the airports. The focus is looking at balance within the regional system and maximizing the investments made at BWI and IAD and affirming the long standing COG Board policy of moderating growth at DCA and directing it to BWI and IAD. There is also a concern about further erosion of regulations at DCA as part of FAA reauthorization next September. The forum is planned for this fall, probably in October. Mr. Roisman will set up an event planning committee with subcommittee participation.

3. 2013 Washington-Baltimore Regional Air Passenger Survey – Draft General Findings Report

Mr. Mohammed presented the subject report. Comments on the draft report were requested from the subcommittee within 30 days.

Mr. Storck reiterated his concern expressed at the previous meeting that the survey sampling plan needs to be reviewed to bring it in line with observed passenger trends; for example, the 2013 survey had the highest number of samples at IAD, yet IAD had the lowest observed locally originating passenger volume for that year. Mr. Roisman indicated that this issue would be discussed in an appendix to the final report, which would include specific direction to review the sampling plan prior to the 2015 survey. Mr. Storck also noted that the review should include consideration of the distribution of wide-body vs. narrow-body aircraft being sampled during the same time frame at each airport. Mr. Griffiths noted that part of the perceived oversampling at IAD is due to the treatment of discrete international markets and the way they are allocated in the overall sample.

A concern was expressed over the low response rate for the on-line survey option that was offered for the first time during this survey. Mr. Roisman responded that he is in favor of continuing to offer the on-line response option, but it will depend on the cost structure on bids for the next survey (introducing the on-line option did not add to the overall cost of the 2013 survey).

Mr. Roisman noted the presence of the Federal government shutdown (October 1st through 16th) during the survey period and suggested that staff might compare the Official Airlines Guide for the same period during 2011 to capture any difference in available seats to reflect airline response to the shutdown as part of the discussion in the report.

A subcommittee member noted the increase in low airfare as a factor in airport choice at DCA, which is indicative of the increase in low cost carriers having a presence at DCA. There is a corresponding decrease in closest airport as an airport choice factor at DCA.

The subcommittee requested that the data be double-checked on Slides 22 and 23, particularly for resident airport preference for BWI. A subcommittee member also suggested looking at geographic origins of those respondents who express no airport preference. Mr. Mohammed

responded that this information could be reviewed after the survey records have been geocoded.

It was suggested by a senior staff member that the collapse of possible responses for the government trip purpose be re-separated to segregate federally-related travel (as it had been during the 2011 and previous surveys). Mr. Roisman responded that the subcommittee approved the change for the 2013 questionnaire and that a change back could be considered, however; the change was made to conserve space on the questionnaire with the understanding from the 2011 data that the vast majority of the data when collapsed would represent federally-related travel (very little historical response for trip purpose on state and local government related travel).

Mr. Roisman suggested that a tabulation of trip purpose by resident / non-resident status be included to provide more information on potential shifts from business to non-business travel during the survey period. Mr. Mohammed agreed to provide this tabulation.

It was noted that passengers accessing DCA using Metrorail decreased by one percent when compared with the 2011 survey. This level of change is within the margin of error of the survey sample and may not be significant, or could be due to rounding. A subcommittee member noted that the decrease in Metrorail usage may be due to differences in resident and non-resident usage, as shown in the breakdown in the report. The change in Metrorail usage may also be due to increased track work or changes in Metrorail fares and operating policy, specifically the service reductions on the Blue Line when compared with 2011.

Mr. Mohammed noted that the draft report excluded information on airport parking. Those tables are forthcoming and will be separated by airport, since the different parking characteristics at each airport eliminate the possibility of cross-airport direct comparison. Staff will determine if the tables are appropriate to include in the report.

A subcommittee member requested that the non-respondents be filtered out (excluded) from Tables 19 through 22. Mr. Mohammed agreed to make this change.

A subcommittee member noted that even international passengers are now permitted to print their boarding pass on-line (while providing their passport information), particularly if the passenger participates in the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Global Entry program. This reduces the number of passengers making in-airport stops for a boarding pass; however, stops for baggage checks for international travel is very dependent on trip purpose (non-business travelers typically check bags) and destination (short haul international destinations such as Canada typically have fewer checked bags).

A subcommittee member noted that some of the bag check and kiosk options may no longer be available at all airports; for example, BWI no longer allows curbside boarding pass issuance, only bag checks. Staff responded that they will need to check each airport prior to the next survey and update the questionnaire as needed.

The next steps will be the survey geocoding and Geographic Findings Report. The goal is to complete the survey geocoding for the May subcommittee meeting but there is a heavy amount of manual geocoding involved so the goal may not be possible.

4. 2014-2018 Draft Airport Capital Improvement Plan and CASP 29 Grant Update

Mr. Roisman reviewed the funding table for the next CASP grant and ACIP. There is a decrease in available federal funding from \$300,000 in the current grant (and two previous grants) to \$283,500 for the next grant and \$230,000 beginning in Federal FY 2015. The decreased funding has resulted in a reduction from three to two projects in the work program. The ground access forecast update and ground access element update will be combined into a single project. This combined project will be done every other year alternating with the ground access travel time study. The air cargo element will continue to be updated every 5 to 7 years. No projects are being removed from the work program. The grant will be submitted to FAA in the next few weeks.

5. 2013 Air Cargo Element Update (Phase 1): Status

Mr. Roisman reported that staffing for the air cargo element is still under discussion. The goal is still to have a draft document for subcommittee review in May or July.

6. Roundtable Discussion

Mr. Roisman discussed information that he had received from a new organization called the Communities for Smart Airport Growth that is concerned with noise issues at DCA.

7. Other Business

There was no other business.

Chair Hewitt adjourned the meeting at 12:00 noon.

The next Aviation Technical Subcommittee meeting will be Thursday, May 22nd, 2014 at 10:30 am at COG.