



Aviation Technical Subcommittee Highlights of the September 23, 2021 meeting

Meeting Participants:

- Mark Rawlings (DDOT)
- Kevin Clarke (MAA)
- Shawn Ames (MAA)
- Mike Hewitt (MWAA)
- Keith Meurlin (WATF)

TPB Staff:

- Tim Canan
- Kenneth Joh

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND APPROVAL OF HIGHLIGHTS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (MAY 27, 2021)

The meeting, which was held by Microsoft Teams teleconference, was called to order by Mr. Rawlings at 10:30 A.M. The highlights of the previous meeting were approved, as written. Note: the July 22, 2021 meeting was cancelled.

2. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Canan informed the Subcommittee the next FAA AIP grant agreement (CASP 36) was awarded and executed. He also informed the Subcommittee that staff met with FAA during the period for a program review, including that status of open grants and deliverables, as well as upcoming milestones.

3. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE AIR PASSENGER SURVEY

Dr. Joh delivered a PowerPoint presentation to review the consultant recommendations from the recent Air Passenger Survey Response Rate and Quality Study as well as staff recommendations for prioritizing important next steps in implementing these recommendations. The consultant made 25 recommendations addressing overall approach, survey design and mode, sampling, questionnaire, training, discussion of an employee inclusive survey, and big data sources. Based on these, staff identified 5 recommendations that were feasible for implementation in time for the next regional air passenger survey. These included: 1) conduct experiments on new methods, 2) transition to electronic data collection, 3) offer incentives to participants, 4) reduce item non-response, and 5) include airport employees in the survey. Dr. Joh reviewed each of these recommendations and identified benefits and costs/considerations associated with each.

During the presentation, there were several questions and comments that generated more in-depth Subcommittee discussion. Staff was requested to provide more cost information at a future meeting to help the Subcommittee prioritize the recommendations. It was also observed that while future surveys may minimize collecting personal aspects of a passenger's trip to the airport, it is important not to lose the ability to track the origin/destination (O/D) information because of the importance of including that information in the regional travel model.

Subcommittee members agreed on the likely effectiveness of reducing the collection of sensitive personal information as a way to improve response.

Several members requested more information on the rationale and benefits for conducting the recommended pre-test survey. Staff emphasized that conducting a pre-test assists in identifying questions that may have been worded poorly, or other aspects of either the questions themselves or the procedures to collect the information that may contribute to non-response. The pre-test would help identify these issues that could then be addressed and implemented in the full deployed survey. If there is to be a pre-test, it would be a task of the overall air passenger survey project and included in the larger budget, rather than be a standalone project (and funded separately) apart from the main survey.

The Subcommittee also agreed on the merits of providing a participation incentive and discussed how best to structure the incentive. There was agreement that providing an incentive raffle at each of the three airports would be effective.

Members also agreed on the importance that whatever enhancements are made to the survey that we do not lose the ability to conduct longitudinal analysis of survey results with past regional air passenger surveys.

Additional discussion focused on the aspects of the employee survey and how that would be conducted and for what purpose. It was mentioned that one of the merits of surveying the employees to examine their ground access needs would be consistent with both the COG Board's and TPB's recent calls to incorporate equity into our work.

Finally, there was discussion on the sampling methodology, indicating a preference to develop a sampling approach based on zone rather than flights. This would streamline the process and aid in data collection; however, care would be needed to ensure the results can still be compared to past surveys.

The Subcommittee will take up this topic again at its next meeting and be asked to provide guidance to staff for implementing recommendations.

4. GROUND ACCESS FORECAST UPDATE

Mr. Canan reviewed the scope of preparing the ground access forecasts, the status of previous forecast that have been prepared, and the plan for preparing the next round of ground access forecasts. He indicated that these were last prepared as a standalone product in 2015 using data from the 2013 air passenger survey. He mentioned that forecasts were prepared using data from the 2017 survey as part of the recent Regional Air System Plan (RASP) update, and that work is underway to complete this dataset and corresponding documentation. The recently awarded CASP 36 grant includes a project for updating the regional ground access forecasts using the 2019 survey and latest-available land use assumptions and terminal area forecasts. In response to a question, Mr. Canan confirmed that FAA concurs with the plan to update the ground access forecasts.

5. AIR CARGO ELEMENT UPDATE

Mr. Canan reviewed the purpose of the Air Cargo Element included as part of the RASP, including when this element was last updated and plans for preparing a new update. The Air Cargo Element analyzes ground access issues present at the region's airports; examines how future growth in congestion might affect access to and from the airports for air cargo and freight forwarding/delivery services; and identifies future demand for air cargo facilities in the region. The next update will include a special emphasis on the growth and outlook for home delivery market trends. The recently awarded CASP 36 grant includes a project for updating the Air Cargo Element, which will be prepared in conjunction with and in coordination with the update of TPB's Regional Freight Plan.

6. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

During the roundtable discussion, Shawn Ames noted air cargo traffic had increased 20 percent since 2019 due in large part to the increased presence of Amazon. He also mentioned two initiatives that were under way before they were halted when the pandemic began. These included planning for the Southwest Quad, an area of a few hundred acres, as well as an evaluation of landside ground access on terminal roadways and access roads. BWI had submitted a \$2.5 million RAISE grant application to continue these efforts and is hopeful for favorable news. Mr. Ames also noted that ground access traffic and checkpoint traffic have been increasing.

Mike Hewitt informed the Subcommittee that MWAA has been working throughout the pandemic on its comprehensive landside program for inclusion in the DCA Airport Layout Plan (ALP). Progress has been made and the environmental review process may conclude in early 2022. He also informed the Subcommittee that IAD has commenced its master plan process, which is set to conclude in 2023. Initial inventories are complete and alternatives development is expected to begin during 2022.

Mark Rawlings asked Subcommittee members about their respective organizations' in-office/teleworking configuration.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

8. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 P.M. The next subcommittee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 18 from 10:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. via Microsoft Teams.