

Airport Layout Plan Update for Methow Valley State Airport

Frequently Asked Questions 5/2009

Who is responsible for the Methow Valley State Airport?

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) owns and operates the Methow Valley State Airport. It is the largest of 16 airports managed by the state. The airport is included in the National Plan of Integrated Airports System (NPIAS), and is therefore eligible for federal funding. During the last 20 years, WSDOT has received over \$2 million in Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grants to improve and maintain the airport facility. Methow Airport is also classified as one of 19 regional airports in the state's aviation system plan due to its ability to accept a broad range of aircraft activity important to the region.

Why is WSDOT updating Methow's Airport Layout Plan

WSDOT is updating Methow's Airport Layout Plan (ALP) to fulfill a FAA obligation to properly plan for future airport needs and address safety compliance issues. As demand changes along with airport design standards the state must respond to address its responsibilities as the operator of a public transportation facility. The Methow ALP was last updated in 1995.

Who is funding the Airport Layout Plan?

The FAA is funding 95 percent of the \$67,000 ALP project through the Airport Improvement Program as provided under Title 49, United States Code, section 47104. WSDOT is contributing a five percent local match.

Is the Methow Airport receiving federal "Economic Stimulus" funds?

No, WSDOT has not received any funding for the Methow Valley State Airport through the federal *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*, signed into law in February 2009.

What will the ALP accomplish?

One of the primary objectives of the ALP is to determine airport safety and design deficiencies and recommend alternatives to correct the deficiencies while protecting the existing capacity of the runway.

What work has been completed?

The project work began in March 2008 in partnership between WSDOT, FAA, and Century West Engineering. ALPs are updated through a process that generally takes over a year to complete. Much of the process involves reviewing and assessing existing conditions. In November 2008, the consultant team presented a preliminary report on the initial findings at a public meeting in Methow. One of the key issues identified was non-standard runway safety areas at each end of the runway that can be used by aircraft in emergencies. Century West developed three alternative proposals to address these design deficiencies. The proposals were presented to the public on March 19 and are out for public comment until the end of April.

Does the State of Washington have airport design standards?

No, WSDOT does not have its own set of airport design standards. WSDOT uses the FAA's airport design standards found in Advisory Circular 150/5300-13 http://www.faa.gov/airports_airtraffic/airports/resources/advisory_circulars/media/150-5300-13/150_5300_13.pdf. During the last 20 years, WSDOT has received over \$2,000,000 in FAA grants to improve and maintain the Methow Airport and is therefore required to apply FAA standards in its planning efforts.

Where can I find available documents?

The alternatives and other documents are on WSDOT's Web site:
<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/News/2009/03/MethowALP.htm>

Public outreach plan

The purpose of a public outreach plan is to provide opportunities for all interested individuals, organizations, or groups to participate in the project. WSDOT has identified the following steps in the plan.

Formation of a planning advisory committee (PAC):

The PAC formed to provide local review and input into the planning process. Members have reviewed and commented on draft work products. Members of the PAC include:

- Dave Sandoz – Town of Winthrop Building Official
- Kurt Oakley – Winthrop Chamber of Commerce
- Charlene Beam – Okanogan County Office of Planning & Development

- John Button – North Cascades Smokejumper Base
- Jeff Wilkens – Wenatchee Valley Transportation Council (North Central RTPO)

Open public PAC meetings:

- March 25, 2008, 3:00 – 5:00 PM – Aero Methow Rescue training room.
- November 18, 2008, 3:00 – 5:00 PM - Aero Methow Rescue training room
- March 19, 2009 – Neighbor Meeting – Twisp Community Center
- March 19, 2009, 3 p.m. – 5 p.m. – Twisp Community Center
 - [Meeting Minutes 3/19/2009 \(pdf 111 kb\)](#)

Another public meeting is scheduled for May 20 at a location to be determined.

Public comment period:

The public comment period for the proposed alternatives extends through April 30, 2009. The comment period was originally scheduled to end on April 17, but in response to public feedback, WSDOT extended the deadline.

What type of aircraft is the planning for Methow Valley State Airport based on?

The FAA requires that airport planning is consistent with the *design aircraft*, or *family grouping of aircraft* reflected in current and forecast aviation activity.

For planning purposes, the most demanding family grouping of aircraft operating at Methow Valley State Airport are included in Airplane Design Group II (ADG II). Current ADG II activity includes North Cascades Smokejumper Base operations, other government agency flights, medevac flights, aircraft charter, and business and personal transportation. These aircraft are primarily turboprops and business jets weighing 12,500 pounds and above.

The diversity of ADG II aircraft operating at the airport suggests that design standards based on the most active segment within this group (Aircraft Approach Categories A and B) provides a reasonable planning standard. Use by larger aircraft (such as those included Aircraft Approach Categories C and D) is relatively low and does not justify use as design aircraft. While larger aircraft that are capable of operating on the existing runway are accommodated, they are not used to define future facility planning evaluations, such a runway length requirements.

Based on these factors, the runway length requirements and other FAA-defined airport design standards used in the ALP update are consistent with large turboprop and business jet aircraft included in Aircraft Approach Category B and Airplane Design Group II. These components combine to create Airport Reference Code (ARC) B-II.

How can I comment?

Submit your comments by emailing johnsel@wsdot.wa.gov, calling 360-651-6303, faxing 360-651-6319, or mailing WSDOT Aviation, PO Box 3367, Arlington WA, 98223.

I still have questions. Who can I contact?

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